



COVID-19 Response and Recovery Monthly Bulletin

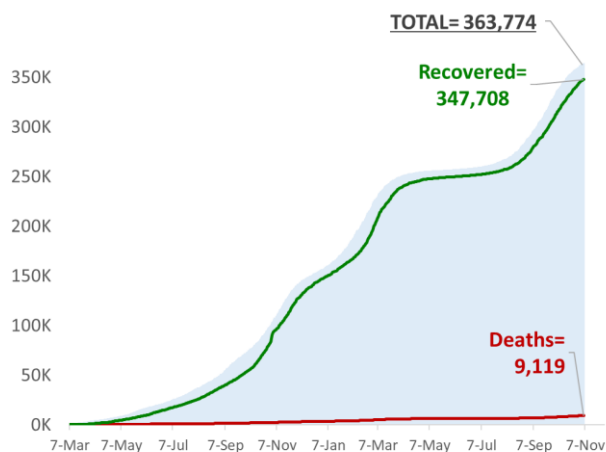
November 2021



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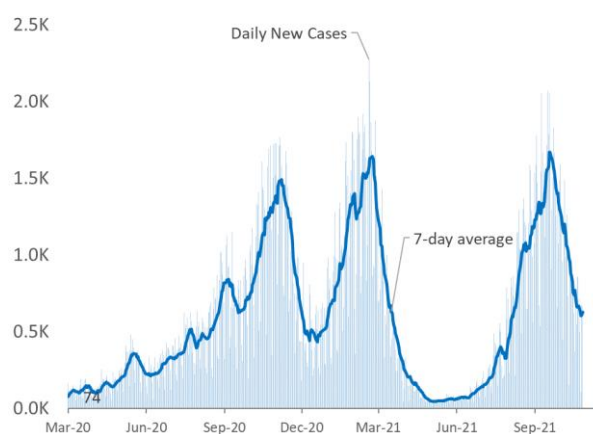
1 COVID-19 Epi and Health situation update (data as of 30.11.2021 unless stated otherwise)

Total Cases, Recoveries and Deaths



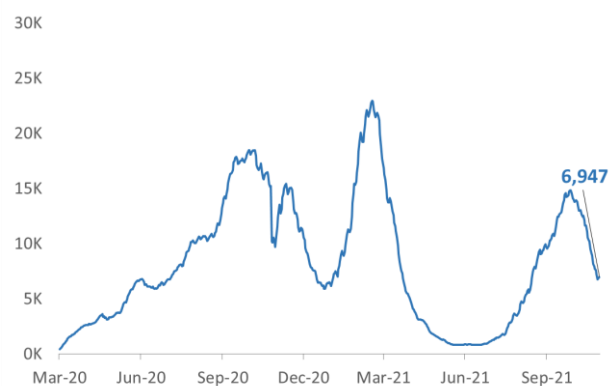
The total number of COVID-19 cases in the country has continued to increase and reached 363,774 at the end of November.

New Infections



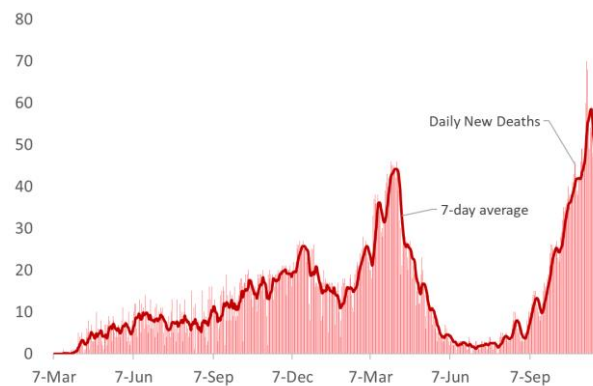
The 7-day average number of daily new cases was 625 at the end of November, which marks a 59% decrease compared to the beginning of the month.

Active Cases



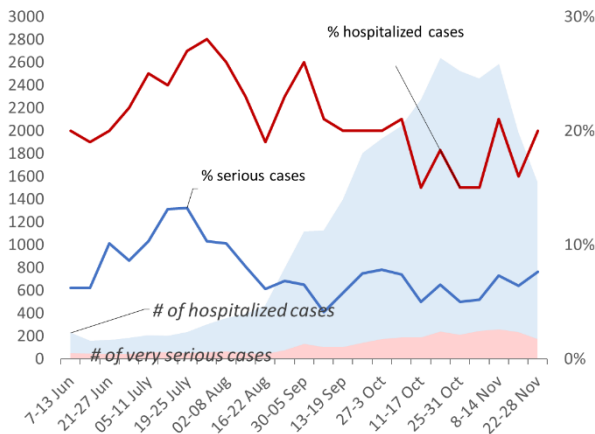
The number of active cases steadily decreased over the course of November and stood at 6,947 at the end of the month.

