

Coronavirus pandemic in the EU – Fundamental Rights Implications

Country: Latvia

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1 Measures taken by government/public authorities

1.1 Emergency laws/states of emergency

Provide information on emergency laws/declarations of states of emergency, including actions taken by police to enforce them and court rulings concerning the legality of such measures.

According to the Article 1.1 of the Cabinet of Ministers Order Nr.254 “Amendments to the Order Nr.103 of 12 March 2020 of the Cabinet of Ministers “On Declaring the State of Emergency” of 7 May 2020¹ which came in force on 12 May 2020, the state of emergency has been prolonged until 9 June 2020. On 28 May, the Ministry of Justice submitted a draft Law on the management of the spread of Covid-19 infection². The main purpose of the law will be the resumption of the legal “acquis” in the country after the pandemic. The draft law will be reviewed as urgent as it will be adopted in the parliament (*Saeima*) in two readings.

The constitutionality of the decision (the according legal norm) *per se* has not been contested before the Constitutional Court (*Satversmes tiesa*) yet, but the case concerning the incompatibility of Article 9 of the Law On Measures for the Prevention and Suppression of Threat to the State and Its Consequences Due to the Spread of COVID-19³ with Article 105 of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia⁴ and Article 49 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union⁵ has been initiated.⁶ Another case regarding the non-compliance of Articles 8 and 9 of the same law with Article 1, the first sentence of Article 91 and the first and third sentences of the Article 105 has been initiated on 12 May 2020 by the Constitutional Court. The case concerns the decision of the legislator to prohibit gambling events and also to stop the gambling licences for the period of anti-pandemic measures.⁷

¹ Latvia, Cabinet of Ministers (2020). Order Nr.254. Amendments to the Order Nr. 103 of 12 March 2020 of the Cabinet of Ministers “On Declaring the State of Emergency” (*Grozījumi Ministru kabineta 2020. gada 12. marta rīkojumā Nr. 103 "Par ārkārtējās situācijas izsludināšanu"*), Article 1.1 at <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/314553-grozijumi-ministru-kabineta-2020-gada-12-marta-rikojuma-nr-103-par-arkartejas-situacijas-izsludinasanu>. Consolidated version of the Order Nr.103 at <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/313191>

² Latvia, Ministry of Justice (2020). Draft Legal Act. Management of the Spread of the Covid-19 Infection and the (*Likumprojekts "Covid-19 infekcijas izplatības pārvaldības likums"*), at <http://tap.mk.gov.lv/lv/mk/tap/?pid=40487984>

³ Latvia, Saeima. Law On Measures for the Prevention and Suppression of Threat to the State and Its Consequences Due to the Spread of COVID-19 (*Likums "Par valsts apdraudējuma un tā seku novēršanas un pārvarēšanas pasākumiem sakarā ar Covid-19 izplatību"*) at <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/313373-par-valsts-apdraudejuma-un-ta-seku-noversanas-un-parvaresanas-pasakumiem-sakara-ar-covid-19-izplatibu>

⁴ Latvia, the Constitutional Assembly, The Constitution of the Republic of Latvia (*Latvijas Republikas Satversme*) at <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/57980-latvijas-republikas-satversme>

⁵ The EU, Establishing Treaty, Official Journal C 326 , 26/10/2012 P. 0001 – 0390 and at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:12012E/TXT&from=LV>

⁶ Latvia, The Constitutional Court of the Republic of Latvia, decision to initiate the procedure of 8 May 2020. The case concerns the decision of the legislator to stop the gambling licences for the period of antipandemic measures. The decision is accessible at http://www.satv.tiesa.gov.lv/web/viewer.html?file=/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/2020-26-0106_Lemums_ierosinasana.pdf#search=

⁷ Latvia, The Constitutional Court of the Republic of Latvia, decision to initiate the procedure of 12 May 2020. The case concerns the decision of the legislator to prohibit gambling events and also to stop the gambling licences for the period of antipandemic measures. The decision is accessible at http://www.satv.tiesa.gov.lv/web/viewer.html?file=/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/2020-27-01_Lemums_ierosinasana.pdf#search=

The Prime Minister stated in the media that the plan of the government is not to prolong the state of emergency after June 9, however some restrictions could remain depending on developments of the medical situation in the country.⁸

Order Nr.254 provides for the easing of restrictions of the public events and meetings, stating that 25 people are allowed to meet at organized events, still keeping 2 m distance.⁹

*On 11 May, the Minister for Environmental Protection and Regional Development issued an order, inter alia, concerning the meetings, processions and pickets organised outside buildings.*¹⁰ Several protest actions have taken place since the easing of the restrictions. On 28 May pickets were organised by 16 persons (each with up to 25 persons) to enable a protest along a large stretch of the main street in the capital Riga against the construction of the new State Security Service (*Valsts drošības dienests*) building in lieu of the former cycling track park.¹¹ On 26 May the Latvian Green Party held two pickets against the administrative territorial reform, and indepent populist MP also had called for a protest against the work of the parliament in e-environment.

The hours for sports, cultural, entertainment and other recreational places have been extended from 7.00-24.00. Conducting of religious activities is also permitted provided that social distancing and other epidemiological measures are observed.

In kindergartens parents are no longer required to submit in writing the confirmation that they and their child have not been abroad during the last 14 days, have not been in contact wit COVID-19 infected persons. All shops are now allowed to be open during the weekends and holidays.

1.2 Measures affecting the general population

1.2.1 Social distancing

Focus on:

- *Lifting of stay at home orders, and measures/rules for general physical distancing when in public or at home*
- *Enforcement and penalties*

⁸ Kariņš: planning not to prolong the state of emergency after June 9 (Kariņš: plānojam vairs nepagarināt ārkārtējo situāciju pēc 9. jūnija) at <https://www.delfi.lv/news/national/politics/karins-planojam-vairs-nepagarinat-arkartejo-situaciju-pec-9-junija.d?id=52172673>

⁹ Latvia, Cabinet of Ministers (2020). Order Nr.254, Article 4.5.2, Order Nr.254. Amendments to the Order Nr. 103 of 12 March 2020 of the Cabinet of Ministers "On Declaring the State of Emergency" (*Grozījumi Ministru kabineta 2020. gada 12. marta rīkojumā Nr. 103 "Par ārkārtējās situācijas izsludināšanu"*), Article 1.1 at <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/314553-grozijumi-ministru-kabineta-2020-gada-12-marta-rikojuma-nr-103-par-arkartejas-situacijas-izsludinasanu>- Consolidated version of the Order Nr.103 at <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/313191>

¹⁰ <https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/314613-regarding-the-ensuring-of-social-and-physical-distancing-during-meetings-processions-and-pickets>

¹¹ Delfi.LV (2020). VVD ēkas būvniecības pretinieki pulcējas 16 piketos, 28.05, <https://www.delfi.lv/news/national/politics/video-vdd-ekas-buvniecibas-pretinieki-pulcejas-16-piketos-plkst-1126.d?id=52174103>

