

# **Coronavirus pandemic in the EU – Fundamental Rights Implications**

**Country:** Croatia

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# **1 Measures taken by government/public authorities**

## **1.1 Emergency laws/states of emergency**

As stated in the previous report, public debate challenged why the Government didn't declare a state of emergency, including the legality of measures ordered by the Civil Protection Headquarters. For that reason 16 citizens and politicians have submitted to the Constitutional Court constitutional reviews and constitutional claims to check whether decisions ordered by the Government and the National Civil Protection Headquarters are in accordance with the Constitution. According to available information, the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia is currently awaiting the Government's response on 16 proposals of constitutional review and claims. Three, as confirmed to web portal Telegram by the Constitutional Court, relate to the constitutional review of laws related to the coronavirus pandemic - the amended Civil Protection System Act and the Law on the Protection of the Population from Infectious Diseases. Other proposals have been made due to a series of decisions by the National Civil Protection Headquarters since the start of the pandemic<sup>1</sup>.

## **1.2 Measures affecting the general population**

### **1.2.1 Social distancing**

As explained in the last reporting period, following the Decision from 24 April 2020<sup>2</sup>, strict measures of physical distance require avoiding close personal contact at a distance of at least two (2) meters indoors and one (1) meter outdoors. The Decision includes measures that gradually allowed for certain types of events and gatherings to be held and services to be provided. From 27 April stores that are not within shopping malls were reopened, as well as libraries, museums, galleries and bookstores. From 4 May provision of services that include close contact to the customer (hairdressers, beauticians, barbers) was allowed and from 2 May religious gatherings as well, but the Decision keeps the ban on holding all public events and gatherings of more than five persons in one place. Non-suspended businesses and organizers of public events and gatherings are obliged to comply with all general anti-epidemic measures and specific recommendations and instructions published by the Croatian Institute of Public Health which include physical distance of 2 meters in all directions and other protective and disinfection measures. Recommendations for stores which started working, as well as museums, galleries and other exhibition areas, include restriction of number of customers to 15 customers on 100m<sup>2</sup> net and other social distancing and disinfection measures. The third phase, starting on 11 May, allowed reopening of shopping centres, reopening of hospitality premises but exclusively providing their services in outside terraces in compliance with epidemiological measures, reopening of hospitality services in accommodation premises as well but only to staying guests, reopening of national and nature parks and expansion of conditions for e-passes.

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<sup>1</sup> Telegram.hr, Article "A bunch of people are asking the Constitutional court to overturn the decisions of the National Civil Protection Headquarters: Our constitutional rights have been violated", 7 May 2020, link available at: <https://www.telegram.hr/politika-kriminal/hrpa-ljudi-od-ustavnog-suda-trazi-da-srusi-odluke-stozera-povrijedena-su-nam-ustavna-prava/#>

<sup>2</sup> Civil Protection Headquarters, Decision on necessary measures to limit social gatherings, work in commerce, services sector and holding of sports and cultural events during the duration of declared epidemic of the disease COVID-19, 24 April 2020, available at: [https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF\\_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20nuz%CC%8Cna%20mjera%20ogranic%CC%8Cavanja.pdf](https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20nuz%CC%8Cna%20mjera%20ogranic%CC%8Cavanja.pdf)

As of 11 May, the ban on temporary leaving the place of residence and permanent residence in the Republic of Croatia is lifted<sup>3</sup>. This means that citizens no longer need e-passes to travel to another city or municipality. The island of Brač<sup>4</sup> was excluded from the decision, where these measures - due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 disease outbreak on the island - are still valid.

As of 11 May, the decision on the necessary measures to restrict social gatherings, work in trade, service activities and holding sports and cultural events is also changed<sup>5</sup>. From 13 May, all training fields and gyms can operate, and swimming pools can start operating from 18 May. The Decision also allows gathering of up to 40 people in one place.

On 27 May, the Civil Protection Headquarters made three decisions: *Decision on amendments to the Decision on the necessary measures to limit social gatherings, work in the trade, service trade and holding of sports and cultural events for the duration of the declared epidemic disease Covid-19*<sup>6</sup>; *Decision on amending the Decision on the manner of holding funerals and final farewells*<sup>7</sup>; *Decision on amendments to the Decision on measures for marriage and life partnership*<sup>8</sup>. According to these decisions, the ban on public events and gatherings with more than 40 people is lifted, and the number of people who can be present at certain public events and gatherings will be determined by the recommendations and instructions of the Croatian Institute of Public Health, together with other anti-epidemic measures. Furthermore, strict measures of physical distance now require avoiding close personal contact at a distance of at least one and a half (1,5) meters indoors and one (1) meter outdoors. Sports competitions will be held without the presence of spectators, from 30 May in the open air and from 13 June indoors. As of 29 May, the restriction that only family members and a representative of the religious community may attend the final farewell has been lifted, as well as the ban on publishing the place and time of the final farewell. Funerals and final farewells continue to be held in compliance with general anti-epidemic measures and the recommendations and instructions

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<sup>3</sup> Civil Protection Headquarters, Decision on repealing the Decision on the prohibition of leaving the place of residence and permanent residence in the Republic of Croatia, 10 May 2020, available at: [https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF\\_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20stavljanje%20izvan%20snage%20Odluke%20o%20zabrani%20napu%C5%A1tanja.pdf](https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20stavljanje%20izvan%20snage%20Odluke%20o%20zabrani%20napu%C5%A1tanja.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Civil Protection Headquarters, Decision on the introduction of the necessary epidemiological measure for the island of Brač, 10 May 2020, available at: [https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF\\_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20nu%C5%BEnje%20mjere%20Bra%C4%8D.pdf](https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20nu%C5%BEnje%20mjere%20Bra%C4%8D.pdf)

The epidemiological measures for the island of Brač last 14 days, starting on 8 May 2020.

<sup>5</sup> Civil Protection Headquarters, Decision amending the Decision on necessary measures to restrict social gatherings, work in trade, service activities and the holding of sports and cultural events during the declared epidemic of the disease COVID-19, 10 May 2020, available at: [https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF\\_ZA%20WEB/Izmjena%20Odluke%20-%20nu%C5%BEnim%20mjerama....pdf](https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF_ZA%20WEB/Izmjena%20Odluke%20-%20nu%C5%BEnim%20mjerama....pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Civil Protection Headquarters, Decision on amendments to the Decision on the necessary measures to limit social gatherings, work in the trade, service trade and holding of sports and cultural events for the duration of the declared epidemic disease Covid-19, 27 May 2020, available at: [https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF\\_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20mjere%20dru%C5%A1tvena%20okupljanja%20-%205.%20izmjena.pdf](https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20mjere%20dru%C5%A1tvena%20okupljanja%20-%205.%20izmjena.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Civil Protection Headquarters, Decision on amending the Decision on the manner of holding funerals and final farewells, 27 May 2020, available at: [https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF\\_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20sprovedi-3.%20izmjena.pdf](https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20sprovedi-3.%20izmjena.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Civil protection Headquarters, Decision on amendments to the Decision on measures for marriage and life partnership, 27 May 2020, available at: [https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF\\_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20brak%20i%20%C5%BE.%20partnerstvo%20-%203.%20izmjena.pdf](https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20brak%20i%20%C5%BE.%20partnerstvo%20-%203.%20izmjena.pdf)

of the Croatian Institute of Public Health. As of 29 May, marriage and life partnership ceremonies may be attended by persons other than family and witnesses, and the ban on wedding celebrations has been lifted. Marriages and life partnerships, as well as wedding ceremonies will be held in compliance with general anti-epidemic measures and recommendations and instructions of the Croatian Institute of Public Health.

Persons in self-isolation must strictly follow the instructions given to them. Measures are still in place to reduce the introduction of the disease into the population and strengthen control over the spread of coronavirus. The Civil protection headquarters recommends to follow prevention measures and avoid touching one's eyes, nose and mouth.<sup>9</sup>

According to the Article 76a of the Law on the Protection of the Population from Infectious Diseases<sup>10</sup>, a person could be fined for a misdemeanour offense in the amount of HRK 8.000-15.000 if the person fails to comply with a safety measure of self-isolation and placing in quarantine. For any violation of these provisions, the sanitary inspector of the State Inspectorate may, on the spot, collect a fine in the amount of HRK 5.000. The violation of self-isolation measures is controlled by the Ministry of the Interior which passes on the information to the State Inspectorate and inspectors then file misdemeanour warrants.<sup>11</sup>

## 1.2.2 Education

The National Centre for External Evaluation of Education published a schedule of the summer term of State Matura graduation exams which will take place between 8 June and 3 July. The schedule is based on instructions for conducting the exams during the COVID-19 pandemic, given by the Croatian Public Health Institute<sup>12</sup>. The instructions contain measures to be taken in order to prevent the virus from spreading, such as disinfecting the facilities, reducing the number of pupils taking the test in the same room and ensuring a distance of 2 meters between persons. The instructions also regulate the adjustments of examination technology and special conditions for pupils with disabilities and chronic illnesses, including the requirements for engaging personal assistants and for taking the test at home or in separate rooms<sup>13</sup>. On 12 May, the Ministry of Science and Education administered a trial online essay task for secondary school graduates, so as to prepare them for State Matura and to test the possibilities of conducting the examination online. The online essay task was adapted for pupils with disabilities through the usage of appropriate textual form and font size, provision of extra time for submission and the option of using a screen reader<sup>14</sup>. To provide more technical support to pupils in

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.koronavirus.hr/najnovije/bez-novooboljelih-u-posljednja-24-sata/35>

<sup>10</sup> Republic of Croatia, Law on the Protection of the Population from Infectious Diseases (OG 79/07, 113/08, 43/09, 130/17, 47/20), Article 76.a and 79.