New Deaths



The 7-day average number of deaths has decreased by 30% compared to the beginning of the month and

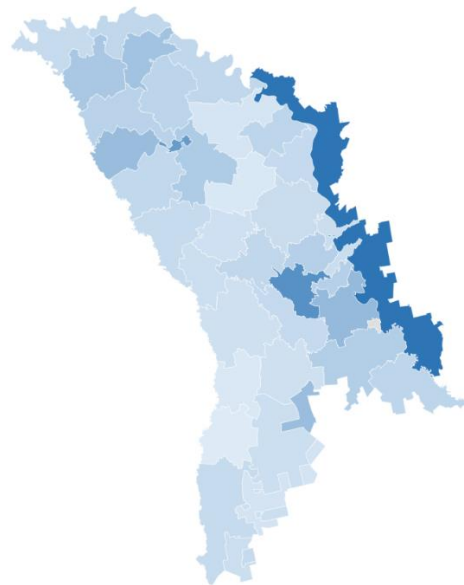
Serious, Very Serious and Hospitalized Cases (weekly averages)



The average daily number of very serious cases increased in November (225) compared to the previous month (201). However, the 7-day average daily number of very serious cases decreased to 173 in the week of November 22-28. The total number of hospitalized patients with COVID-19 currently stands at 1,482 of whom 180 are in a very serious condition.

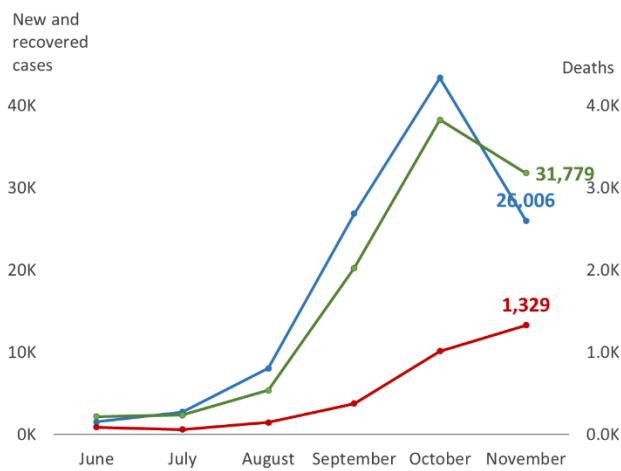
now stands at 29.1. The total number of deaths currently is 9,119.

14-Day Incidence per 100,000 by District



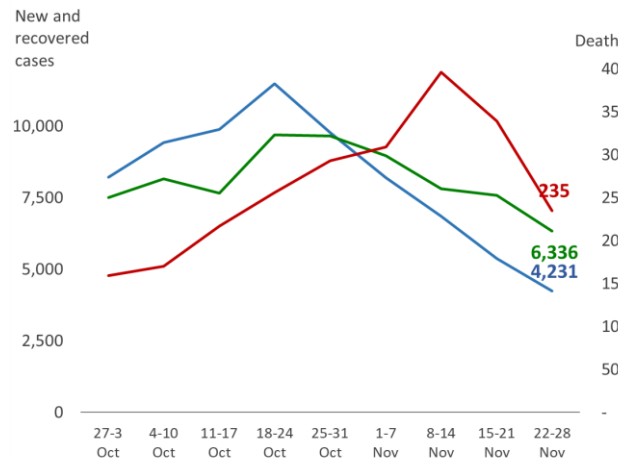
The crude cumulative incidence rate per 100,000 in the last 14 days is 260. The incidence has been highest in the Transnistria Region (840), Basarabeasca (360) and Chisinau (295). The lowest incidence has been recorded in Cantemir (56).

Monthly Data: New Cases, Recoveries and Deaths



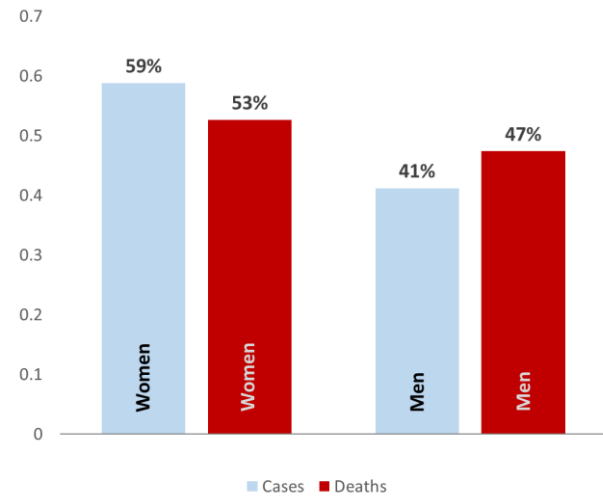
Overall, the number of new cases in November decreased by 40% compared to the previous month and reached 26,006. The crude cumulative incidence of cases per 100,000 population for the last 30 days was 749 on November 30. The number of deaths increased by 31% during the past month. The monthly number of recoveries however reflected the decrease in cases and has dropped by 17%.