As of 12 May public and private events, excluding sports events, meetings, gatherings and pickets, organized religious events of up to 25 persons can be organised for no longer than three hours. Event organiser has to ensure physical distancing of two meters and disinfectants for participants.¹²

As of 12 May mouth and nose covers¹³ are obligatory when riding public transport.¹⁴ In public transport where boarding is done through the front door, the driver may refuse boarding to passengers without face/nose cover. Passengers should observe distancing of two meters.¹⁵ In Riga, wearing of face/nose cover in public transport is controlled by the Municipal police (*Rīgas pašvaldības policija*).¹⁶

As of 12 May sports training is allowed in a group of up to 25 persons, no longer than three hours for inside training, observing social distancing of two meters.¹⁷ As of 1 June organising of training without the requirement of social distancing is allowed for the athletes of Latvian adult professional teams, Latvian Olympic units, teams of highest sporting leagues, except combat (contact) sports.¹⁸

From 13 March until 31 May, the police have issued around 4,000 administrative violation citations for breach of different restrictions during the emergency situation, including 80% for violation of social distancing restrictions. The average amount of fine is EUR 40.¹⁹

1.2.2 Education

Focus on:

- *Steps to reopen educational institutions (schools, third level educational facilities and kindergartens/day care). Please include any specific measures aimed at children from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds*
- *Measures to protect students and staff as they return to educational institutions (e.g. related to physical distancing, shift patterns, health and hygiene, etc.)*

On 7 May, remote education process was prolonged in all the educational establishments. Schools are allowed to conduct the preparation of children of compulsory educational age (5-6 years) in person upon the decision of the founder of the educational establishment. Consultations for students preparing

¹² Latvia, Cabinet of Ministers (2020). Order No. 254 "[Amendments to the Order No 103 "On Declaring Emergency Situation" of 12 March of the Cabinet of Ministers \(Grozījumi Ministru kabineta 2020. gada 12. marta rīkojumā Nr. 103 "Par ārkārtējās situācijas izsludināšanu"\)](#)", point 4.5. 7 May 2020

¹³ The order purposefully does not mention masks, but face/nose cover, because not all residents are able to obtain face masks.

¹⁴ Latvia, Cabinet of Ministers (2020). Order No. 254 "[Amendments to the Order No 103 "On Declaring Emergency Situation" of 12 March of the Cabinet of Ministers \(Grozījumi Ministru kabineta 2020. gada 12. marta rīkojumā Nr. 103 "Par ārkārtējās situācijas izsludināšanu"\)](#)", point 4.37.. 7 May 2020

¹⁵ Latvia, Ministry of Transport (2020), [Order of the Minister of Transport No 01-03/112 On precautionary measures in public transport \(Par piesardzības pasākumiem sabiedriskajā transportā\)](#), 8 May 2020

¹⁶ Riga Municipal police (Rīgas pašvaldības policija), [Policija Rīgā īsteno pārbaužu sabiedriskajā transportā](#), Press release, 19 May 2020.

¹⁷ Latvia, Cabinet of Ministers (2020). Order No. 254 "[Amendments to the Order No 103 "On Declaring Emergency Situation" of 12 March of the Cabinet of Ministers \(Grozījumi Ministru kabineta 2020. gada 12. marta rīkojumā Nr. 103 "Par ārkārtējās situācijas izsludināšanu"\)](#)", point 4.5 (3). 7 May 2020

¹⁸ Latvia, Cabinet of Ministers (2020). Order No. 279 "[Amendments to the Order No 103 "On Declaring Emergency Situation" of 12 March of the Cabinet of Ministers \(Grozījumi Ministru kabineta 2020. gada 12. marta rīkojumā Nr. 103 "Par ārkārtējās situācijas izsludināšanu"\)](#)", point 4.5.² 4.5, 21 May 2020

¹⁹ News agency LETA (2020), [Policija uzsākusi divas lietvedības par ārkārtējās situācijas ierobežojumu neievērošanu](#), 31 May 2020.

for state exams are also allowed in person.²⁰

As of 1 June, state exams, vocational qualification exams, and enrolment exams in primary, and secondary educational establishments are allowed in person provided social distancing and epidemiological safety measures are observed. State exams and vocational qualification exams in higher educational establishments (e.g. colleges, universities) can be organised in person if it is not possible to organise those remotely. State Education Content Centre (*Valsts izglītības satura centrs*) has prepared detailed information about the exam procedure. The main changes concerning the exams are the following – the duration of exams are up to three hours, the number of tasks has been reduced, nevertheless the level of difficulty of the exam has been retained, there will be no breaks during the exams, foreign language exam will not have the oral part.²¹

As of 1 June, vocational training, informal education programmes for adults, child summer camps can be organised in person observing epidemiological safety measures. Art collectives (choirs, dance groups, etc.) are allowed to organise indoor and outdoor rehearsals observing epidemiological measures which should not exceed three hours, keeping the distance of two metres between the participants and other measures.²²

According to a survey conducted by the Latvian Student Union (*Latvijas Studentu apvienība*) 11.8% or 10,000 of students plan to terminate their studies because of the financial consequences caused by COVID-19 as they will no longer be able to cover study fees or daily expenses. This is largely due to the rising unemployment rate, particularly in the service sector where every fifth student is employed. 25% of respondents anticipate their income (wages, savings, family/partner support) will decrease by 50%, while 15% anticipate complete loss of income. 8 661 student from 42 higher education establishments took part in the survey.²³ Student's Union initiated an action "I want to study" (*Gribu Studēt*) aimed at drawing public and decision makers' attention to the financial situation of students during COVID-19 crisis and to overall access to education in Latvia. The Ministry of Education and Science (*Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija*) has promised to seek funds to create support mechanisms for students to address the consequences. However, no specific COVID-19 related measures have been approved.²⁴

Starting from 18 May on weekdays until the end of the school year, 9th and 12th grade students who have to go to consultations and examinations may use "Rīgas satiksme" public transport free of charge without registering the trip. The student must carry a valid student card to prove the free use of the public transport for ticket controllers.²⁵

²⁰ Latvia, Cabinet of Ministers (2020). Order No. 254 "[Amendments to the Order No 103 "On Declaring Emergency Situation" of 12 March of the Cabinet of Ministers \(Grozījumi Ministru kabineta 2020. gada 12. marta rīkojumā Nr. 103 "Par ārkārtējās situācijas izsludināšanu"\)](#)", point 4.3.1., 4.3.3., 4.3.6.1. 7 May 2020

²¹ Latvia, Cabinet of Ministers (2020). Order No. 279 "[Amendments to the Order No 103 "On Declaring Emergency Situation" of 12 March of the Cabinet of Ministers \(Grozījumi Ministru kabineta 2020. gada 12. marta rīkojumā Nr. 103 "Par ārkārtējās situācijas izsludināšanu"\)](#)", point 4.3.6.5., 4.3.6.6.. 21 May 2020