<sup>11</sup> T-portal news, Police have a new information system that enables the control of self-isolation measures. We asked how it functions, 16 March 2020, available at: : <https://www.tportal.hr/tehnolo/clanak/policija-ima-novi-informacijski-sustav-koji-im-omogucava-kontrolu-mjera-samoizolacije-pitali-smo-kako-on-funkcionira-foto-20200316>

<sup>12</sup> Croatia, National Centre for External Evaluation of Education, published on May 8<sup>th</sup>, available at: [https://www.ncvvo.hr/kalendar-i-vremenik-polaganja-ispita-drzavne-mature-u-sk-god-2019-2020-ljetni-rok-novo/?fbclid=IwAR2tsvEJNV1EIyXHziJHrBJ69I7foSAvtFqGD95CUkZh\\_ivo4mtna6AtCU](https://www.ncvvo.hr/kalendar-i-vremenik-polaganja-ispita-drzavne-mature-u-sk-god-2019-2020-ljetni-rok-novo/?fbclid=IwAR2tsvEJNV1EIyXHziJHrBJ69I7foSAvtFqGD95CUkZh_ivo4mtna6AtCU)

<sup>13</sup> Croatia, Croatian Public Health Institute, published on May 8<sup>th</sup>, available at: [https://www.hzjz.hr/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Upute-za-provedbu-drzavne-mature-tijekom-epidemije-koronavirusa\\_I\\_BLOK.pdf](https://www.hzjz.hr/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Upute-za-provedbu-drzavne-mature-tijekom-epidemije-koronavirusa_I_BLOK.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> Croatia, Ministry of Science and Education, published on May 12<sup>th</sup>, available at: <https://mzo.gov.hr/vijesti/maturanti-danas-pisu-probni-online-esej/3720>

rural areas, the Ministry of Science and Education announced the allocation of 15.334.000,00 kunas to 1.137 branch schools for the purpose of purchasing laptops and hybrid computers<sup>15</sup>.

Only lower grade children are attending classes in schools (children from 1st to 4th grade of elementary school), while the rest of the children will end the school year through online classes. High school graduates will enter schools only to take the State Matura exams, after the school year has ended<sup>16</sup>. Upon reintroducing classroom learning for smaller groups (9 children per group) of preschool and lower-grade elementary school children on 11 May, the Ombudswoman for Children remarked that this decision neglected the needs of pupils with developmental disabilities. She warned that upper-grade children with developmental disabilities might have difficulties participating in distance learning without the support of their parents, who began returning to their workplaces. Therefore, she appealed to the government to ensure classroom learning for upper-grade children with developmental disabilities, as well as to further adjust distance learning for this group<sup>17</sup>. On 20 May, the Croatian Public Health Institute published new *Instructions for the prevention and suppression of the COVID-19 epidemic related to the work of preschool facilities and classroom teaching from 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> grade, special class divisions and work with children with disabilities who have a teaching assistant*<sup>18</sup>, allowing learning groups between 15 and 20 children. Children with disabilities attending grades between 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> may also return to classrooms if their schools provide adequate conditions and learning assistants<sup>19</sup>. The minister's advisor Marko Košiček stated that parents are entitled to refuse to send their children to school due to concerns regarding coronavirus and that distance learning will continue until the beginning of June<sup>20</sup>. Elementary school pupils will continue to have free access to Matific, a digital math learning programme, until 31 August<sup>21</sup>. Likewise, pupils will be able to enrol into secondary schools online<sup>22</sup>.

The minister of science and education, Blaženka Divjak reported that the World Bank has pointed to Croatia as a good example of the digital transformation of schools and education, and as a country that has responded very well to educational challenges in the "corona crisis"<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> Croatia, Ministry of Science and Education, published on May 20<sup>th</sup>, available at: <https://mzo.gov.hr/vijesti/odluka-o-dodjeli-sredstava-osnovnim-skolama-za-nabavu-laptopa-hibridnih-racunala-za-podrucne-skole/3737>

<sup>16</sup> Croatia, School for Life official website, published on 29 May, available at:

<https://skolazazivot.hr/povratak-u-skolu-cesta-pitanja-i-odgovori-29-5-2020/>

<sup>17</sup> Croatia, Ombudswoman for Children, published on May 11<sup>th</sup>, available at: <https://dijete.hr/odluku-o-nacinu-provođenja-nastave-dopuniti-i-prilagoditi-djeci-s-teskocama/>

<sup>18</sup> Croatia, Croatian Public Health Institute, published on May 20<sup>th</sup>, available at: [https://www.hzjz.hr/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Upute\\_vrtici\\_skole.pdf](https://www.hzjz.hr/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Upute_vrtici_skole.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> Croatia, Ministry of Science and Education, published on May 25<sup>th</sup>, available at:

<https://mzo.gov.hr/vijesti/povratak-u-skole/3744>

<sup>20</sup> Croatia, N1 television, published on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, available at: <http://hr.n1info.com/Vijesti/a511209/Uvaziti-se-i-subjektivni-i-objektivni-razlozi-nedolaska-djeteta-u-skolu.html>

<sup>21</sup> Croatia, Ministry of Science and Education, published on May 27<sup>th</sup>, available at:

<https://mzo.gov.hr/vijesti/ucenicima-i-uciteljima-produzen-besplatan-pristup-online-digitalni-program-za-vježbanje-matematike-matific-do-kraja-kolovoza/3746>

<sup>22</sup> Croatia, Ministry of Science and Education, published on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, available at:

<https://mzo.gov.hr/vijesti/mzo-upisi-u-srednje-skole-online-ne-mora-se-vise-fizicki-doci-u-skole/3742>

<sup>23</sup> Croatia, Ministry of Science and Education, published on May 28<sup>th</sup>, available at:

<https://mzo.gov.hr/vijesti/divjak-svjetska-banka-hrvatsku-istaknula-kao-dobar-primjer-digitalizacije-skola/3759>

### 1.2.3 Work

Following the Decision from 24 April<sup>24</sup>, measures to launch economic and other activities took place in three phases. From 27 April stores that are not within shopping malls were reopened, as well as libraries, museums, galleries and bookstores. From 4 May provision of services that include close contact to the customer (hairdressers, beauticians, barbers) was allowed. From 11 May, shopping centres were reopened, hospitality premises (exclusively providing their services in outside terraces in compliance with epidemiological measures) and hospitality services in accommodation premises were reopened as well but only to staying guests, as well as national and nature parks.

An addendum to the Collective Agreement for Health Care and Health Insurance was signed at the Ministry of Health on 5 May, according to which, from 1 April, allowances for working conditions, responsibilities and scientific titles for health workers will be calculated for overtime as well.<sup>25</sup>

On 21 May, negotiations between the Government and the trade unions on concluding amendments to the current collective and basic collective agreement with representatives of public and state services continued at the Ministry of Labour and Pensions. Like the first time, there were three meetings, first with representatives of the public service unions; then with representatives of trade unions of science and higher education, teachers and employees in secondary school; and with representatives of civil services. After the public and state service unions rejected the Government's proposal to suspend substantive rights in 2020 (Christmas bonus, recourse, jubilee award and a two plus two percent increase), the Government came up with a new proposal. The government has offered unions not to raise the base in June and October by two plus two percent, but to get it in January 2021, and to negotiate a Christmas bonus only in the fall. The jubilee award would remain as before. An attempt would be made to find a model to replace the recourse with a *CRO card*<sup>26,27</sup>. As of 1 June, the *Cro card* will be introduced, through which employers will be able to pay the amount of HRK 2,500 (tax-free), which will be allowed to be spent exclusively on paying for tourist and catering services. With the *Cro card* it will not be possible to withdraw cash, and unfortunately it will not be possible to use it online, but only through POS devices.<sup>28</sup>

As of 26 May, following the *Decision amending the Decision on working hours and manner of work in the activity of trade during the declared epidemic of the disease COVID-19*<sup>29</sup>, the ban on working on

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<sup>24</sup> Civil Protection Headquarters, Decision on necessary measures to limit social gatherings, work in commerce, services sector and holding of sports and cultural events during the duration of declared epidemic of the disease COVID-19, 24 April 2020, available at: [https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF\\_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20nuz%CC%8Cna%20mjera%20ogranic%CC%8Cvanja.pdf](https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20nuz%CC%8Cna%20mjera%20ogranic%CC%8Cvanja.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> From April 1, the calculation of allowances for overtime work in health care, published on 5 May 2020, available at: <https://www.koronavirus.hr/najnovije/od-1-travnja-obracun-dodataka-na-prekovremeni-rad-u-zdravstvu/563>

<sup>26</sup> Ministry of Tourism, GOVERNMENT: Cro card to be introduced, published on 18 December 2019, available at: <https://mint.gov.hr/vijesti/vlada-uvodi-se-cro-kartica/20743>

<sup>27</sup> Union of Autonomous Trade Unions of Croatia, Negotiations with public and state sector unions continued, published on 22 May 2020, available at: <http://www.sssh.hr/hr/vise/granski-sindikati-74/nastavljeni-pregovori-sa-sindikatom-javnoga-i-drzavnoga-sektora-4394>