Weekly Data: New Cases, Recoveries and Deaths



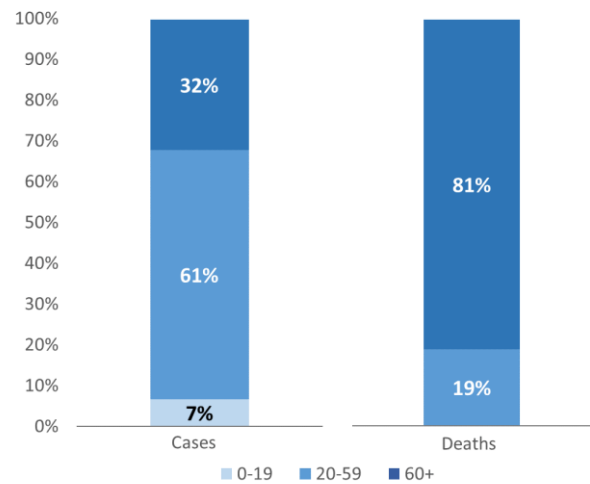
The number of weekly cases has decreased over the course of the past month and stood at 4,231 for the week of November 22-28. The crude cumulative incidence of cases per 100,000 population for the last 7 days was 126. Moreover, compared to the previous week the number of deaths has decreased by 30.7%, while the number of recoveries has decreased by 16.5%.

Cases and Deaths by Sex



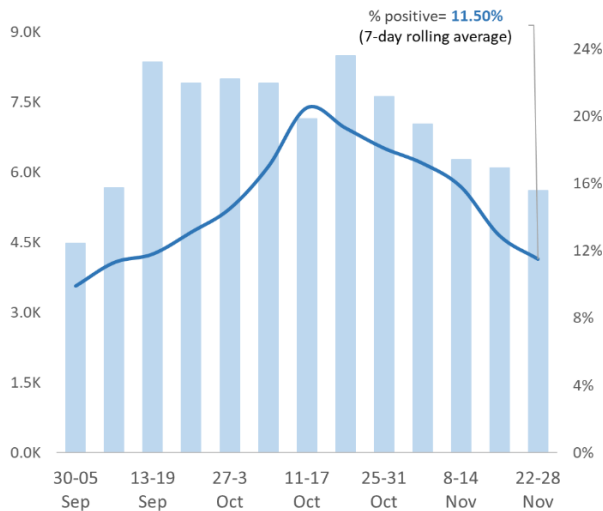
Overall, 59% of all cases have been recorded among women and 41% among men. Moreover, women (53%) account for a slightly higher proportion of all deaths than men (47%).

COVID-19 Cases/Deaths by Age Group



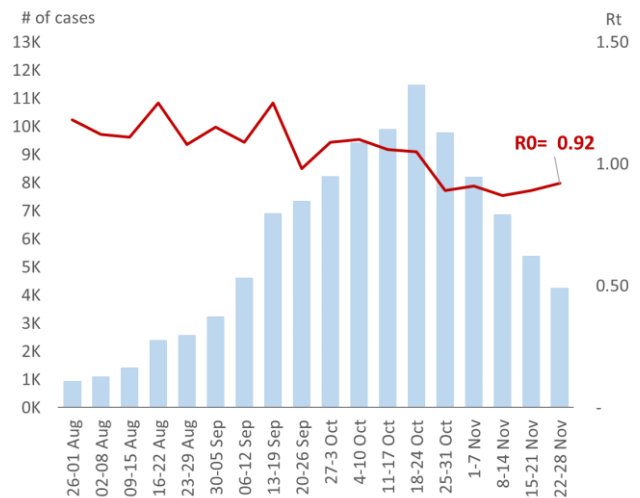
Even though infections among people aged 60 and over accounted for 32% of the total number of cases, 81% of all deaths were registered in this age group. The average age of patients who have died from the disease is 68.4.