²² Latvia, Cabinet of Ministers (2020). Order No. 279 "[Amendments to the Order No 103 "On Declaring Emergency Situation" of 12 March of the Cabinet of Ministers \(Grozījumi Ministru kabineta 2020. gada 12. marta rīkojumā Nr. 103 "Par ārkārtējās situācijas izsludināšanu"\)](#)", point 4.3.6.7., 4.3.6.8., 4.5(5) 21 May 2020

²³ Student Union of Latvia (Latvijas Studentu apvienība) (2020), [12% studējošo varētu pārtraukt studijas Covid-19 izraisīto finansiālo seku dēļ](#), Press release, 12 May 2020

²⁴ Student Union of Latvia (Latvijas Studentu apvienība) (2020), [Sarunas ar IZM par atbalstu studentiem iekustējušās, studentu akcija joprojām turpinās](#), Press release, 24 May 2020

²⁵ Rīgas satiksme (2020). Starting from today May 18 the 9th and 12th grade students may use Rīgas satiksme public transport free of charge, 18.05.2020, <https://www.rigassatiksme.lv/en/news/starting-from-today-may-18-on-weekdays-the-9th-and-12th-grade-students-may-use-rigas-satiksme-public-transport-free-of-charge/>

On 17 April the Riga City Council issued an order concerning assistance to foreign students who have remained in Riga during the pandemic and are unable to provide for their basic needs due to the emergency and whose declared place of residence is the territory of the Riga City Municipality. The amount of the assistance is EUR 128.00 per person and students should turn to the Riga City Council Social Service. The City Council also urge higher education institutions to support foreign students considering the possibility to reduce their payments for dormitories, late fees in libraries, etc., as well as to support foreign students in preparing the application and documents, and to help to handle different domestic situations that have occurred taking into account the current situation in the country.²⁶

1.2.3 Work

Focus on:

- *Steps for specific sectors/the general population to return to work and measures to protect employees in the workplace (physical distancing, health and hygiene, shift patterns, etc.)*
- *People in precarious work*

The Ministry of Culture and Health have developed special sanitary protocols (guidelines on social distancing and epidemiological safety measures) for museums, libraries, places organizing cultural events, drive-in cultural events, etc.²⁷ binding upon state and private cultural institutions, that, inter alia, includes maximum number of people allowed depending on the size of the institution (e.g. museum, palace, etc.), renting of the premises to third parties, remote ticketing services, if possible, etc.

On 12 May, the government allocated EUR 518 730 to supplement wages of the personnel of the Latvian Prison Administration for work in conditions of increased risk and workload.²⁸

Social workers working in the institutions under the subordination of the Riga City Council Welfare Department, health care personnel working in Riga City health care capital companies can use the public transport for free during the state of emergency.²⁹ Special support has been available for frontline medical staff. With the help of donations and support of cafes/restaurants, since 18 March an NGO has provided 60,000 warm meals to frontline medical staff on daily basis.³⁰ Volkswagen and Audi importer in Latvia rents their cars for free to health care staff, while free petrol cards are provided by “Neste.”³¹

²⁶ Rīgas Sociālais dienests (2020). Informācija ārvalstu studentiem, kuri nonākuši ārkārtējā situācijā saistībā ar COVID-19 (LV un ENG), 17.04, at <https://ld.riga.lv/files/Bukleti/Foreign%20students%20in%20Riga%20can%20apply%20for%20a%20crisis%20benefit%20grant%20during%20the%20Covid-19%20crisis.png>

²⁷ LVPORTALS.LV (2020). Darbību atsāks kultūras iestādes: kas jāzina apmeklētājiem, 13.05., updated on 22.05, at <https://lvportals.lv/skaidrojumi/316079-darbibu-atsaks-kulturas-iestades-kas-jazina-apsekletajiem-2020>

²⁸ LSM.LV (2020). Atvēl 0,5 miljonus eiro piemaksā ieslodzījuma vietu pārvaldē strādājošajiem, 12.05, at <https://www.lsm.lv/raksts/zinas/latvija/atvel-05-miljonus-eiro-piemaksam-ieslodzijuma-vietu-parvalde-stradajosajiem.a359516/>

²⁹ Rīgas satiksme (2020). Rīgas satiksmes informācija atlaižu saņēmējiem par jauno kārtību sabiedriskā transporta izmantošanā Rīgā, 28.03.2020, at <https://www.rigassatiksmes.lv/lv/aktualitates/-rigas-satiksmes-informacija-atlaizu-sanemejiem-par-jauno-kartibu-sabiedriski-transporta-izmantosana-riga/>

³⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/HospissLV/posts/154915446073365>

³¹ Paliēc-majas. Lv (2020), Support to medical staff, at <https://paliēc-majas.lv/atbalsts-medicinas-darbiniekam/?fbclid=IwAR3LkdQgEdhSzDb4Fc9N7FKF4tZI2Gnnl1F7TjoYqPq6RDDvi9nAErAxnqM>

1.2.4 Access to justice

Changes to the Cabinet Order No. 103 (adopted 12 March 2020) “Regarding declaration of the emergency situation” allowing the gatherings of maximum 25 persons at the event at the same time (Article 4.5.1.) have also affected courts.³²

Court hearings must be held in compliance with the requirement of the 2 meter distance and with no more than 25 persons per one court room.³³ The courthouse will provide face masks and disinfectants, but media representatives, lawyers, state prosecutors, representatives of the institutions and other audience will have to provide the face masks by themselves. The priority will be given to the cases which previously could not be reviewed in the written procedure.³⁴

The changes and amendments to the law “On the operations of state authorities during the emergency situations related to the spread of Covid-19” that came into force on May 12, impose new regulations in the field of access to justice.³⁵ Before May 12, the participant had the right to request the extension or renewal of the procedural time limit in the administrative proceedings, after May 12 the formulation became less restrictive, meaning that the “right” was replaced by “may request” and in addition it was regulated that such reason must be justified by an institution, a court or a judge. It was also added that the request for the renewal of the time limit shall be submitted once the objective circumstance have ceased to exist. Analogous amendment was made for civil proceedings, stating that if the procedural time limit expired during the emergency situation, the court may upon a reasoned request from the participant to extend or renew the procedural time limit (Article 4(2¹).

With the new amendments the Legal Aid Administration shall organise legal counselling on the issues that have occurred due to the emergency situation (pandemic) by phone or in writing, using the information line 116006 "Hotline for victims of crime" and online consultation tool (Article 40).³⁶ The categories of matters are family law, safety from the violence, labour disputes, performance of obligation, recovery of compensation, the rights of victim. Three official web pages of the institutions informed on their own official web pages that free legal counselling will be available during the working days from 10 am until 4 pm from May 18 until May 29.³⁷ The provision of these consultations, organized by the Legal Aid Administration, will continue even after the end of the emergency

³² Latvia, Cabinet Order No. 103 “Regarding declaration of the emergency situation” (*Ministru kabineta rīkojums Nr. 103 “Par ārkārtējās situācijas izsludināšanu”*), 12 March, 2020.