<sup>28</sup> Portal hrturizam.hr, From June 1, the Cro card will be introduced, published on 4 May 2020, available at: <https://hrturizam.hr/od-01-lipnja-uvodi-se-cro-kartica/>

<sup>29</sup> Civil Protection Headquarters, Decision amending the Decision on working hours and manner of work in the activity of trade during the declared epidemic of the disease COVID-19, published on 26 May 2020, available at: <https://civilna->

Sundays is lifted. However, the Union of Autonomous Trade Unions of Croatia warned that the Labour Act clearly states that a worker must know his schedule at least seven days in advance, so working on 31 May would present a violation of the Labour Act.<sup>30</sup>

On 29 May, the Governing Board of the Croatian Employment Service has made a decision on *Amendments to the Terms and Conditions for the Use of Funds for the Implementation of Active Employment Policy Measures in 2020*. The most significant changes relate to the change in the criteria for the use of the measure Support for the preservation of jobs in activities affected by coronavirus for May for employers with more than 50 employees.<sup>31</sup>

The Workers' Initiative and Democratization Base (BRID) in collaboration with UNI Global Union as part of a global initiative to improve the working conditions of employees in the care and welfare sectors during April 2020 conducted a questionnaire on working conditions during the coronavirus epidemic. A questionnaire on working conditions was completed by a total of 219 workers employed in the private care sector, of which 102 were employed in private homes for the elderly and infirm, 57 employees in private home health care institutions and 60 employees in non-governmental organizations in the provision of home care and assistance to users. According to work positions, the largest number of participants in the questionnaire are nurses or medical technicians, the next group in number are caregivers and personal assistants, then geronto-hosts and physiotherapists, and a smaller number of employees in professional services or as support staff. Some of the results of the questionnaire are the following:

- security in the workplace: only 21,05% workers employed in private home health care facilities feels safe, and 26.32% of workers do not feel safe at all in their workplace;
- protective equipment and working conditions: more than a third of the questionnaire participants do not have enough protective equipment, among workers employed in private home health care facilities more than half of the survey participants point out that they do not have enough protective equipment, more than a third of the participants stated that they procured the protective equipment themselves, almost half of the participants stated that they were not educated by an expert on the proper use of protective equipment, 11% of participants stated that their salary was reduced;
- union presence: only 6% of the participants in the questionnaire stated that there is an active union at their employer, which confirms the assumption of extremely low union density in the sectors of care for the elderly and infirm and home care, which means that workers in these sectors are extremely unprotected from poor working conditions and violations of their workers' rights.<sup>32</sup>

The Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy, in accordance with the possibilities and availability, has regularly procured and distributed protective equipment and disinfectants (financed

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[zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF\\_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20oradnom%20vremenu%20i%20na%C4%8Dinu%20rada-26.5.2020.pdf](http://zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20oradnom%20vremenu%20i%20na%C4%8Dinu%20rada-26.5.2020.pdf)

<sup>30</sup> Union of Autonomous Trade Unions of Croatia, If retail chains operate this Sunday, they will violate the Labor Act and the penalties are rigorous, published on 27 May 2020, available at: <http://www.sssh.hr/hr/vise/nacionalne-aktivnosti-72/ako-trgovacki-lanci-budu-radili-ove-nedjelje-krsit-ce-zakon-o-radu-a-kazne-su-rigorozne-4403>

<sup>31</sup> Croatian Employment Service, A new measure to preserve jobs for June and a change in the criteria for beneficiaries of the measure in May, published on 29 May, available at: <https://www.hzz.hr/novosti-priopcenja/nova-mjera-lipanj-2020-izmjena-kriterija-svibanj-poslodavci-50-zaposlenih.php>

<sup>32</sup> Portal Workers Rights (*Radnička prava*), Corona-crisis: insecurity and difficult working conditions in the care sector, published on 25 May 2020, available at: <http://radnickaprava.org/tekstovi/istrazivanja/korona-kriza-nesigurnost-i-teski-uvjeti-rada-u-sektoru-njege-i-skrbi>

from MDFYSP's funds, donations, Croatian Civil Protection Headquarters and in cooperation with UNICEF). On several occasions, the e-mail address [korona@mdomsp.hr](mailto:korona@mdomsp.hr) has been used to call on social services providers in the social welfare system to express interest in protective equipment such as protective masks, gloves, hand sanitizers, disinfection agents for all kinds of surfaces, 75% alcohol and equipment in case of need for isolation of beneficiaries in the facility of the social services provider - surgical caps, disposable coveralls, disposable overshoes, protective goggles, beds.

In the period from March 17 up to this date, with the aim to protect users, the MDFYSP distributed to the social service providers a total of 100,000 surgical masks, 105,000 cloth masks, 206,000 pairs of gloves, 2,800 surgical gowns, 2,511.56 liters of hand sanitizers, 48 liters of floor disinfectant cleaners (for dilution), 2,400 liters of alcohol and 52 kilograms of granular chlorine for disinfection.

According to the instructions of the Civil Protection Headquarters of the Republic of Croatia dated April 14, 2020 in cooperation with the county level Civil Protection Headquarters, equipment was delivered to social services providers in order to ensure that all of them, in accordance with the services they provided to users at that time, were equipped with the necessary protective equipment to protect the health of both employees and users. Distribution was carried out on three occasions: April 14, 2020, April 23, 2020 and May 12, 2020. At the initiative of the MDFYSP, to all social services providers in all 3 terms was proposed distribution of the following equipment: 1,155,790 surgical masks, 47,237 FFP2 respirator masks, 45,540 protective gowns, 12,900 protective coveralls with hood, 46,602 visors, 46,572 protective goggles, 2,386,970 pairs of gloves, 34,050 shoe covers, 26,482 liters of air sanitizer, 22,705 liters of alcohol and 3,590 non-contact thermometers.

The adoption of the Decision on measures to restrict social gatherings, work in trade, service activities and holding sports and cultural events<sup>33</sup> on 19 March interrupted the work of "all cultural activities" and the "suspension of exhibitions, fashion shows and fairs" came into force. Despite the lack of greater media attention to the emerging problems within cultural production, there were consequences for all those working in the field of culture. Although this crisis affects both institutional and independent culture, the consequences will manifest differently. It will certainly be more disastrous for workers in the field of independent culture, which has so far been most marked by precariousness, part-time engagements, lack of basic labour rights and existential uncertainty. It can be assumed that the institutionalized cultural field, which is mostly financed from the local or state budget, will lose a large part of its program costs, but it is unlikely that there will be a sharper cut in jobs. Furthermore, the measure of assistance of the Ministry of Culture to independent artists affected only a small part of artists, and the criteria for obtaining support proved to be questionable.<sup>34</sup>

#### **1.2.4 Access to justice**

The Minister of Justice held a video conference with the President of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Croatia and presidents of municipal courts. They instructed the presidents of municipal courts to gradually return to the regular work of the courts in accordance with the instructions of the Croatian Institute of Public Health. The presidents of the courts reported on the work of the courts

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<sup>33</sup> Civil Protection Headquarters, Decision on the necessary measures to limit social gatherings, work in the trade, service trade and holding of sports and cultural events for the duration of the declared epidemic disease Covid-19 (OG 32/2020), 19 March 2020, available at: [https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2020\\_03\\_32\\_713.html](https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2020_03_32_713.html)

<sup>34</sup> Portal Workers Rights (*Radnička prava*), Domagoj Kučinić: Korona has shed light on the problems of precarious work in culture, published on 2 June 2020, available at: <http://radnickaprava.org/tekstovi/novosti/domagoj-kucinic-korona-je-rasvijetlila-probleme-prekarnog-rada-u-kulturi>



since 16 March, including a large number of resolved cases in which there was no need to hold a hearing, regular resolution of urgent cases and regular and efficient use of e-Communication. The courts expressed readiness for increased activity in the courts from 11 May in compliance with the prescribed protective measures.<sup>35</sup> Another video conference was held with presidents of county courts who informed that there were no problems in the functioning of the courts during the coronavirus epidemic even though they operated at a reduced capacity.<sup>36</sup>

Steps to lift measures or restrictions previously imposed on court proceedings are determined by each court individually through a decision on the organization of its work brought by the president of the court.