Average Daily Tests and Positivity Rate



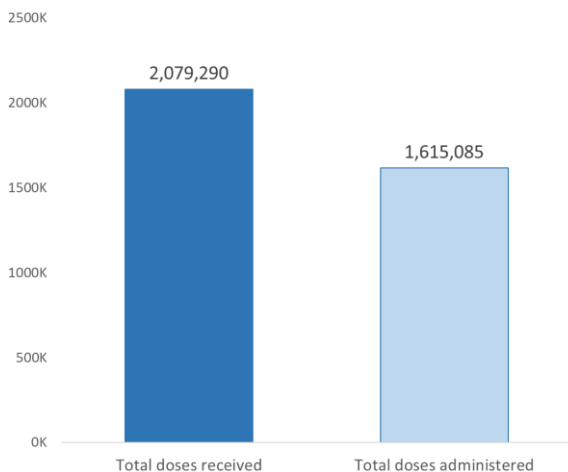
Overall, the percentage of positive tests has steadily decreased over the course of the month and dropped to 11.5% for the week of Nov 22-28. Since then, the figure has further decreased and as of November 30, it stands at 10.5%. On average, 5,608 tests were conducted every day during the week of November 22-28.

COVID-19 Weekly Cases and Effective Reproductive Number (Rt)



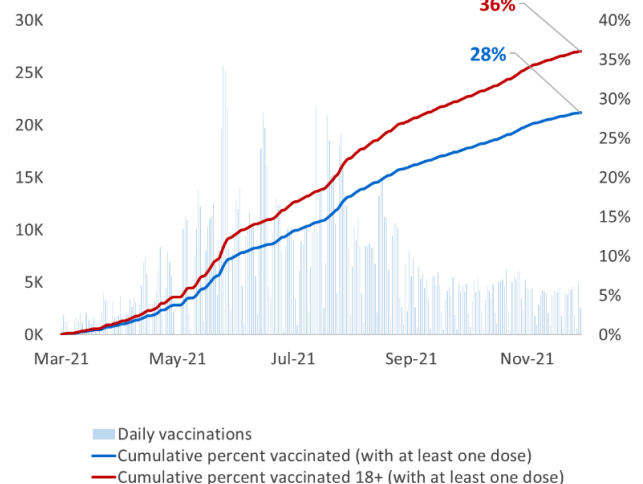
The effective reproductive number has stayed beneath 1 throughout November but increased slightly to 0.92 during the last week of the month. There are regional variations for this indicator, ranging from 1.22 (Briceni) to 0.64 (Telenesti and Nisporeni). The reproductive number for Chisinau was 0.92.

Received and administered vaccines



As of November 30, a total of 2,079,290 COVID-19 vaccines have been delivered to the country, out of which 1,615,085 or 78% have been administered, with over 464,000 doses still available for use.

Daily Vaccinations and Percentage Vaccinated



The number of vaccinations administered in November was 101,144 marking a 14.6% decrease compared to the previous month. As of November 30, an estimated 28% of the country's population or 36% of the population aged 18+ has received at least one vaccine dose.

1.1 Official decision and restrictions

- The latest Decision of the CNESP, [No. 66 from 28 Nov. 2021](#) is mainly about restrictions in connection with the 'Omicron' variant of the COVID-19 virus, specifically:
 - Interdiction to enter Moldova for persons that visited in the last 14 days several states from Africa, i.e. South Africa, Lesotho, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambic, Namibia, Eswatini and Malawi
 - Citizens of Moldova that traveled in the last 14 days to these countries will observe a 14-day quarantine period, irrespective of vaccination or past infection status (possible to leave quarantine after 7 days and negative PCR test),
 - The MFA will inquire if there are Moldovan citizens in these countries and will provide support if/when needed. Also, it recommends avoiding traveling to/through these countries.

2 General situation update

2.1 Political update & Transnistria region

- The energetic crisis in Moldova reached its apogee in October as the Moldovan government lacked any solution after the old contract for the gas delivery has expired and a new agreement had to be reached considering the quotations on the stock exchanges which reached the historical highs. The executive has imposed a state of emergency due to the reduced volumes of delivered gas, with some institutions getting insufficient quantities on the first days of the crisis. The immediate assessment revealed the lack of alternative suppliers and an underdeveloped infrastructure to interconnect with the European network.
- After long negotiations, on the last week of October the previous contract between Moldova-Gaz and Gazprom was extended for five years using a price formula proposed by the Moldovan party. As per agreed formula the price shall be later adjusted according to the quotations on the stock exchanges. As per the negotiations themselves 3 key areas have been discussed: the settlement of the historical debt of "Moldovagaz", the activities of "Moldovagaz" in the context of the Third Energy Package to be implemented by Moldova and the new formula to estimate the gas price quotation. According to the new agreement for

November the price of gas was estimated at about US\$450 per 1,000 cubic meters, which for the households means a bill of 11.6 Lei per cubic meter compared to the previous 4.3 Lei. However, the Government announced supportive measures for the households during the cold season by directly deducting the gas price difference from their monthly bills. The initiative looks to support a total of 746,000 – families.