<https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/313191-regarding-declaration-of-the-emergency-situation>

³³ Latvia, Latvian Courts (*Latvijas tiesas*), Latvian courts will resume court hearings (*Latvijas tiesas pakāpeniski atsāks skatīt lietas klātienē*) (2020), press release, 12 May 2020. <https://tiesas.lv/aktualitates/latvijas-tiesas-pakapeniski-atsaks-skatit-lietas-klatienē-9577>

³⁴ Latvia, Courts of Latvia (*Latvijas tiesas*), Latvian courts will resume court hearings (*Latvijas tiesas pakāpeniski atsāks skatīt lietas klātienē*) (2020), press release, 12 May 2020.

<https://tiesas.lv/aktualitates/latvijas-tiesas-pakapeniski-atsaks-skatit-lietas-klatienē-9577>

³⁵ Latvia, The law on the operation of state authorities during the emergency situation related to the spread of Covid-19 (*Likums “Par valsts institūciju darbību ārkārtējās situācijas laikā saistība ar Covid-19 izplatību*), 5 April 2020. <https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/313730-on-the-operation-of-state-authorities-during-the-emergency-situation-related-to-the-spread-of-covid-19>

³⁶ Latvia, The law on the operation of state authorities during the emergency situation related to the spread of Covid-19 (*Likums “Par valsts institūciju darbību ārkārtējās situācijas laikā saistība ar Covid-19 izplatību*), 5 April 2020 <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/313730-par-valsts-instituciju-darbibu-arkartejas-situacijas-laika-saistiba-ar-covid-19-izplatibu>

³⁷ Latvia, Courts of Latvia (*Latvijas tiesas*) (2020), Free remote legal counsellings (*Bezmaksas attālinātās juristu konsultācijas*) press release, 21.05., (<https://tiesas.lv/aktualitates/bezmaksas-attalinatas-juristu-konsultacijas-9589>

Latvia, The Court Administration (*Tiesu administrācija*). Free remote legal counsellings (*Bezmaksas attālinātās juristu konsultācijas*) (2020), press release, 21.05., Latvia, The Court Administration (*Tiesu administrācija*). Free remote legal counsellings (*Bezmaksas attālinātās juristu konsultācijas*) (2020), press release, 21.05, at

Due to the reported increase in the incidence of domestic violence during the pandemic, a video was published about how to submit an application for temporary protection order against violence in court. From 13 March until 7 May 2020, 146 applications on temporary protection order were received by courts compared with 194 during the same period in 2019, thus fewer by 24%. A judge reminded that decisions on protection orders are taken within one day.³⁸

From March 13 until May 15, the courts of the first instance received 7 389 cases and 7 523 case have been reviewed, the courts of the appeal have received 1 534 and reviewed 1 469 cases respectively.³⁹ Compared with the same time period in 2019, the courts of the first instance in 2020 received 18% fewer cases and 24% fewer cases have been reviewed. The courts of the appeal have received 4% fewer cases and have reviewed 6% fewer cases.⁴⁰

The number of court hearings that took place via video conference from March 16 until the end of May is 508, an increase by 10% compared with the same period in 2019. The video conference has been used more often with prisons in criminal cases. During the pandemic video conference facilities were installed in the State Border Guard, video conferencing has also been resolved with Court Expertise Bureau.⁴¹

1.2.5 Freedom of movement

According to the Article 4.16.2 of the Order Nr.103 (as amended on 14 May 2020 with the Article 1.13 of the Order Nr.258 of the Cabinet of Ministers⁴²) persons are entitled to move via the international passenger air, sea, bus and railway transport without restrictions within the three Baltic states, i.e. to and from Estonia and Lithuania, from 15 May 2020. Article 4.16.4 of the same order provides the right for the Minister of Transport to impose restrictions and conditions for the passengers transport movement. No self-isolation is necessary in these cases. This is the first "travel bubble" in Europe since

https://www.ta.gov.lv/LV/aktualitates_17/informacija_54/bezmaksas_attalinatas_juristu_konsultacijas.html_C2_249

Latvia, The Legal Aid Administration (*Juridiskās palīdzības administrācija*) (2020). Free remote legal counsellings (*Bezmaksas attālinātās juristu konsultācijas*), press release, 21.05.

<https://www.jpa.gov.lv/informacija-presei/bezmaksas-attalinatas-juristu-konsultacijas>

³⁸ Latvia, Courts of Latvia (Latvijas tiesas) (2020), The head of the Riga city Vidzemes region court Iveta Krēvica: The courts also accepts the applications on temporary protection against violence (*Rīgas pilsētas Vidzemes priekšpilsētas tiesas priekšsēdētāja Iveta Krēvica: Arī ārkārtas situācijas laikā tiesas pieņem pieteikumus par pagaidu aizsardzību pret vardarbību*) press release, 12.05. <https://tiesas.lv/aktualitates/rigas-pilsetas-vidzemes-priekspilsetas-tiesas-priekssedetaja-iveta-krevica-ari-arkartas-situacijas-l-9578>

³⁹ Latvia, Courts of Latvia (Latvijas tiesas). Infographic about the reviewed cases from 13.03.2020 until 15.05.2020. (Infografika par lietu izskatīšanu laika periodā no 13.03.2020.-15.05.2020 (2020), press release, 19 May 2020 <https://tiesas.lv/Media/Default/Topicality/Lietu%20izskat%C4%AB%C5%A1ana%20%C4%ABdz%2015.05.2020..pdf>

⁴⁰ Latvia, Courts of Latvia (Latvijas tiesas). Infographic about the reviewed cases from 13.03.2020 until 15.05.2020. (Infografika par lietu izskatīšanu laika periodā no 13.03.2020.-15.05.2020) (2020), press release, 19 May 2020 <https://tiesas.lv/Media/Default/Topicality/Lietu%20izskat%C4%AB%C5%A1ana%20%C4%ABdz%2015.05.2020..pdf>

⁴¹ Tiesas.LV (2020). Courts Could also Work Remotely in the Future (*Tiesas arī turpmāk varētu strādāt attālināti*), 05.06, <https://tiesas.lv/aktualitates/tiesas-ari-turpmak-varetu-stradat-attalinati-9612>.