Given the entry into force of the third phase of the relaxation of epidemiological measures related to coronavirus pandemic, the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia at a session held on 12 May brought a *Decision repealing its Decision on the temporary possibility of submitting submissions related to the deadline* (constitutional complaints, appeals against the decision of the State Judicial Council etc.) by fax and e-mail which shall enter into force on 13 May 2020.<sup>37</sup> The Constitutional Court has also repealed its notification from 15 March on non-acceptance of submissions directly from the parties and declared that from 1 June all submissions and documentation can be submitted directly to the Constitutional Court in its seat or by registered mail.<sup>38</sup> Following a more favourable epidemiological situation in relation to coronavirus, on 15 May the President of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Croatia issued a decision on the organization of work of the Supreme Court. Sessions of judicial councils are held regularly in the court since 20 April. All court clerks and employees will perform their duties in court regularly from 11 May and court advisers from 25 May. Work from home is enabled only in specific circumstances determined by the instructions of the epidemiologic service. The following measures are applied for the protection of work of employees: physical distance, hygienic measures, space cleaning standards, airing and disinfection. Direct work with the parties will be performed only exceptionally with prior notice by e-mail or telephone, unless it is possible to address the request of the party without his/her presence. In case of arrival of the parties to the court's premises, a special reception area will be organized as well as respect of special epidemiologist measures. In cases of holding a public session of judicial councils with direct presence of several parties, the courtrooms will be organized in a way that a 2-meters distance between the participants of the proceedings is ensured.<sup>39</sup>

The President of the County Court in Zagreb brought a decision on 11 May according to which its Civil Department will hold judicial council sessions once a week as foreseen by the annual work schedule, but due to limited space two judicial councils will share one room by exchanging on even and uneven dates throughout the week. During their stay on the court premises all employees shall wear protective masks and part of the judges' work will be performed from home when possible. Hearings

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<sup>35</sup> Ministry of Justice, Video conference held with municipal courts presidents, 5 May 2020, available at: <https://pravosudje.gov.hr/vijesti/odrzana-videokonferencija-s-predsjednicima-opcinskih-sudova/21950>

<sup>36</sup> Ministry of Justice, Video conference held with county courts presidents, 15 May 2020, available at: <https://pravosudje.gov.hr/vijesti/odrzana-videokonferencija-s-predsjednicima-zupanijskih-sudova/21958>

<sup>37</sup> Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia, Decision on submissions, 12 May 2020, available at: [https://www.usud.hr/sites/default/files/dokumenti/Odluka\\_o\\_podnescima\\_od\\_12.5.2020.pdf](https://www.usud.hr/sites/default/files/dokumenti/Odluka_o_podnescima_od_12.5.2020.pdf)

<sup>38</sup> Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia, Notification, 28 May, available at: [https://www.usud.hr/sites/default/files/doc/Obavijest\\_o\\_podnescima\\_od\\_28.5.2020.pdf](https://www.usud.hr/sites/default/files/doc/Obavijest_o_podnescima_od_28.5.2020.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> Supreme Court of the Republic of Croatia, Decision on the organization of work of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Croatia, 15 May 2020, available at: <http://www.vsrh.hr/custompages/static/HRV/files/2020dok/Priopcenja/Odluka%20VSRH%2015.5.2020.%20-%20normalizacija%20rada%20u%20sudu%20od%2011.5.2020.pdf>

for its Criminal Department of 1st Instance, Department for Bureau for Combating Corruption and Organized Crime and War Crimes as well as Criminal Department of 2nd Instance begin on 11 May. All judges and officials shall wear face masks on the court premises. Protective masks shall be used during holding of public sessions and hearings by all the participants of the proceedings as well as public. In case that presence of the judges is not necessary, they are not obliged to come to the premises but they shall work from home instead. All the parties are obliged to sanitize their hands when entering the court premises and wear protective masks when they are inside, otherwise they will be banned from entering the building. Judicial police officer shall determine the identity of the person entering the court's premises and check through the application [covid.provjera@pravosudje.hr](mailto:covid.provjera@pravosudje.hr) whether self-isolation measure, quarantine or treatment of coronavirus infection is prescribed to this person, in which case he/she will be banned from entering the building. Judicial police officers will also measure each party's body temperature and they will be banned from entering in case that it exceeds 37.2 C.<sup>40</sup>

The Municipal Court in Rijeka introduced work in the morning and afternoon shift for all its employees from 18 May due to the increased scope of work, increased overflow of cases and the impossibility to accommodate and organize uninterrupted work of all judges, officials and employees. The measure will last as long as necessary.<sup>41</sup> The same measure was introduced in the Land Registry and Special Land Registry Departments of the Municipal Court in Split.<sup>42</sup> Additional example is Municipal Criminal Court in Zagreb, which brought a decision not to hold hearings in the period of 4-29 May, except for the cases where investigative prison was determined as well as older cases, whereby the criteria of number of participants in the case shall be respected together with social distancing measure of minimally 2 meters.<sup>43</sup>

The Ombudswoman of the Republic of Croatia has also warned that during the coronavirus epidemic, but also after the devastating earthquake that hit Zagreb, regular work of many state and public bodies, including the judiciary, was significantly hampered. As an efficient judiciary is one of the fundamental mechanisms for ensuring the rule of law, and thus respect for all guaranteed human rights and freedoms, she stressed that it is extremely important to ensure its best functioning in the new circumstances. Due to limited work, only urgent court activities, hearings and sessions of second-instance departments are performed, which can increase the number of cases in which the prosecution and execution of sentences will become statute-barred. It is also necessary to find a solution to the problem of parties who, due to inability to move freely and other reasons, will not be able to use suspensive remedies in a timely manner, such as appeals against judgments, decisions etc., or will miss preclusive deadlines for private lawsuits, taking over prosecution by the injured party and others. The Ombudswoman also stressed that it is important to ensure the functioning of free legal aid during the epidemic, in particular the timely receipt and resolution of requests for secondary free

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<sup>40</sup> County Court in Zagreb, Decision, 11 May 2020, available at: <http://sudovi.pravosudje.hr/zszg/img/File/Odluka%20o%20organizaciji%20rada.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> Ministry of Justice, Municipal Court in Rijeka introduced work in morning and afternoon shifts, 20 May 2020, available at: <https://pravosudje.gov.hr/vijesti/opcinski-sud-u-rijeci-uveo-rad-prije-i-poslije-podne/21964>

<sup>42</sup> Ministry of Justice, Land Registry and Special Land Registry Departments of the Municipal Court in Split introduced work in morning and afternoon shifts, 20 May 2020, available at: <https://pravosudje.gov.hr/vijesti/uveden-rad-prije-i-poslije-podne-zemljsnknjiznom-i-posebnom-zemljsnknjiznom-odjelu-opcinskog-suda-u-splitu/21963>

<sup>43</sup> Municipal Criminal Court in Croatia, Decision, 30 April 2020, available at: <https://sudovi.pravosudje.hr/oksz/img/File/Odluka%20od%2030%20travnja%202020.pdf>

legal aid and appeals since it is one of the preconditions for exercising the right to equal access to justice, fair trial and effective remedy for many citizens.<sup>44</sup>

Law on Intervention Measures in Enforcement and Insolvency Procedures throughout the Duration of Specific Circumstances adopted in urgent procedure entered into force on 1 May.<sup>45</sup> Due to special circumstances caused by the COVID-19 epidemic, it seeks to facilitate the position of natural persons whose part of the income is withheld for enforcement purposes on wages, pensions or other permanent money income, economic entities threatened with insolvency as well as grant beneficiaries for project implementation financed from national funds and/or the budget of the European Union and beneficiaries of assistance measures paid due to special circumstances.<sup>46</sup>

### 1.2.5 Freedom of movement

On 5 May, the Civil Protection Headquarters amended the *Decision banning entry into seaports and inland ports in the Republic of Croatia*, which now applies to yachts and boats in international navigation that have the obligation of self-isolation or quarantine.<sup>47</sup>

According to the *Decision on amendments to the Decision on the temporary ban on crossing the border crossings of the Republic of Croatia*<sup>48</sup>, published on 9 May, Croatian citizens are allowed to enter the Republic of Croatia or to go abroad, in compliance with the general and special recommendations of the Croatian Institute of Public Health. Additionally, when there are business reasons or economic interests, entry into the Republic of Croatia, in compliance with the recommendations of the Croatian Institute of Public Health, is also allowed to: citizens of EU Member States and members of their families; third-country nationals who are long-term residents under Council Directive 2003/109/EC;

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<sup>44</sup> Ombudswoman of the Republic of Croatia, Enabling efficient functioning of the judiciary also in extraordinary circumstances, 29 April 2020, available at: <https://www.ombudsman.hr/hr/omoguciti-ucinkovito-funkcioniranje-pravosuda-i-u-izvanrednim-okolnostima/>

<sup>45</sup> Law on Intervention Measures in Enforcement and Insolvency Procedures throughout the Duration of Specific Circumstances - *Zakon o interventnim mjerama u ovršnim i stečajnim postupcima za vrijeme trajanja posebnih okolnosti* (OG 53/20), available at: <https://zakon.hr/z/2553/Zakon-o-interventnim-mjerama-u-ovr%C5%A1nim-i-ste%C4%8Dajnim-postupcima-za-vrijeme-trajanja-posebnih-okolnosti>

<sup>46</sup> Informator, Intervention measures in enforcement and insolvency procedures throughout duration of special circumstances, 5 May 2020, available at: <https://informator.hr/vijesti/interventne-mjere-u-ovrsnim-i-stecajnim-postupcima-za-vrijeme-trajanja-posebnih-okolnosti>

<sup>47</sup> Civil Protection Headquarters, Decision on amendments to the Decision banning entry into seaports and inland ports in the Republic of Croatia, 5 May 2020, available at: [https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF\\_ZA%20WEB/2.%20Odluka%20o%20izmjeni%20Odluke%20o%20brodovima.pdf](https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF_ZA%20WEB/2.%20Odluka%20o%20izmjeni%20Odluke%20o%20brodovima.pdf); Decision banning entry into seaports and inland ports in the Republic of Croatia, 19 March 2020, available at: [https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF\\_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20kruzeri\\_2.pdf](https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20kruzeri_2.pdf)

<sup>48</sup> Civil Protection Headquarters, Decision on amendments to the Decision on the temporary ban on crossing the border crossings of the Republic of Croatia, 9 May 2020, available at: [https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF\\_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20o%20izmjenama%20i%20dopuni%20Odluke%20o%20privremenoj%20zabrani%20prelaska%20preko%20grani%C4%8Dnih%20prijelaza%20RH.pdf](https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20o%20izmjenama%20i%20dopuni%20Odluke%20o%20privremenoj%20zabrani%20prelaska%20preko%20grani%C4%8Dnih%20prijelaza%20RH.pdf); Decision on the temporary ban on crossing the border crossings of the Republic of Croatia, 19 March 2020, available at: [https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF\\_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20privremena%20zabrana%20prelaska%20preko%20grani%C4%8Dnih%20prijelaza%20RH.pdf](https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20privremena%20zabrana%20prelaska%20preko%20grani%C4%8Dnih%20prijelaza%20RH.pdf)

persons who have the right to reside under other EU directives or national law or who have national long-term visas.<sup>49</sup>

As of Monday, 11 May, the ban on temporary leaving the place of residence and permanent residence in the Republic of Croatia is lifted<sup>50</sup>. This means that citizens no longer need e-passes to travel to another city or municipality. The island of Brač<sup>51</sup> was excluded from the decision, where these measures - due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 disease outbreak on the island - are still valid.