- Gazprom has extended the pay date after Moldovagaz failed to transfer the first tranche for the gas delivered according to the new agreement. In this regard the state-run company Energocom received a financial support of 1.7 billion MDL from the government to purchase gas from alternative sources, out of which remaining 1.4 billion lei have been used to pay the consumed gas in October-November.
- Moldova will sign with Romania a contract to build an alternative power transmission line to interconnect with the European energy system. An implementing company will be selected based on an international tender. The supplier shall construct the power line by 2024.
- Moldova has signed the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use in the Glasgow Climate Change Conference. More than 100 leaders reaffirmed commitments to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030. The Declaration commits to conserve forests and other terrestrial ecosystems and accelerate their restoration.
- A set of amendments was proposed to the Ministry of Justice by the Central Electoral Commission to introduce harsher criminal and administrative punishment for electoral and political offenses. One of the amendments looks to remove the ban on campaigning during the election day and the day before. Additional clarifications were included on the concept of organized transportation of voters which bans transportation of voters to polling stations on election day. Moreover, non-profit organizations are now able to provide fee-based services to electoral competitors according to the draft amendment recently approved by the Government. The draft amendment comes in response to a Constitutional Court ruling.
- Natalia Gavrilița has reported on the first 100 days in office as the new government has significantly improved the cooperation with the international organizations, has started reforming the justice sector by cleaning key institutions. Among the successes of the current executive were named the good managed of the health and energetic crisis, but also the implementation fo the Customs Code.
- President Maia Sandu spoke about the first year in office and her successes in the foreign cooperation with substantial impact on the technical assistance provided to Moldova. She mentioned the contribution of the Presidential team to the promotion of reforms in judicial system and fight against corruption. Among the emphasized priorities the President named the improvement of the business environment and the and we need to do everything we can for our economy to develop in a much more favorable environment, including by drawing foreign investments." President Sandu also noted that Russian Foreign Minister Serghei Lavrov would soon visit Moldova at the invitation of his Moldovan counterpart Nicu Popescu. (Imedia, 21 November)
- In a public speech the Minister of Economy said that 3 key priorities were set for economic development of the country. Among them the optimization of procedures and rationalization of public services, special attention being paid to the micro and small businesses, attraction of investments and the development of the IT sector.
- Non-EU citizens including citizens with the Moldovan passports travelling to the EU will have to pay €7 tax on entry into Schengen Area as from 2022. This decision is part of a wider visa waiver programme designed to protect and strengthen the EU's borders. According to the rule non-EU citizens are only allowed to stay in the EU up to 90 days out of 180.

Transnistria region

- The Deputy Prime Minister for Reintegration, Vlad Kulminski resigned due to family reasons. A new DPM is still pending to be named. Thus, the 5+2 format meeting in Stockholm has been postponed for the next year.
- A parliamentary commission was established to monitor the country reintegration process, but also to analyze the reintegration policies, to work out proposals and recommendations in regard to the reintegration policies.

- The status of Adrian Glijin case who was arrested over a year ago by the TN de-facto authorities is still unclear. His rights and freedoms are still neglected. The case will be added to the agenda of all the relevant dialogue formats until it is definitively solved. In this regard Promo-LEX Association launched an online campaign to support Adrian while clarifying his status.
- Only 2 candidates have been registered for the elections of the de-facto leader on the left bank of the Nistru River. Vadim Krasnoselsky and Sergiu Pinzari, a member of the Grigoriopol Raion Council are the only contenders for the elections on December 12, after Anatoly Dirun and Nikolai Malyshev - were not accepted by the de-facto election commission under the pretext of insufficient number of valid signatures cumulated to support the candidates. Sergey Dechev withdrew his candidacy.
- New services are now available at vehicle registration units on the left bank, where people can the certificates confirming the state identification number (IDNO). Also, the time needed to issue the neutral-design registration certificate was shortened to three and five workdays.