⁴² Latvia. The Cabinet of Ministers. Order Nr.258 of 14 May 2020 Amendments to the Order Nr. 103 of 12 March 2020 of the Cabinet of Ministers "On Declaring the State of Emergency" (*Grozījumi Ministru kabineta 2020. gada 12. marta rīkojumā Nr. 103 "Par ārkārtējās situācijas izsludināšanu"*), Article 1.13 at <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/314699-grozijumi-ministru-kabineta-2020-gada-12-marta-rikojuma-nr-103-par-arkartejas-situacijas-izsludinasanu->

nations began shutting their borders earlier this year in response to the coronavirus outbreak.⁴³ Apart from self-isolation requirement, there are no internal movement restrictions for other groups of persons. Before return to the Republic of Latvia the person shall sign the written confirmation (including the address of residence where person will be accessible) of all the precautions, including the self-isolation.⁴⁴ As of 14 May the mandatory 14 day self-isolation was no longer required for Latvian nationals and permanent residents, as well as foreigners who over the last 14 days had not visited other countries, except for Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. On 2 June, the government amended the order, and no longer required self-isolation if persons had not visited other countries during the last 14 days, except for Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and countries published on the website of the Diseases Prevention and Control Centre with cumulative Covid 19 cases that during 14 days had not exceeded 15 cases per 100 000 residents.⁴⁵

The national airline “Air Baltic” resumed direct flights from Riga, Tallinn and Vilnius since May 18 with new health measures on board and at airports. Since then flights have restarted to Helsinki, Munich, Berlin, Amsterdam, Vienna, Dusseldorf.⁴⁶

The asylum procedure has not been changed. No amendments to the external or internal legal acts regarding asylum have been adopted in the reference period.⁴⁷ No additional restrictions regarding the standards for asylum applications have been imposed. At the same time, procedures of receiving persons back to the responsible state under the Dublin regulation⁴⁸ do not take place due to restrictions of movement outside the country.

Implementing the right provided in Article 53 of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation Nr.254 “Internal Rules of Procedure of Accommodation Premises for Detained Foreigners and Asylum Seekers”⁴⁹ the head of the Accommodation Center has imposed general prohibition to visit the premises and also restricted meetings or use of collective facilities, therefore, the Accommodation Centre of Detained Foreigners “Daugavpils” is closed for visits until 9 June 2020. The Accommodation Centre in Mucenieki has been open for legal aid providers upon the appointment and only one room is accessible for such purpose (special hygiene requirements are provided there). Mentoring services remain

⁴³ BBC.COM. (2020). Coronavirus: Baltic States open a pandemic ‘travel bubble’, 15 May, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-52673373>

⁴⁴ Latvia. Cabinet of Ministers. Order Nr. 103 of 12 March 2020 of the Cabinet of Ministers “On Declaring the State of Emergency”, Article 4.19.¹ (as amended with Article 1.1. of the Order Nr. 257 of 12 May 2020 at <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/314643-grozijumi-ministru-kabineta-2020-gada-12-marta-rikojuma-nr-103-par-arkartejas-situacijas-izsludinasanu->) at <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/313191>

⁴⁵ Amendment to the Order 103 On Declaring the State of Emergency of 12 March 2020 (*Grozījums Ministru kabineta 2020. gada 12. marta rīkojumā Nr. 103 "Par ārkārtējās situācijas izsludināšanu"*), 02.06., at <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/315143-grozijums-ministru-kabineta-2020-gada-12-marta-rikojuma-nr-103-par-arkartejas-situacijas-izsludinasanu->

⁴⁶ Airbaltic.com (2020). Travel updates, <https://www.airbaltic.com/en/travel-updates>

⁴⁷ The verification has been made at the official data base of legal acts likumi.lv, and also the home page of the State Border Guard (<http://www.rs.gov.lv/>) and the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (<https://www.pmlp.gov.lv/lv/>)

⁴⁸ The EU. Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person. At <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2013/604/oj>

⁴⁹ Latvia. Cabinet of Ministers. Regulation Nr.254 of 16 May 2017 “Internal Rules of Procedure of Accommodation Premises for Detained Foreigners and Asylum Seekers” (Aizturēto ārzemnieku un patvēruma meklētāju izmitināšanas telpu iekšējās kārtības noteikumi) at <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/290847-aiztureto-arzemnieku-un-patveruma-mekletaju-izmitinasanas-telpu-ieksejas-kartibas-noteikumi>

available, as does access to a psychologist, child custody court official. Latvian language training remains accessible to asylum seekers.

1.3 Impact of measures on particular groups

Select the three most relevant groups from the following:

- *persons with disabilities*

With the amendments of the Disability Law on 23 March, decisions on disability by State Health and Workability Expertise Commission have been automatically prolonged for six months without repeated determination of disability.⁵⁰ A single benefit in the amount of EUR 150 will be paid to parents receiving family benefit for a child with disability to mitigate the consequences of covid-19 pandemic when schools, day care centres have been closed and access to health care services has been limited.⁵¹

State aid for children with celiac disease continued during the emergency situation, i.e. if the period specified in the medical certificate expires during the specified emergency situation or within three months after the end of the emergency situation and the necessary medical certificate has not been submitted, the term of validity of the certificate is extended for a period of up to six months, but not longer than until the issuance of a new medical certificate.⁵²

- *homeless people*

In May, 14 residents of women's shelter for homeless in the capital Riga tested positive for Covid-19. 65 homeless women stay in the shelter and all have been tested. The illness is occurring with minor symptoms or without symptoms, all have been isolated in a wing with a separate entrance/exit and sanitary annex. Since 21 May quarantine has been imposed and the shelter is guarded by the Riga Municipal police. There have been difficulties with ensuring walks in the outdoor yard as it is shared by other women living in the shelter who work in the garden and greenhouse. Women who have received the permission of the treating doctor to cease isolation or in whose respect the self-isolation period has ended, may leave the shelter.⁵³ On 20 May the Health Minister issued an order lifting the quarantine in the shelter for homeless run by a religious organisation.⁵⁴ The shelter was quarantined⁵⁵ for two weeks as 27 of 138 individuals accommodated there became infected with Covid-19, two were hospitalised and one died.

⁵⁰ LVPORTALS (2020). Automātiski pagarinās iepriekšējos lēmumus par invaliditāti, 22.03, at <https://lvportals.lv/skaidrojumi/314447-automatiski-pagarinas-ieprieksejos-lemumus-par-invaliditati-2020>

⁵¹ LSM.LV (2020) Nosaka 150 eiro vienreizēju piemaksu pie pabalsta par bērnu invalīdu, 14.05, at <https://www.lsm.lv/raksts/zinas/latvija/nosaka-150-eiro-vienreizeju-piemaksu-pie-pabalsta-par-bernu-invalidu.a359783/>

⁵² Ministry of Welfare (Labklājības ministrija) (2020). State support for children with celiac disease will be continued (Valsts atbalsts ar celiakiju slimajiem bērniem tiks turpināts), 31.03, at <https://www.mk.gov.lv/lv/aktualitates/valsts-atbalsts-ar-celiakiju-slimajiem-berniem-tiks-turpinats>

⁵³ LSM.LV (2020). Ar covid-19 inficētajām sieviešu patversmes iemitniecēm slimība norit bez simptomiem, 17 May, at <https://www.lsm.lv/raksts/zinas/latvija/ar-covid-19-inficetajam-sieviesu-patversmes-iemitniecem-slimiba-norit-bez-simptomiem-a360118/>; Delfi.lv (2020). Ar covid-19 saslimušais Rīgas sieviešu patversmes darbinieks jau izvesēlojies, 28 May, at <https://www.delfi.lv/news/national/politics/ar-covid-19-saslimusais-rigas-sieviesu-patversmes-darbinieks-jau-izveselojies.d?id=52178371>

⁵⁴ Veselības ministra rīkojums Nr 110. Par karantīnas režīma atcelšanu, 20.05, at <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/314851-par-karantinas-rezima-atcelšanu>

⁵⁵ Ministry of Health (*Veselības ministrija*). Order nr 65 of 30.03.2020 “On Imposing of the Quarantine Regime” Veselības ministrijas 30.03.2020. rīkojumu Nr.65 “Par karantīnas režīma noteikšanu”.