People transiting through Croatia are still obliged to use the motorways. However, the obligation of truck drivers in transit through the Republic of Croatia to stop at certain rest areas ceases, which means that truck drivers in transit, without restrictions, can stop at rest areas located on certain transit routes.<sup>52</sup>

As of 21 May, all foreign citizens who intend to enter the Republic of Croatia, as well as Croatian citizens who do not reside or reside in the Republic of Croatia, can find all frequently asked questions and answers about the conditions of entry published on the official website of the Ministry of Interior under the category [UZG COVID](#). The website also provides an online inquiry form for additional inquiries. The web page and the inquiry form are at the moment available in Croatian, English and German.<sup>53</sup>

On 28 May, the Civil Protection Headquarters passed a *Decision amending the Decision on the temporary ban on crossing the border crossings of the Republic of Croatia*<sup>54</sup>. This Decision designates the Member States of the European Union (Czech Republic, Hungary, Republic of Austria, Republic of Estonia, Republic of Latvia, Republic of Lithuania, Republic of Poland, Republic of Slovenia, Federal Republic of Germany and Slovak Republic), whose citizens, due to the satisfactory epidemiological situation, will not have to prove the reason for their entry (business, economic, tourist, etc.) when entering the Republic of Croatia, but will be able to enter under the same conditions as before COVID-19, but still with epidemiological control, and with the obligation to comply with the general and special recommendations of the Croatian Institute of Public Health. For faster and easier crossing of the state border, all foreign nationals are advised to register via [entercroatia.mup.hr](#) website.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Changes in crossing the border crossings of the Republic of Croatia, published on 9 May, available at: <https://www.koronavirus.hr/najnovije/promjene-u-prelasku-preko-granicnih-prijelaza-republike-hrvatske/588>

<sup>50</sup> Civil Protection Headquarters, Decision on repealing the Decision on the prohibition of leaving the place of residence and permanent residence in the Republic of Croatia, 10 May 2020, available at: [https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF\\_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20stavljanje%20izvan%20snage%20Odluke%20o%20zabrani%20napu%C5%A1tanja.pdf](https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20stavljanje%20izvan%20snage%20Odluke%20o%20zabrani%20napu%C5%A1tanja.pdf)

<sup>51</sup> Civil Protection Headquarters, Decision on the introduction of the necessary epidemiological measure for the island of Brač, 10 May 2020, available at: [https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF\\_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20nu%C5%BEne%20mjere%20Bra%C4%8D.pdf](https://civilna-zastita.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/CIVILNA%20ZA%C5%A0TITA/PDF_ZA%20WEB/Odluka%20-%20nu%C5%BEne%20mjere%20Bra%C4%8D.pdf)

The epidemiological measures for the island of Brač last 14 days, starting on 8 May 2020.

<sup>52</sup> Obligation to use motorways during transit through the Republic of Croatia, published on 16 May 2020, available at: <https://www.koronavirus.hr/najnovije/obveza-koristenja-autocesta-prilikom-tranzita-kroz-rh/226>

<sup>53</sup> Border crossing on-line form, published on 21 May, available at: <https://www.koronavirus.hr/border-crossing-on-line-form/648>

<sup>54</sup> Civil Protection Headquarters, Decision amending the Decision on the temporary ban on crossing the border crossings of the Republic of Croatia (OG 64/2020), 28 May 2020, available at: [https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2020\\_05\\_64\\_1280.html](https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2020_05_64_1280.html)

<sup>55</sup> Easier and faster border crossing for certain countries, 28 May 2020, available at: <https://www.koronavirus.hr/najnovije/jednostavniji-i-brzi-prelazak-granice-za-odredjene-drzave/668>

There were no temporary suspensions or restrictions on procedures in regards to the asylum application procedures in Croatia.

### 1.3 Impact of measures on particular groups

- *victims of domestic violence,*

Since April, the Croatian government has been acknowledging the negative effects that isolation measures can have on women, children and the elderly who are exposed to domestic violence. Vesna Bedeković, the Minister for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy, publicly stated that an increase in domestic violence is expected, calling all citizens to report suspicions of domestic violence<sup>56</sup>. On 6 April, the ministry published a *Statement on measures in a situation of increased risk of domestic violence and child abuse*<sup>57</sup>, containing instructions for recognizing domestic violence, self-protection measures for victims (creating a safety plan, tracking the warning signs of violence etc.) and obligations of professionals in contact with victims. According to the statement, the ministry issued special instructions to all social welfare centres and family centres, organized 24-hour shifts in social welfare centres and formed mobile crisis teams. Official statistics of the Ministry of the Interior do not point to significant changes in the frequency of domestic violence<sup>58</sup>, however, civil society organizations indicated that victims are less likely to report violence in close proximity of the abuser<sup>59</sup>. The Ministry of the Interior has issued a public warning about increased risks of domestic and online violence against children during the coronavirus pandemic, referring citizens to report such violence via their online application Red Button<sup>60</sup>. Likewise, the ministry launched a campaign titled “Behind closed doors”, in order to raise public awareness of domestic violence during the pandemic, which continues in May<sup>61</sup>.

- *homeless people,*

During COVID-19 epidemic, *Care plan for homeless in the Republic of Croatia and homeless care plan in extreme winter conditions for 2019/2020*<sup>62</sup> is used. Homeless people were instructed to use public kitchens in compliance with hygienic measures and in compliance with space cleaning standards and other measures issued by the Croatian Institute of Public Health (respect for spatial distance, limited

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<sup>56</sup> Croatia, Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy, published on April 4<sup>th</sup>, available at: <https://vlada.gov.hr/vijesti/bedekovic-nema-povecanog-broja-prijava-nasilja-u-obitelji/29163>

<sup>57</sup> Croatia, Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy, published on April 6<sup>th</sup>, available at: <https://mdomsp.gov.hr/vijesti-8/priopcenje-o-postupanju-u-situaciji-pojecanog-rizika-od-nasilja-u-obitelji-i-zlostavljanja-i-zanemarivanja-djece-zbog-pojecanijih-mjera-izolacije-radi-suzbijanja-epidemije-covid-19/12696>

<sup>58</sup> Croatia, Ministry of the Interior, the *Violence Calendar* available at: <https://mup.gov.hr/kalendar-nasilja/283308>

<sup>59</sup> Croatia, N1 television, published on March 31<sup>st</sup>, available at: <http://hr.n1info.com/Crna-Kronika/a496343/Obiteljsko-nasilje-u-svijetu-je-eskaliralo-kakva-je-situacija-u-Hrvatskoj.html>

<sup>60</sup> Croatia, Ministry of the Interior, available at: <https://mup.gov.hr/online-prijave/online-prijava-zlostavljanja-djeteta-red-button/sigurnost-djece-i-obitelji-u-doba-koronavirusa/286139>

<sup>61</sup> Croatia, Ministry of the Interior, published on April 10<sup>th</sup>, available at: <https://policija.gov.hr/vijesti/iza-ovih-vrata-zivi-mia/4591>

<sup>62</sup> Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy, *Care plan for homeless in the Republic of Croatia and homeless care plan in extreme winter conditions for 2019/2020*, available at: <https://mdomsp.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/Vijesti2019/Zbrinjavanje%20besku%C4%87nika%202019-2020.pdf>

number of persons present in the room at the same time, etc.).<sup>63</sup> The City of Zagreb, in accordance with the obligation prescribed by the Social Welfare Act, provides accommodation for the homeless in cooperation with the Centre for Social Welfare Zagreb, the Croatian Red Cross, the City Society of the Red Cross Zagreb and Caritas of the Zagreb Archdiocese. The City of Zagreb provides accommodation for a total of 171 users and for an additional 50 users in accordance with the plan for care in extreme winter conditions, which is also applied during the epidemic of COVID-19.<sup>64</sup>

On 2 April, the Ombudswoman's Office published a statement about additional efforts needed in care of the homeless people during the epidemic. In addition to the above mentioned information, they added that the City of Zagreb, in cooperation with the Red Cross, has provided an additional 40 places for the homeless in the Kosnica Shelter. After being informed that a large number of homeless people are still staying in public places and facilities that are not intended for housing, the Ombudswoman Lora Vidović asked the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy whether additional temporary accommodation for the homeless is planned or has already been organized, possibly in heated tents or housing containers. She sent the same inquiry to the City of Zagreb and the Red Cross. Furthermore, she asked the Ministry of the Interior for information on the implementation of the Decision on the measure of strict restriction of retention in the streets and other public places, as well as on the manner in which police officers inform the homeless about measures, additional accommodation and all other forms of care available to this vulnerable group during the epidemic. The Croatian Network for Homeless People estimates that there are about 2,000 homeless<sup>65</sup>, but according to the ETHOS typology, which includes those with insecure or inadequate housing, their number is rising to 10,000.<sup>66</sup>