2.2 Economic and social update

- The NBS published [analysis of monetary poverty and well-being of households with children in 2020](#). The data suggest that public health outbreak coupled with drought and economic crisis negatively affected many households (HHs), but most notably families with children. As absolute poverty rate grew from 25.2 in 2019 to 26.8 in 2020, the share of children in poverty also grew reaching 10% in 2020. More than one third (35.7%) of children in rural area live in absolute poverty while the share of poor children in urban areas is substantially lower (12.5%). Vulnerability of households grows with every additional child born. In 2020 the highest poverty rate was amongst households with 3+ families (42.1%) versus HHs with only one child (19.5%). Noteworthy that about one third (31.3%) of single parent families also live in poverty. All social allocations (pensions, child allowance and Ajutor Social) contributed by 4.9% to poverty reduction of households with children in 2020. However, the labour migration is still widely spread and continues to contribute to poverty reduction. In 2020 the poverty rate of children with labour migrant parent(s) was by 4% lower than that with both parents present in the household (26.6%). Overall, 14.4% of all Moldovan children had at least one parent left the country as labour migrant in 2020.
- The average monthly salary (9,176 MDL) grew by 13.6% in Q3 2021 compared to the same period of previous year. The highest salaries are in the ICT sector (2,1704 MDL), insurance and finance (16,685 MDL) and energy, heating and water supply (14,690 MDL) while the lowest salaries are in catering and accommodation (5,706), agriculture (6,126) and arts and recreation (6,169). The highest salary growth was in real sector of the economy – 14.9% while in public sector the salaries grew by only 8.9% (in Q3 2021 vs 2020).
- In October 2021 inflation rate spiked to 8.84% y.o.y and the [NBM forecast](#) suggests that the upward trend will continue reaching 15.1% by Q2 2022. Inflation in October 2021 was caused primarily by higher food prices (12.7%) and non-food prices went up by roughly 10%, while prices for services grew moderately – by 1.64% versus the same period of 2020. Industrial producers' prices went up by 7.7% in October 2021 versus the same period of 2020 being pushed by manufacturing sector.
- The tourism sector showed good signs of recovery in Q3 2021 yet it reached only a partial recovery versus pre-Covid year. The majority of tourists are Moldova's residents (64.7%) while incoming tourists account for slightly over one third (35.3%). The highest share of non-resident tourists comes from Romania (almost one third) followed by Russia (12.4%), Ukraine (11.5%) and USA (7.2%). With this, utilization rate of accommodation was quite low in 2021 – only 19%, while average length of stay for local tourists was 6.5 days and for incoming tourists – 3.2 days.
- The exports in September 2021 increased by almost a quarter (24.8%) compared to August 2021, however imports grew only by 16.5% in the same time. If to compare based on the year-to-year basis, exports grew by 21.1% in Q3 2021 while imports increased more substantially – by 32.4% versus the same period of 2020.

3 UN Social and Economic Response and Recovery Portfolio update

Please access <https://covid19response.un.md/> to see the Plan and the Project Portfolio in more detail, including on-going projects and initiatives still requiring financing.

3.1 Pillar 1: HEALTH FIRST: protecting health services and systems during the crisis

- COVAX donated 50,400 doses of Moderna vaccine that arrived in the country on 27 November 2021. The donation is part of the Round 8 COVAX allocation of COVID19 vaccine.
- UNICEF supported procurement and delivery of 108 refrigerators VLS 204A, including for Transnistria region. Additional 169 refrigerators to come in the next weeks. Refrigerators will replace the old chain equipment at the level of the primary health care. UNICEF Moldova contracted the Center for Policies and Analytics in Healthcare to conduct a qualitative study among vaccination target groups on attitudes related to anti-COVID-19 vaccination. The study design and protocols were cleared by the National Ethical Committee and data collection started.
- The Dialogues on health and well-being (1-3 Dec 2021) with high-level representatives and main financial, health, social and education stakeholders as well representatives from partner organizations and civil society will touch upon the current health issues and set the direction for future health system development, to build connections and promote enhanced political and financial commitments for a more coherent health system strengthen. These dialogues with relevant health partners address the inclusive approaches and accountability for results and is an effort from WHO EURO and the Ministry of Health to provide national stakeholders with the necessary guidance on the SDGs and their impact on broader health goals. This is part of the vision of the WHO European Programme of Work, 2020–2025 – “United Action for Better Health in Europe”.
- The National Deployment COVID-19 Vaccination Plan (NDVP) was updated according to international requirements and based on the selected assessments assessment in order to update key targets for medium and long term as well as implement/revise some mechanisms such as financing, data collection and integration. The activity was done in partnership of National counterparts, UNICEF and WHO.
- Development of the scenarios for improvement of the Pharmaceutical Supply Management (PSM) system in the Republic of Moldova is ongoing. The national action plan aligned to the Ministry of Health priorities and international experience will be discussed during upcoming Round table discussion followed by the subsequent legal framework update.
- The assessment of the emergency and critical care facilities has been conducted (22-26 Nov 2021) during in-country mission by a team of international and national experts. During the field mission the updated in COVID-19 WHO Hospital Emergency Unit Assessment tool was tested in 9 hospitals (2 Republican, 2 Municipal and 5 Regional), further adjusted tool will be applied in all 60 hospitals.
- The nation-wide X-Ray assessment in hospitals was initiated and the national expert is working to finalize the tailored tools and checklists. The work is performed under the international expert guidance and support from CPS-AMO technical unit from WHO Europe.
- 18 cycles of hybrid (online and face-to-face) trainings on the severe COVID-19 clinical case management were conducted for up 620 ICU and primary health care professionals from 37 administrative territories. Other 4 on-line trainings on COVID-19 clinical case management (Clinical case management protocol, 6th edition) for more than 1800 health care workers from community, district, municipal and the national health care facilities, including hospitals have been organized with WHO support.
- The Ministry of Health, National Agency for Public Health and Information Technology and Cyber Security Service (STISC) in collaboration with WHO CO have been working on improvement of the information systems from Health Sector under e-health with accent on Information Immunization System (IIS) integrated in information system for surveillance of communicable diseases and public health events (IS CDSPHE). The support will leverage the development of legal framework and will enhance technical development of overall health information systems.