- *Roma*

N/A

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

Since 12 May prisons can organise activities related to spiritual care and leisure time without the participation of third parties and provided that no more than 25 persons are present and observing the 2 metre distance. Implementation of resocialisation programmes can also be resumed in line with the same requirements. Work with collecting the necessary documents for preparing prisoner identification documents has also been allowed. Working groups of prison staff established in prisons to work with prisoner suicidal behaviour are allowed to resume their work. All other restrictions introduced during the state of emergency remain in force.⁵⁶ There have been no covid-19 infections in the Latvian prisons. During the pandemic the prison system received 600 persons.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Latvian Prison Administration (Ieslodzījumu vietu pārvalde) (2020), 12 May, at <http://www.ievp.gov.lv/index.php/415-sakara-ar-arkartejas-situacijas-pagarinasanu-lidz-9-junijam-un-dazu-valsti-noteikto-ierobezojumu-mikstinasanu-ir-veiktas-izmainas-attieciba-uz-pasakumiem-un-ierobezojumiem-kas-ieviesti-ieslodzijuma-vietas>

⁵⁷ LSM.LV (2020). Atvēl 0,5 miljonus eiro piemaksā ieslodzījuma vietu pārvaldē strādājošajiem, 12.05, at <https://www.lsm.lv/raksts/zinas/latvija/atvel-05-miljonus-eiro-piemaksam-ieslodzijuma-vietu-parvalde-stradajosajiem.a359516/>

2 Impact on fundamental rights of older people

Please provide information under each title / sub-title; and indicate n/a when no information available.

2.1 Data/statistics

Where available, data should be disaggregated by age groups and sex.

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.

As of 2 June, 111 404 COVID-19 tests have been conducted in Latvia and 1% have been found positive, 1 071 persons have been infected, and 24 persons have died. 760 persons have recovered.⁵⁸ Of the 24 COVID-19 related deaths, 7 have been in the age group 50-59, 1 in the age group 60-69, seven – 70-79, nine – 80+). Of the 24 deaths 75% are men, 25% - women.

Among those diagnosed with COVID-19, 137 (60 women, 77 men) are in the age group 60-69, 71 (37 women, 34 men) in the age group 70-79, 63 (46 women, 17 men) in the age group 80+.

Among all age groups, the largest number of those infected with COVID-19 – 210 are in the age group 30-39 (94 women, 116 men).⁵⁹

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.

According to the information of the Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (*Slimību kontroles un profilakses centrs*), as of 1 June 2020, a total of 95 COVID-19 cases were registered in long-term social care and social rehabilitation institutions, including 71 cases of infection to clients and 24 employees. Seven (9, 9%) infected customers have died. The share of registered COVID-19 cases in institutions is 8.9% of all COVID-19 cases. Most of the patients had other serious chronic illnesses.

2.1.3 Number and type of institutions affected

According to the information of the Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (*Slimību kontroles un profilakses centrs*) covid-19 has been diagnosed in 12 social care homes⁶⁰. The largest number of infected persons has been diagnosed in one social care home of “Mārsnēni” of the Priekule County – 39 clients and eight staff members.⁶¹ Two of those infected died. Riga Social care Centre “Gaiļezers” had 19 clients infected, of whom 3 died. 1 staff member was also infected.⁶² Overall infection incidence and death rates in institutions in Latvia have been lower than in many EU countries.

The official statistical data on mortality rates from COVID-19 include deaths of older persons in care homes. There has been no critique of data collection with respect to care homes.

⁵⁸ <https://spkc.gov.lv/lv/tavai-veselibai/aktualitate-par-jauno-koronavi>

⁵⁹ Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (*Slimību kontroles un profilakses centrs*) (2020), Death cases with Covid-19 in Latvia by age and gender (*Mirušo skaits ar Covid-19 Latvijā vecuma un dzimuma sadalījums*), with update until 2 June 2020, at <https://infogram.com/covid-19-izplatiba-latvija-1hzj4ozwvnzo2pw>

⁶⁰ Social care centres are homes for persons of pension age or persons with disability who due to their age or health status cannot take care of themselves. These do not include blind persons or persons with serious mental illnesses. Around 6 000 persons reside in the social care homes.

⁶¹ <https://spkc.gov.lv/lv/tavai-veselibai/aktualitate-par-jauno-koronavi>, IR (2020). *Vīrus epicentre, 20.-23.* (available to subscribers only)

⁶² SPKC.LV (2020). Aktualitātes par Covid-19, <https://spkc.gov.lv/lv/tavai-veselibai/aktualitate-par-jauno-koronavi>

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

According to the investigative programme “De Facto” of the Latvian Public TV Channel 1 Covid-19 could have been detected in the social care home of “Mārsnēni” at least a week earlier. On 24 April one client was diagnosed with Covid-19. On 6 May one patient complained about high temperature. Although the ambulance arrived, he was neither tested on Covid-19, nor taken to hospital. Several days later three clients of the social care home with symptoms of pneumonia were taken to the hospital and diagnosed with Covid-19. After four more days, testing of all clients and staff began, and 17 persons were diagnosed with Covid-19. The social care home acknowledged it was initially unable to provide the isolation of sick clients. One of the clients who had earlier been treated in a regional hospital had tested negative, however, after the arrival back in the social care home, had tested positive. The Ministry of Welfare guidelines requiring the quarantine of patients returning from hospitals were updated on 21 May. The Minister of Health has informed that social care homes will remain the focus of attention and in the future the testing will take place at regular intervals.⁶³

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.)