According to the Ministry of Democracy, Family, Youth and Social Policy, as part of the collection of annual statistics in the field of social welfare, data on homeless persons is also collected from social welfare centres. According to the data collected by the social welfare centres, in Croatia, as of December 31, 2018, a total of 584 homeless persons were registered.<sup>67</sup>

According to the Croatian Network for Homeless People, the activation of the Homeless care plan in extreme winter conditions achieved no additional engagement of local communities, nor the engagement of the organisations listed in the plan. The complete issue was transferred exclusively to organisations that already provide services and which, within their modest financial, logistical and spatial capabilities, have provided care for existing users.<sup>68</sup>

- *Detainees (including measures on early release or alternatives to detention)*

On 16 March, the Ministry of Justice in accordance with the recommendations of the Croatian Institute of Public Health and the National Civil Protection Headquarters brought measures in order to protect

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<sup>63</sup> Caring for the homeless during the coronavirus epidemic and organizing the work of public kitchens, published on 23 March 2020, available at: <https://www.koronavirus.hr/zbrinjavanje-beskucnika-za-vrijeme-trajanja-epidemije-koronavirusa-i-organizacija-rada-puckih-kuhinja/280>

<sup>64</sup> How does the City take care of the homeless in this situation?, published on 6 April 2020, available at: <https://www.zagreb.hr/kako-grad-skrbi-o-beskucnicima-u-ovoj-situaciji/156977>

<sup>65</sup> Croatian Network for Homeless People, <http://beskucnici.info/>

<sup>66</sup> Ombudswoman's Office, Additional efforts needed to take care of the homeless, published on 2 April 2020, available at: <https://www.ombudsman.hr/hr/potrebni-dodatni-napori-za-zbrinjavanje-beskucnika-tijekom-epidemije-koronavirusa/>

<sup>67</sup> Croatia, Information provided by the Ministry of Democracy, Family, Youth and Social Policy.

<sup>68</sup> Croatian Network for Homeless People, Important and urgent! Appeal to help the homeless!, published on 15 April 2020, available at: <http://beskucnici.info/vazno-i-hitno-apel-za-pomoc-beskucnicima/>

the health of all persons deprived of liberty and prison personnel for the time period from 14 March 2020 till 1 April 2020. These measures restricted prisoners' rights to visit. In exceptional cases, a visit was granted only with the special approval of the warden, and when it was necessary to protect the rights of prisoners in court proceedings or in other unforeseeable cases (eg death of a family member, natural disaster, etc.). The benefit of prisoners leaving the penitentiary was suspended. All activities of civil society organizations in penitentiaries were also suspended and the prison system intensified the use of video links with competent courts<sup>69</sup>. As of 25 March, new measures were introduced in the way that sending prisoners to work outside the penitentiary was suspended and new protocols for receiving packages for prisoners were established. In order to mitigate the harmful psychological consequences of these measures and to enable the maintenance of contacts between prisoners and their family members especially children, prisoners were provided with more frequent and longer telephone calls. With the support of UNICEF, the possibility of video calls was expanded. Furthermore, prisoners were allowed to spend more time in the fresh air and the activities of prisoners' free time were intensified<sup>70</sup>. However, activities within the prison were cancelled and those activities that could be organized in such a way that no more than 5 people are present in the group (group therapies, recreational activities, nutrition, etc.) were allowed. Such group work was organized in as large room as possible or outdoors in such a way that people are seated as far as possible from each other<sup>71</sup>. Penitentiaries ensure the implementation of disinfection measures and provide a sufficient amount of appropriate protective equipment. Additionally, a treatment procedure has been established in the cases when a prisoner manifests respiratory problems and/or other symptoms that may indicate the onset of illness. Each penitentiary has secured designated special rooms to isolate people with symptoms that may indicate the onset of the disease<sup>72</sup>. In regard to social distance within prison, a distance of at least 2m indoors and 1m outdoors between people in conversation and during social interactions is recommended. It is recommended that close contact with anyone who shows symptoms of acute respiratory diseases such as fever, cough, sore throat, difficulty breathing is avoided<sup>73</sup>. The Minister of Justice stated that the Government gave recommendations to send to prison only dangerous people, and those who can serve their sentences later on to send them to prison after the situation is stabilized. This recommendation led to a reduction in the number of people in the prison system<sup>74</sup>.

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<sup>69</sup> Ministry of Justice, "Measures in the prison system from 14 March 2020 to 1 April 2020", 16 March 2020, link available at: <https://pravosudje.gov.hr/vijesti/mjere-u-zatvorskom-sustavu-od-14-ozujka-2020-godine-do-01-travnja-2020-godine/21710>

<sup>70</sup> Ministry of Justice, "Measures and activities in the prison system aimed at preventing the spread coronavirus", 25 March 2020, link available at: <https://pravosudje.gov.hr/vijesti/mjere-i-aktivnosti-u-zatvorskom-sustavu-usmjerene-prevenciji-sirenja-korona-virusa/21722>

<sup>71</sup> Ministry of Justice, "The Croatian Institute of Public Health has published treatment recommendations for judicial police officers and the procedure for the prevention and suppression of the coronavirus in the prison system", 29 March 2020, link available at: <https://pravosudje.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/slike/novi%20osj/Postupnik-Zatvorski-sustav.pdf>

<sup>72</sup> Ministry of Justice, "Measures and activities in the prison system aimed at preventing the spread coronavirus", 25 March 2020, link available at: <https://pravosudje.gov.hr/vijesti/mjere-i-aktivnosti-u-zatvorskom-sustavu-usmjerene-prevenciji-sirenja-korona-virusa/21722>

<sup>73</sup> Ministry of Justice, "The Croatian Institute of Public Health has published treatment recommendations for judicial police officers and the procedure for the prevention and suppression of the coronavirus in the prison system", 29 March 2020, link available at: <https://pravosudje.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/slike/novi%20osj/Postupnik-Zatvorski-sustav.pdf>

<sup>74</sup> Ministry of Justice, "Minister Bošnjaković answered journalists questions about the functioning of the judiciary during the earthquake and COVID-19", 26 March 2020, link available at: <https://pravosudje.gov.hr/vijesti/ministar-bosnjakovic-odgovarao-na-pitanja-novinar-a-o-funkcioniranju-pravosudja-u-vrijeme-potresa-i-covid-19/21726>

Despite the introduction of special measures and recommendations for protection against coronavirus within the prison system, detainees and prisoners on March 26 in the Split prison in Bilice began a hunger strike for fear of coronavirus<sup>75</sup>. Attorney Doris Košta appealed to the Ministry of Justice and the prison administration asking for temporary release of pre-trial detainees as prison conditions were inadequate and unsuitable to respond to COVID-19. She stressed out that no detainee is provided with a minimum of three square meters of floor space, they do not have a meter of space between them, as well as the necessary conditions for maintaining personal hygiene. Detainees can only once per week perform personal hygiene outside the cell, which all indicates a serious threat to their health<sup>76</sup>. Asked about the prisoners' strike, the minister replied that what the court had ordered was being carried out and that there was no reason for the strike because all measures related to hygiene and control of people entering had been taken and he called on prisoners to end the strike<sup>77</sup>.

On 25 May, penitentiaries began the first phase of relaxation of measures to prevent the transmission and suppression of the COVID-19. It is allowed to visit prisoners but only with wearing protective equipment (mask and gloves). The number of visitors is limited to a maximum of two adults per prisoner. If the prisoners are parents, the number of visitors is limited to a maximum of four people (two adults and two children). During the entrance to the premises of the penitentiary all visitors have their body temperature measured with non-contact thermometers. During their stay in the penitentiary, visitors are obliged to use protective equipment (masks, gloves), as well as hand and foot disinfectants that will be at the entrance of the visiting rooms. During the visit, physical contact between the prisoner and his/her visitors is not allowed. Disinfection of the visiting rooms will be carried out between two groups of visitors<sup>78</sup>.