- The Laboratory Information System (LIS) for 12 national public health laboratories is in the process of installation and will be interconnected with IS CDSPHE. The prototype of the reengineered national (electronic) surveillance system for communicable diseases and public health events with M-connect features was presented to the national stakeholders.
- First latest generation sequencer for the identification of SARS-CoV-2 virus mutation variants by the viral genome sequencing method was purchased and donated to the Republic of Moldova by the WHO. The donation is part of the European Union-funded initiative "Solidarity for Health". Total amount of the donation is USD 433.000. The results of the sequencing data will be integrated in the national surveillance system and correlated with the cases of COVID-19 for monitoring the mutations of the SARS-CoV-2 virus on the territory of the Republic of Moldova.
- Several trainings on the genome sequencing equipment utilization, genome data collection analysis and compilation in the GISAID platform (global initiative on sharing avian flu data (GISAID) was conducted for the staff of the National Reference Laboratory of the NAPH.
- The national public health laboratory capacities for COVID-19 testing using molecular biology were expanded with enrolment of 2 public health laboratories in Soroca and Comrat districts. Based on the Strategy developed with WHO support 5 public health laboratories now performing the PCR tests in their districts other two are in the process of refurbishment.
- In the national sentinel surveillance for ILI, ARI and Severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) for influenza and COVID-19, from ~ 50 samples weekly collected have been identified the following viruses: SARS-CoV-2, A(H3N2), Adenoviruses, RSV, Rhinovirus. Weekly data are submitted on the global surveillance platforms and TESSY.
- With support of WHO CO a comprehensive assessment of the 10 regional vaccine warehouses from public health centers was conducted by professional engineers and specialists. The aim of the project is to conduct the assessment of the back-up supply for cold chain equipment needs of the regional vaccine warehouse and regional lab equipment from Republic of Moldova and to verify the installation equipment meet the requirements after being installed.
- Weekly scientific newsletter with regards to the COVID-19 immunization activities have been developed with support of WHO, National Agency for Public Health and sent to all members of COVID-19 Task Force (MoH, NAPH) and RCCE.
- A new vaccination platform is establishing with WHO aiming at coordination of the national information campaign for COVID-19 vaccination of discharged people from the hospitals. Expanding the COVID-19 vaccine availability via these settings can increase access to vaccination services and improve vaccine coverage.
- WHO CO has provided technical support in capacity building of health care workers from the health care facilities, including from Transnistria region to improve childcare and PHC services in management of anaphylaxis cases. As first step, immunization and pediatric coordinators from each of the region from Transnistria will be trained in high performance simulation center from State Medical and Pharmacy University "Nicolae Testemițanu".
- The World Antimicrobial Awareness Week (18-24 Nov) was extended as one month communication campaign. The high-level round table discussion on the Republic of Moldova Parliament platform was organized in order to raise the awareness on the antimicrobial resistance as an upcoming public health threat. The 2021 theme was "Spread Awareness, Stop Resistance". The Draft of the AMR Program and action plan have been revised by the national experts and will be promoted to be approved by the Government. The technical meeting on Antimicrobial Stewardship program implementation took place have to be piloting in two national institutions with WHO technical guidance.
- The 1st edition of the National Conference with International participation the One Health approach in a Changing World have been conducted during 04-05 November 2021 with more than 150 participants from 10 countries with WHO support and technical guidance. The One health approach implementation

experiences have been shared and 6 satellite events have addressed specific aspects of the surveillance of zoonotic diseases and antimicrobial resistance, health and environmental issues.

Procurement

- With the support of WHO the Centralized Public Procurement Center in Health have received IT-equipment for better operation of the institution, especially to use the special software. 21 PCs, 23 UPSs and 2 Server PCs worth USD 15,300 would help in operating data, generating analytical statistical reports and procurement contracts which will significantly improve existing information system.
- Under the immunization programme the National Vaccine Warehouse of the National Agency for Public Health have been equipped with backup power supply (diesel generator) worth USD 13,000. The device will help to protect warehouse's vaccine cooling systems and electronic equipment against damages from unexpected power failures.