Following the adoption of the Law “On the work of state institutions during the state of emergency in connection with the spread of Covid-19” on 5 April (in force until 10 June) ⁶⁴, the Ministry of Welfare shortly issued a guidance on the application of Article 23 which suspends the placement of new clients in institutions. Exceptions are made for the social rehabilitation services to persons, victims of violence in crises centres and the placement of children who have remained without parental care in long-term social care and social rehabilitation institution or crises centre or temporary accommodation in shelters and overnight shelters of persons without a place of residence. The provision is applicable to all types of institutions irrespective of the type of institution and client target group. Social services in the place of residence are to be provided remotely except for cases when the service cannot be provided remotely, e.g. home care service in the client’s place of residence if cannot be provided by a family member. In cases, when there is a risk that the lack of a social service may endanger a person’s health and life, by individually assessing to provide the service in person within 14 days in separated premises, including the sanitary annex), to ensure that the personnel involved in the care of the client is not involved the

⁶³ LSM.LV (2020). Covid-19 uzliesmojumu Mārsnēnos varēja atklāt daudz ātrāk, 24 May, at <https://www.lsm.lv/raksts/zinas/latvija/covid-19-uzliesmojumu-marsnenos-vareja-atklat-daudz-agrak.a361062/>

⁶⁴ Law “On the work of state institutions during the state of emergency in connection with the spread of Covid-19” Par valsts institūciju darbību ārkārtējās situācijas laikā saistībā ar Covid-19 izplatību, 03.04.2020 with updates until 07.05.2020, at <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/313730-par-valsts-instituciju-darbibu-arkartejas-situacijas-laika-saistiba-ar-covid-19-izplatibu>

care of other clients, that it is possible to provide the personnel with individual protective equipment and other essential conditions (the disinfection of premises).⁶⁵

In March, the Centre for Disease Prevention and Control issued recommendations for social care homes. These include information about the spread of Covid-19, clients at risk (old age, those with chronic illnesses, low immunity, etc.) preventive and safety measures that need to be undertaken that include, e.g. physical distancing measures for staff and clients, provision of food and meals, provision of thermometers for individual use, call buttons; personal protective measures, e.g. provision of disinfectants, soap, drinking water and single use cups, instructions for social care home staff; health screening measures, e.g. documenting health screening of staff before and upon finishing work, paying attention to health related complaints by clients of homes, particularly patients with mental health issues; isolation and care of patients diagnosed with Covid-19: in case of individual/collective infection, hygiene, personal safety measures, provision of food; maintaining cleanliness of premises; individual protective equipment.⁶⁶

On 20 April, Health Inspection also issued recommendations about the premises for quarantine and the isolation of Covid-19 infected persons. These include separate entrances, ventilation, provision of disinfectants, sanitary annexes, provision of meals, cleaning of premises, washing of bedlinen, clothes, collection of garbage, etc.⁶⁷

Separate guidelines for Providing Care in Long-Term Social Care and Social Rehabilitation institutions for the Prevention of Spread of Covid-19 infection⁶⁸ were published in the end of March. After mass infection in one of the social care homes for the elderly, on 21 May, the Ministry of Welfare issued [Additional recommendations for long-term social care and social rehabilitation institutions to prevent new mass infection cases with Covid-19.](#)

Upon the request of the Health Ministry, the Ministry of Welfare issued repeated appeals for the social care homes to use the opportunity to take tests by both patients and the staff.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Ministry of Welfare (*Labklājības ministrija*) (2020), at <http://www.lm.gov.lv/lv/2-uncategorised/91770-skaidrojums-par-likuma-par-valsts-instituciju-darbibu-arkartejas-situacijas-laika-saistiba-ar-covid-19-izplatibu-23-panta-piemerosanu>

⁶⁶ Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (*Slimību kontroles un profilakses centrs*) (2020), To social care homes in connection with Covid-19 (*Sociālā aprūpes iestādēm saistībā ar Covid-19*), at <https://spkc.gov.lv/lv/tavai-veselibai/aktualitate-par-jauno-koronavi/rekomendacijas-socialas-aprupe>

⁶⁷ Veselības inspekcijas rekomendācijas telpām karantīnas pasākumu veikšanai un Covid-19 inficēto personu izolēšanai, 20.04.2020, On at http://www.lm.gov.lv/lv/?option=com_content&view=article&id=91683

⁶⁸ Latvia, Ministry of Welfare (2020). Guidelines for Providing Care in Long-Term Social Care and Social Rehabilitation institutions for the Prevention of Spread of Covid-19 infection (*Vadlīnijas aprūpes nodrošināšanai ilgstošas sociālās aprūpes un sociālās rehabilitācijas institūcijās (SAC) Covid-19 izplatības ierobežošanai*) <http://lm.gov.lv/lv/aktuali/aktuali-list/91698-covid-19-noradijumi-pakalpojumu-sniedzjiem-ilgstosas-socialas-aprupes-institucijas>

⁶⁹ Ministry of Welfare (*Labklājības ministrija*) (2020). We invite to use the screening on COVID-19 for the clients and staff of the social care homes offered by the Emergency Medical Assistance Service. (*Aicinām izmantot Neatliekamās medicīniskās palīdzības dienesta piedāvāto iespēju veikt skrīningu uz COVID-19 sociālās aprūpes centru klientiem un darbiniekiem*), <http://www.lm.gov.lv/lv/2-uncategorised/91783-nmpd-piedavata-iespeja-veikt-skriningu-sac-klientiem-un-darbiniekiem>

- in the community in general

The Health Ministry and the Centre for Disease Prevention and Control issued several leaflets in Latvian and Russian for senior citizens “On FAQ by Seniors”⁷⁰, “Protect Yourself from Covid-19”, including on why senior citizens need to take extra caution, what to do if they need medicine, food and other necessary things, what to do if they need to see a doctor, how to avoid infection, can they go out in open air, etc.⁷¹

Since 24 March a toll-free line, set up by the State Chancellery and telecommunication company “Tet” has been operating to provide answers to questions about Covid-19 in Latvian and in Russian. The operators of the toll-free line also refer the callers to other services (except emergency services).⁷² A special government webpage on Covid-19 related information has also been set-up with Latvian, Russian⁷³ and English language⁷⁴ sections. Each week-day summaries on key issues of the day are published on the website.⁷⁵

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

There is no public information about such guidelines or protocols on patient triage that apply age as the main and decisive criterion.

2.2.3 Targeted testing of residents and staff in residential care homes

- Is this laid down in a targeted policy/measure or done on an ad-hoc basis when a case has been detected?

Mass testing of residents and staff in social care homes began in mid-April.⁷⁶ Employees of social care and [homeless] shelter institutions, residents of social care institutions and shelters are included among six priority patient groups. In conducting tests with these groups, test samples should be marked with P – on priority basis to ensure that the epidemiologists of the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention receive information about the tests results and can undertake epidemiological investigation as fast as possible.⁷⁷

In case of acute respiratory illness symptoms, clients of social care homes and staff can be referred for tests by the head of the institution. In line with the decision of epidemiologists tests are to be conducted in affected social care home or shelter by Emergency Medical Assistance Service (*Neatliekamās medicīniskās palīdzības dienests*).