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<sup>75</sup> Slobodnadalmacija.hr, Article "Hunger strike begins in Split prison over fear of coronavirus: 'We live in inhumane conditions, we feel like death row inmates'", 26 March 2020, link available at:

<https://slobodnadalmacija.hr/vijesti/hrvatska/u-splitskom-zatvoru-poceo-strajk-gladu-zbog-straha-od-koronavirusa-zivimo-u-nehumanim-uvjetima-osjecamo-se-kao-osudenici-na-smrt-1011886>

<sup>76</sup> Slobodnadalmacija.hr, Article "Doris Košta: Release the detainees while the cataclysm lasts! In Bilice, they don't even have one meter distance, they take a shower once a week, they don't have toilet paper ...", 18 March 2020, link available at: <https://slobodnadalmacija.hr/vijesti/hrvatska/apel-odvjetnice-pustite-pritvorenike-dok-traje-pandemija-u-zatvoru-u-splitu-krse-se-sva-pravila-nema-wc-papira-tusiraju-se-jednom-tjedno-1009724>

<sup>77</sup> Ministry of Justice, Minister Bošnjaković presented to the Croatian Parliament a proposal for the Law on Amendments to the Law on Advocacy, 27 March 2020, link available at: <https://pravosudje.gov.hr/vijesti/ministar-bosnjakovic-predstavio-hrvatskom-saboru-prijedlog-zakona-o-izmjenama-i-dopunama-zakona-o-odvjetnistvu/21729>

<sup>78</sup> Ministry of Justice, "The first phase of relaxation of measures in the prison system", 23 May 2020, link available at: <https://pravosudje.gov.hr/vijesti/prva-faza-ublazavanja-mjera-u-zatvorskom-sustavu/21970>



## **2 Impact on fundamental rights of older people**

### **2.1 Data/statistics**

#### **2.1.1 Share of persons 60+ in the total number of persons in the community infected, recovered and died in relation to COVID-19.**

- Infected by COVID-19

Available data from 1 June includes data on infected persons on 29 May disaggregated by age groups as follows: between the ages of 61-70 there were 301 cases out of which 145 female and 156 male; between the ages of 71-80 there were 207 cases out of which 119 female and 88 male; between the ages of 81-90 there were 182 cases out of which 124 female and 58 male; in the age group 91+ there were 45 cases out of which 39 female and 6 male. Total number of infections by 29 May was 2246 cases out of which 1213 female and 1033 male.<sup>79</sup> Share of persons 60+ in the total number of infected people is 32.72%.

According to data from 29 April provided by the Croatian Institute for Public Health to the National Pensioners' Convention, out of the total number of persons infected with coronavirus in Croatia, 488 persons or 24% of them were over 65.<sup>80</sup>

- Recovered from COVID-19

N/a - the only available number is a total number of persons recovered (2072 on 31 May)

- Died in relation to COVID-19

According to data from 29 April provided by the Croatian Institute for Public Health to the National Pensioners' Convention, 29 persons over 65 died which is close to 50% of the total number of victims of the coronavirus pandemic in Croatia. Considering that the number of deceased persons increased since the date of delivery of data and cases mostly included citizens over the age of 65, the percentage of deceased persons over 65 has increased over 50%.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Government website on information regarding coronavirus, Data section, available at: <https://www.koronavirus.hr/podaci/489>

<sup>80</sup> Mirovina.hr, Number of persons over 65 infected and died of corona in Croatia revealed!, 4 May 2020, available at: <https://www.mirovina.hr/novosti/otkriveno-koliko-je-starijih-od-65-oboljelo-i-umrlo-od-korone-u-hrvatskoj/>

<sup>81</sup> Mirovina.hr, Number of persons over 65 infected and died of corona in Croatia revealed!, 4 May 2020, available at: <https://www.mirovina.hr/novosti/otkriveno-koliko-je-starijih-od-65-oboljelo-i-umrlo-od-korone-u-hrvatskoj/>

### **2.1.2 Share of persons 60+ in the total number of persons in institutional settings infected, recovered and died in relation to COVID-19.**

- Infected by COVID-19

According to data from 29 April provided by the Croatian Institute for Public Health to the National Pensioners' Convention, 166 infected persons were from pensioner care homes which is 8% of all infected persons.<sup>82</sup>

- Recovered from COVID-19

N/a

- Died in relation to COVID-19

Numbers differ according to different media sources. According to data from 29 April provided by the Croatian Institute for Public Health to the National Pensioners' Convention, around 25% of the total number of deceased were persons from pensioner care homes.<sup>83</sup> According to an article in *Jutarnji list* from 6 May 2020, a total of 83 people died of which 34 of them died in care homes (18 from Split, 5 from Koprivnica, 4 from Ploče, 3 from Dubrovnik, 3 from Makarska and 1 from Dicmo). Therefore, as many as 40% of all deaths (83) from COVID-19 were residents of care homes<sup>84</sup>.

### **2.1.3 Number and type of institutions affected**

There is no official statistics available on the number and type of institutions affected. From information available in the media, there are 8 care homes affected by COVID-19 (Split, Dubrovnik, Ploče, Makarska, Dicmo, Seget Vranjici, Koprivnica i Zagreb)<sup>85</sup>.

### **2.1.4 Do official statistics on mortality rates from COVID-19 include deaths of older persons in care homes? Has there been any critique of data collection with respect to care homes?**

There are no official statistics available on mortality rates from COVID-19 that would include deaths of older persons in care homes. According to the mirovina.hr portal, a digital platform with information for pensioners, Croatian Institute for Public Health provided information to the National Pensioners' Convention of Croatia on the share of persons over 65 as well as persons accommodated in care homes who were infected and died of coronavirus.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Mirovina.hr, Number of persons over 65 infected and died of corona in Croatia revealed!, 4 May 2020, available at: <https://www.mirovina.hr/novosti/otkriveno-koliko-je-starijih-od-65-oboljelo-i-umrlo-od-korone-u-hrvatskoj/>

<sup>83</sup> Mirovina.hr, Number of persons over 65 infected and died of corona in Croatia revealed!, 4 May 2020, available at: <https://www.mirovina.hr/novosti/otkriveno-koliko-je-starijih-od-65-oboljelo-i-umrlo-od-korone-u-hrvatskoj/>

<sup>84</sup> Jutarnjilist.hr, Article "Catastrophic consequences of virus among the vulnerable - 40 percent of deaths in Croatia are residents of care homes", 6 May 2020, link available at: <https://www.jutarnji.hr/vijesti/hrvatska/katastrofalne-posljedice-proboja-virusa-medu-najugorozenije-40-posto-preminulih-u-hrvatskoj-sticenici-su-domova-za-starije-i-nemocne/10277095/>

<sup>85</sup> HRT.HR, Article "Topic of the day: Is there a threat of further spread of the infection in care homes for elderly people", 16 April 2020, link available at: <https://vijesti.hrt.hr/605097/tema-dana-prijeti-li-daljnje-sirenje-zaraze-u-domovima-za-starije>

<sup>86</sup> Mirovina.hr, Number of persons over 65 infected and died of corona in Croatia revealed!, 4 May 2020, available at: <https://www.mirovina.hr/novosti/otkriveno-koliko-je-starijih-od-65-oboljelo-i-umrlo-od-korone-u-hrvatskoj/>

### 2.1.5 Independent studies published on the situation of older persons with respect to the impact of and responses to COVID-19

On 5 May, the Croatian Chamber of Nurses published research findings on the problems faced by nurses and technicians in social care institutions. The study involved 395 nurses and technicians out of 1800 working in total in the social welfare system. The results revealed alarmingly poor working conditions. Protective equipment is still not provided in all social care institutions in Croatia, because as many as 20% of nurses do not have a surgical mask at work, while as many as 43% do not have protective clothing. 4% of these health professionals still do not even have protective gloves. Furthermore, not all facilities were provided with sufficient disinfectants because 16% of respondents said they were not. Of particular concern is the fact that although more than two thirds (67%) of nurses work in separate teams, in accordance with the recommendation of the Croatian Institute of Public Health, every second (53%) in the survey said that some employees are in physical contact with both teams. Team interference occurs, which significantly increases the possibility of transmitting coronavirus infection. One of the respondents highlighted that only 1 nurse works with 89 *protégés* with mental disabilities, and only 1 nurse and three or four caregivers take care of 150 mental patients in other case. Additionally, 24% of those nurses who ended up in self-isolation, as well as 37% of nurses who had a smaller fund of hours were deprived of their vacation days by their employers<sup>87</sup>.

## 2.2 COVID-19 measures targeting older people

### 2.2.1 National guidelines/protocols in response to COVID-19 addressing older people

- in residential care homes (including protective equipment, visits etc.)

On 8 May, the Croatian Institute of Public Health, Teaching Institute of Public Health “Dr. Andrija Štampar” and the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy published *Instructions to providers of accommodation in the social welfare system in order to prevent and combat the COVID-19 epidemic*<sup>88</sup>. The instructions refer to accommodation in nursing homes for the elderly and infirm and other providers of social accommodation services and include a plan for easing measures in the next two waves (from 11 May and 18 May). According to the mentioned instructions, departures to other accommodation outside the social welfare system must be medically justified and previously organized. Visits to the day hospital and specialist examinations are carried out in compliance with all protection measures and the use of protective equipment by users and workers.

As of 11 May, the delivery of hygiene supplies, groceries and other supplies by family members and friends packed in the original packaging, with an appropriate expiration date, is permitted. After receipt, brought things are stored in a separate storage space for at least 3 days until delivery to the user. Packages are handed over at the entrance to the service provider, and are received by the persons in charge, who are not in direct contact with the nursing home users. It is still allowed to admit users to temporary accommodation in crisis situations with the obligation to keep at least one room

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<sup>87</sup> Croatian Chamber of Nurses, Research findings on the problems that are facing nurses in social care institutions, 5 May 2020, link available at: <http://www.hkms.hr/istrazivanje-hrvatske-komore-medicinskih-sestara-pokazalo-da-dio-medicinskih-sestara-jos-nema-maske-niti-rukavice/> and <http://www.hkms.hr/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Istrazivanje-Hrvatske-komore-medicinskih-sestara-o-problemima-s-kojima-se-susrecu-medicinske-sestre-u-ustanovama-socijalne-skrbi.pdf>

<sup>88</sup> Croatia, Croatian Institute of Public Health, Teaching Institute of Public Health “Dr. Andrija Štampar” and the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy, published on May 8<sup>th</sup>, available at: [https://mdomsp.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/Vijesti2020/Smjestaj-izvaninstitucionalno\\_08-05.pdf](https://mdomsp.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/Vijesti2020/Smjestaj-izvaninstitucionalno_08-05.pdf)

for the needs of isolation of users under suspicion of COVID-19 and mandatory testing of new users on SARS-CoV-2 immediately before accommodation and self-isolation of new users for 14 days.