3.2 Pillar 2: PROTECTING PEOPLE: Social protection and basic services

- With UNDP and Sweden assistance, a distance [learning platform](#) for the business sector was launched to support, facilitating rapid and easy access during the pandemic to learning opportunities and information necessary to support and extend their activity
- Within the EU-CBM Programme implemented by UNDP, professionals from both riverbanks were informed on the peculiarities of working with parents in the context of hybrid and inclusive education, by the thematic platform of education.

3.3 Pillar 3: ECONOMIC RESPONSE & RECOVERY: Protecting jobs, small and medium-sized enterprises, and the informal sector and workers

- With UNDP, UK and Sweden assistance, private sector companies enhanced their production, promotion, and export capacity, through 3 masters-classes on export opportunities to Romania and Italy, and food processing techniques; supply of equipment; online promotion via companies' websites; and coaching for quality certifications.
- With UNDP and SDC support, over 40 start-up entrepreneurs from 12 emerging touristic destinations from all Moldovan regions have been capacitated to streamline and rationalize their business processes through a comprehensive technical assistance package (trainings and internal study visits); and over 100 entrepreneurs from 32 partner communities have been initiated in accessing financing opportunities for business development.

3.4 Pillar 4: MACROECONOMIC RESPONSE AND MULTILATERAL COLLABORATION

- As a result of COVID-19 outbreak effects in agriculture, farmers are looking for innovative solutions in order to overcome the existing challenges. In this sense, FAO together with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry and with the support of NGO "Gradina Moldovei" organized the first international conference on the topic of "Agroecology: an opportunity for resilient agriculture and food systems" in Moldova. The event took place on 22nd of November and was dedicated to agroecology as an integrated approach for sustainable production and healthy nutrition. The conference was focused on presentation and broad discussions about the benefits and opportunities for application/adoption of the 10 elements of agroecology by local farmers in the context of the overarching goal to create sustainable food systems. As the transition to agroecology entails transformation in all food system sectors, the event engaged all relevant sectors and different stakeholders, including consumers, small-scale food producers, and policy makers to raise awareness and to create a supportive policy environment for sustainable food systems transformation in view of climate change and COVID-19 challenges. The event was organized within the framework of the World Food Day celebration in Moldova.

4 Communications and Advocacy

- WHO provided support to national authorities to organize the COVID-19 vaccination week in the Republic of Moldova, there dozens of volunteers, representatives of local public authorities and Parliament, the Ministry of Defense and the subdivisions of the Ministry of Interior, territorial public health centers and medical staff go from door to door for to inform citizens about the benefits of vaccination and the dangers of COVID-19. WHO, together with partners, the European Union and USAID, support all efforts of health authorities to inform and mobilize citizens for COVID-19 vaccination. The information materials on COVID-19 vaccines advantages were produced with the support of the European Union in the Republic of Moldova (more than 400.000 flyers), and the volunteer teams were equipped with vests thanks to USAID Moldova. The volunteer teams aimed to cover 172 localities of the country with the lowest vaccination coverage rate in the districts of Anenii Noi, Cahul, Calarasi, Drochia, Falesti, Ungheni, Ialoveni, Sangerei, Orhei, Leova, Hancesti, Glodeni, Floresti, Falesti, Cău , Cimișlia, Cantemir, Criuleni, Briceni.
- WHO launched 2 creative video spots on COVID-19 vaccination and general public health measures with participation of the leading influencer and actor, Emilian Crețu. The videos were produced with EU support.
Video 1 COVID-19 Vaccination – <https://fb.watch/9aAvjBpFBI/> - 696.000 views
Video 2 COVID-19 public health rules - <https://fb.watch/9aATN1iGDm/>
- WHO produced a series of video tutorials with main message Vaccines save lives! With participation of well-known persons, MPs, singers, actors, etc.
<https://fb.watch/9aB3oXcTpK/>
<https://fb.watch/9aB63Owl-M/>
<https://fb.watch/9aB9ggCP4H/>
<https://fb.watch/9aBdAVszJU/>
- WHO provides support in development and dissemination of the MoH newsletter on COVID-19 news & interviews, etc., created with WHO support -
https://msmps.gov.md/sites/default/files/buletinformativ/2020/nr_45/
- WHO presented the results for wave 6 of the COVID-19 behavioral insights study (data collection – October 2021) to the MoH team. Main conclusions: 41% find it EASY to avoid an infection with COVID-19, 32% Believe it's very likely they will be infected with COVID-19, 67% believe the pandemic is somewhat or VERY MEDIA HYPED, 56% think decisions taken are fair. Despite vaccines being available, more people feel it is harder to avoid getting infected. A significant portion of the population continues to feel negative emotional affect due to the pandemic. Among the unvaccinated, half of those with low intentions believe that vaccination will NOT help control the spread of COVID-19 and 60% say that getting vaccinated against COVID-19 is NOT important for their health.