⁷⁰ FAQ by seniors about Covid-19 (Senioru biežāk uzdotie jautājumi par Covid-19), <http://www.auce.lv/covid-19/index.php?cmd=get&cid=17534>

⁷¹ https://saldus.lv/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/VM-COVID-info-senioriem-LV-A4_compressed.pdf

⁷² State Chancellery (Valsts kanceleja) (2020). Izveido vienoto diennakts tālruni ar covid-19 saistīto jautājumu noskaidrošanai, 24.03, at <https://www.mk.gov.lv/lv/aktualitates/izveido-vienoto-diennakts-talruni-8345-ar-covid-19-saistito-jautajumu-noskaidrosanai>

⁷³ In Russian, <https://spkc.gov.lv/ru/dlja-obshchjestva/covid-19/>

⁷⁴ In English, <https://spkc.gov.lv/en/for-general-public/covid-19>

⁷⁵ <https://covid19.gov.lv/>

⁷⁶ SPKC (2020). State funded Covid-19 tests: who should take tests and how to proceed (Valsts apmaksātas Covid-19 analīzes un <https://spkc.gov.lv/lv/tavai-veselibai/aktualitate-par-jauno-koronavi/valsts-apmaksatas-covid-19-anal>

⁷⁷ Ibid.

Upon the request of the Health Ministry, the Ministry of Welfare issued repeated appeals for the social care homes to use the opportunity to take tests by both patients and the staff.⁷⁸

- Data/statistics on testing & frequency of testing – institutions, residents, staff

By 2 June, 16,500 persons had been tested in social care centres and homeless shelters, including clients and staff.⁷⁹ Patients and staff in the most affected social care home “Mārsnēni” have been tested five times.⁸⁰

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

With the setting of the state of emergency, the Minister of Welfare sent recommendations to all institutions under its subordination, including state social care centres and institutions, providing state funded social care services to persons with serious and grave mental health problems. A large number of social care providers are based in municipalities, thus on 17 March the MoW sent recommendations to municipalities on emergency measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in municipal social care services, orphan (child custody) courts and institutions providing social care. In line with recommendations, starting with 13 March 2020 state funded social care institutions were instructed to introduce quarantine – cease visits, placement of new clients and prohibit clients from leaving the territory of the institution. The situation had not changed in May.

2.2.5 Restrictive measures for older people living in the community

On 27 March, the Riga City Council interim administration suspended discount tickets for pensioners, students, persons with III degree disability, Chernobyl disaster frontline workers, free tickets for senior citizens over 75, etc. It retained full discount for public transport tickets to persons with I and II degree disability, pre-school age children, state and municipal police officers, teachers of municipal educational institutions. Social workers working in the institutions under the subordination of the Riga City Council Welfare Department, health care personnel working in Riga City health care capital companies can use the public transport for free during the state of emergency.⁸¹

Latvian Pensioner Federation (Latvijas pensionāru federācija) addressed several MPs with a request to re-introduce discount tickets from 8.00-10.00, however the proposal was turned down by the parliament on 7 May.⁸²

⁷⁸ Ministry of Welfare (*Labklājības ministrija*) (2020). We invite to use the screening on COVID-19 for the clients and staff of the social care homes offered by the Emergency Medical Assistance Service. (*Aicinām izmantot Neatliekamās medicīniskās palīdzības dienesta piedāvāto iespēju veikt skrīningu uz COVID-19 sociālās aprūpes centru klientiem un darbiniekiem*), <http://www.lm.gov.lv/lv/2-uncategorised/91783-nmpd-piedavata-iespeja-veikt-skriningu-sac-klientiem-un-darbiniekiem>

⁷⁹ State Emergency Medical Service (*Nacionālās Neatliekamās palīdzības dienests*) (2020), [NMPD: “Mārsnēnu” vadītājas izteikumi presē ir nepamatoti un apmelojoši](#), Press release, 2 June 2020.

⁸⁰ LSM.LV (2020). Piekto reizi veiks testus Covid-19 skartajā aprūpes centrā “Mārsnēni”, 02.06, https://www.lsm.lv/raksts/zinas/latvija/piekto-reizi-veiks-testus-covid-19-skartaja-apruses-centra-marsneni.a362244/?utm_source=rss&utm_campaign=rss&utm_medium=links

⁸¹ Rīgas satiksme (2020). Rīgas satiksmes informācija atlaižu saņēmējiem par jauno kārtību sabiedriskā transporta izmantošanā Rīgā, 28.03.2020, at <https://www.rigassatiksmes.lv/lv/aktualitates/-rigas-satiksmes-informacija-atlaizu-sanemejiem-par-jauno-kartibu-sabiedriskaja-transporta-izmantosana-riga/>

⁸² TVNET/LETA (2020). Noraida rosinājumu par atlaižu atjaunošanu senioriem Rīgas sabiedriskajā transportā pa dienu, 07.05., <https://www.tvnet.lv/6968226/noraida-rosinajumu-par-atlaizu-atjaunosanu-senioriem-rigas-sabiedriskaja-transporta-darba-dienu-vidu>

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

Please report on measures targeted at older people living in the community and in institutional care settings (e.g. home-based visits, mobile health care, other hospital treatment).

On 25 March, the Health Minister issued an order “On restricting the provision of health care services during the state of emergency”⁸³ determining the type and scope of services to be provided in state and private health institutions, which include 1) consultations and assistance by family doctors, emergency medical aid, vaccinations, services to cancer patients, HIV/AIDS, TB patients, psychiatric, trauma patients, health care services at home, services to ensure continuity of therapies, specialist consultation with chronic diseases (if possible remotely), oncological, life saving operations, operations preventing disability, dental services in acute cases, consultations to patients of infectious skin diseases and those with STD’s, rehabilitation services whose suspension can cause disability and loss of workability risks, ect.

On 20 April a range of planned health services were resumed, on 13 and 29 May secondary planned services were resumed, while on 3 June all health services will be resumed.⁸⁴

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

Please also report on any targeted measures for people with dementia.

Several supermarket chains such as “Rimi” introduced special shopping hours from 8.00-10.00 a.m. for senior citizens, expecting mothers and persons with disabilities, while the Riga Central Market introduced shopping hours for these groups from 11.00-15.00.

A volunteer movement “Remain at Home” (<https://paliec-majas.lv/>) was set up across the country to cater for the needs of those in self-isolation or any person unable to do shopping, walk their pets, or simply talk, etc. Health workers also disseminated information to their patients about the possibilities offered by the volunteer movement.

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

N/A

⁸³ Health Minister (*Veselības ministrs*) (2020), Order No 59 On Restricting the Provisions of Health Care Services during the State Of Emergency (Par veselības aprūpes pakalpojumu sniegšanas ierobežošanu ārkārtas situācijas laikā), <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/313481-par-veselibas-aprupes-pakalpojumu-sniegsanas-ierobezosanu-arkartejas-situacijas-laika>

⁸⁴ LVPORTALS.LV, at <https://lvportals.lv/skaidrojumi/314369-veselibas-aprupes-pakalpojumi-2020>