As of 11 May, walks and stays in nature and allowed for nursing home users, independently or accompanied by professionals, depending on the age and condition assessment.

As of 18 May, it is possible to admit new users from the waiting lists with the obligation to keep at least two rooms for the needs of isolating users with suspected COVID-19 and mandatory testing of new users on SARS-CoV-2 immediately before accommodation and self-isolation of new users for 14 days. Visits to elderly users and users with disabilities are permitted with strict adherence to epidemiological measures.

As of 18 May, it is recommended to enable the elderly and people with disabilities to go outside the premises of the accommodation services, as long as they are accompanied by nursing home employees and in compliance with protection measures and physical distance (walking around the institution, yard, park...). All users are obliged to adhere to the measures of physical distance and if they stay in common areas they must keep a distance of 2 meters. Users are required to disinfect their hands before each meal, and if possible during the pandemic, it is recommended that the users dine in their own room or in the common dining room, respecting physical distance measures (in the dining room it is necessary to spread tables so that the distance between seats in all directions is 2 m). The on-duty nurse or other on-duty employee or service provider is responsible for compliance with the measures in relation to the users. On May 29, 2020, the COVID-19 Instructions for the Prevention and Suppression of the Epidemic for Social Services Providers relating to accommodation in nursing homes for elderly and other housing providers (institutions, family homes and other providers in line with the Social Welfare Act) were issued. According to the instructions, all measures related to the use of personal protection and the use of protective equipment by beneficiaries and employees remain in force. The current epidemiological situation throughout the country is very favourable and there are preconditions for further partial abolition of epidemic control and suppression measures.

- in the community in general

In the general community, *Recommendations for the elderly and people with chronic non communicable diseases as part of the gradual alleviation of COVID-19-related restrictions*<sup>89</sup> still apply. They consist of general prevention measures such as maintaining high personal and space hygiene and recommendations on avoiding crowded places and calling for support (physical or psychological) if needed.

### **2.2.2 National guidelines/protocols on patient triage that apply age as the main and decisive criterion**

There are no national guidelines/protocols on patient triage that apply age as the main and decisive criterion.

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<sup>89</sup> Croatia, Croatian Institute of Public Health, published on April 24<sup>th</sup>, available at: <https://www.hzjz.hr/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Preporuke-za-osobe-starije-%C5%BEivotne-dobi-i-osobe-s-kroni%C4%8Dnim-nezaraznim-bolestima-u-okviru-postupnog-ubla%C5%BEavanja-restrikcija-vezanih-uz-COVID-19.pdf>

### **2.2.3 Targeted testing of residents and staff in residential care homes**

Testing of residents and employees of nursing homes is carried out according to the assessment of competent epidemiologists and family physicians, in accordance with the set indications and the current epidemiological situation, in case of suspicion of a virus infection and in case of a confirmed new case (newly infected persons in the institution). Also, the recommendations assume the testing employees of nursing homes who have organized work quarantine. For such employees, it is also recommended to test before arriving to a seven-day or fourteen-day shift. Testing of residents is also performed after long-term hospital treatment, after which the resident is placed into a 14-day self-isolation in the accommodation (after receiving a negative test for SARS-CoV-2). Statistical data about the testing of these persons for coronavirus is collected by county public health institutes and health centres that conducted the tests<sup>90</sup>.

### **2.2.4 Restrictions/bans on visits to residential care settings, and any (conditional) lifting of these restrictions**

As of 18 May, visits to elderly residents and residents with disabilities in nursing homes are permitted<sup>91</sup> with strict adherence to epidemiological measures. A maximum of one visitor per room is allowed with strict adherence to measures (mandatory hand disinfection, protective mask), with prior body temperature measurement and signing a statement that the visitor has no symptoms of COVID-19, is not in self-isolation and that his family has no respiratory symptoms. The number of simultaneous visits is limited according to spatial conditions and possibilities of the nursing home, and in order to ensure compliance with the measures. It is recommended to organize visits in the outdoor space (garden) of the nursing home for mobile residents or residents who are able to use the outdoor space. Registration of all visitors on arrival and departure is mandatory.

### **2.2.5 Restrictive measures for older people living in the community**

There are no official restrictive measures, but *Respiratory protection measures, including SARS-CoV-2 - people with chronic diseases, and the elderly*<sup>92</sup> published on March 27<sup>th</sup> are in still place. According to these measures the elderly and people with chronic diseases should adhere to the same general protection measures as the general population, and they should continue to apply the therapy recommended by their physician.

### **2.2.6 Access to healthcare for older people for conditions unrelated to COVID-19**

Elderly people receive primary health care through the chosen family doctor in whose care they are, regardless of whether they are at home or in the community or live in a household. The provision of health care is continuous, comprehensive and with regard to the current epidemiological situation, in accordance with the instructions and recommendations of the Croatian Public Health Institute, with prior telephone contact with the family doctor. The provision of emergency medical care in the field is the responsibility of emergency medical service providers<sup>93</sup>.

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<sup>90</sup> Croatia, Croatian Institute of Public Health, answers provided via e-mail correspondance.

<sup>91</sup> Croatia, zdravlje.hina.hr news portal, published on 15 May, available at:  
<https://zdravlje.hina.hr/content/10368585>

<sup>92</sup> Croatia, Croatian Institute of Public Health, published on March 27<sup>th</sup>, available at:  
<https://www.hzjz.hr/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Stariji-i-kroni%C4%8Dni-Mjere-za%C5%A1tite-2.pdf>

<sup>93</sup> Croatia, Croatian Institute of Public Health, answers provided via e-mail correspondance.

### **2.2.7 Support measures and promising practices targeting older people, including access to goods and services online and offline, social/psychological support, and use of digital tools and technology**

The Croatian Red Cross and 131 Red Cross Society regularly visit the elderly and infirm who are unable to access basic necessities on their own. All those who need help and are not covered by the Home Help program can contact the nearest Red Cross society (all numbers are listed at the Official Croatian Red Cross website<sup>94</sup>). The Croatian Red Cross, in cooperation with the Croatian Institute of Public Health, published two leaflets on 17 March; *Instructions for providing assistance to the elderly and infirm*<sup>95</sup> and *Instructions for receiving assistance for the elderly and infirm*<sup>96</sup>. Leaflets were distributed throughout Croatia, including institutions and residential buildings.

In order to help those in need, the Facebook group “Jedni za druge”<sup>97</sup> was created. Group description states: “the group is a self-organized initiative that organizes volunteering to deliver supplies to vulnerable groups.”

The Croatian Psychological Chamber, in cooperation with the Croatian Psychological Society and the County Psychological Societies, has activated the Network of Telephone Lines for Psychological Assistance, which includes 25 telephone lines with 150 volunteer psychologists and clinical psychologists on duty 24 hours a day<sup>98</sup>. They also published *CORONAVIRUS AND MENTAL HEALTH: Psychological aspects, advice and recommendations*<sup>99</sup>, a manual containing the texts of psychologists in response to the pandemic and earthquake in Zagreb.

### **2.2.8 Consultation of older people’s organisations and/or other civil society organisations in the design, implementation and review of COVID-19-related measures**

Health protection measures in the context of the new coronavirus epidemic are designed by experts (doctors specializing in epidemiology and other public health specializations and other experts), in cooperation with other state and public institutions<sup>100</sup>. Civil society organizations were not consulted.

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<sup>94</sup> Croatia, Croatian Red Cross, contact numbers for people in need, available at: <https://www.hck.hr/novosti/ovo-su-kontakti-drustava-crvenoga-kriza-za-ljude-u-potrebi/10282>

<sup>95</sup> Croatia, Croatian Red Cross, published on March 17th, available at: [https://www.hck.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/Za%C5%A1tita%20zdravlja/Upute\\_za\\_pomoc\\_starijima\\_HCK.pdf](https://www.hck.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/Za%C5%A1tita%20zdravlja/Upute_za_pomoc_starijima_HCK.pdf)

<sup>96</sup> Croatia, Croatian Red Cross, published on March 17th, available at: [https://www.hck.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/Za%C5%A1tita%20zdravlja/Upute\\_za\\_starije\\_osobe\\_HCK.pdf](https://www.hck.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/Za%C5%A1tita%20zdravlja/Upute_za_starije_osobe_HCK.pdf)

<sup>97</sup> Croatia, Facebook group „Jedni za druge“, available at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/523065185274554/>

<sup>98</sup> Croatia, Croatian Psychological Chamber, published on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, available at: <http://www.psiholoska-komora.hr/1247>

<sup>99</sup> Croatia, Croatian Psychological Chamber, published on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, available at: [http://www.psiholoska-komora.hr/static/documents/HPK-Koronavirus\\_i\\_mentalno\\_zdravlje.pdf](http://www.psiholoska-komora.hr/static/documents/HPK-Koronavirus_i_mentalno_zdravlje.pdf)

<sup>100</sup> Croatia, Croatian Institute of Public Health, answers provided via e-mail correspondence.