

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO COVID-19 in Mixed Migration Context in Bosnia and Herzegovina

SITUATION REPORT #38 / 07 December 2020

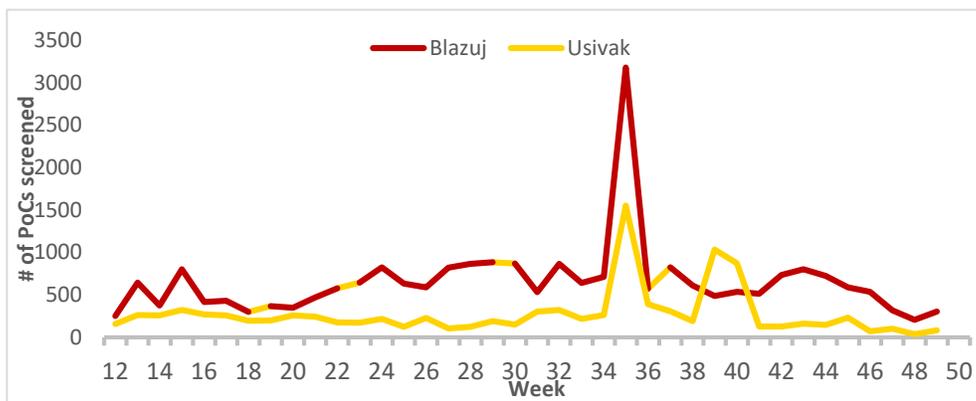
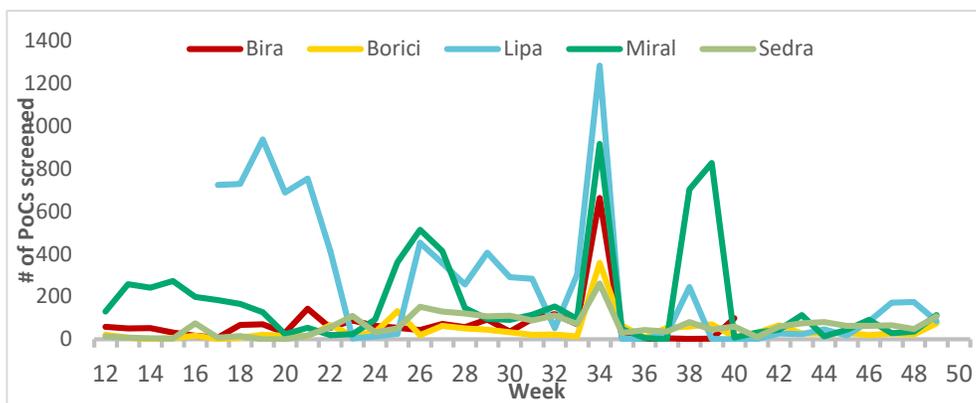
Reporting Period: 30/11 - 07/12 2020

http://drc.ba/covid19_resources

WEEKLY UPDATES:	HIGHLIGHTS
<p>10 PoCs exhibiting symptoms and isolated in reception facilities</p> <p>768 PoCs screened in reception facilities</p> <p>0 new PoCs confirmed positive for COVID-19</p> <p>CUMULATIVE:</p> <p>29 PoCs positive for COVID-19</p> <p>58,171 COVID-19 screenings in reception facilities</p> <p>349 PoCs tested for COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 94,944 cases of COVID-19 confirmed in BiH, 3,012 deaths and 59,488 recovered patients.¹ • 10 PoCs exhibiting COVID-19-like symptoms monitored by PHC and DRC medical teams in TRCs: 5 in TRC Miral, 2 in TRC Sedra and 3 in ETC Lipa. • 1 PoC positive for COVID-19, previously monitored in ETC Lipa, was transferred to TRC Miral symptomatic isolation. • 7 new PoCs exhibiting COVID-19-like symptoms referred to symptomatic isolation in reception centers: 4 in TRC Miral, 2 in TRC Sedra and 1 in ETC Lipa. • 371 PoCs referred to preventive isolation in reception facilities. • 768 PoCs screened for COVID-19 symptoms: all new arrivals to temporary reception facilities in BiH during the reporting week. • 261 PoCs monitored in preventive isolation by DRC Medical Officers (14 in TRC Miral, 128 in Sedra and 119 in Borici). • 1 PoC tested for COVID-19. Result confirmed negative <p>KEY DEVELOPMENTS AND CHALLENGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of PoCs present in ETC Lipa surpassed 1,600 during the week. On 3 December, due to an influx of PoCs from external locations, and due to the loosening of some rubhall structures, CCCM was forced to turn the preventive isolation in ETC Lipa into an accommodation zone.

¹ Official statistics for [Federation of BiH](#), [Republika Srpska](#) and [Brcko District](#)

- The lack of running water, functional sanitary facilities, lack of electricity and overall inadequate living conditions in ETC Lipa present a high risk for the health of PoCs, and for public health.
- During the week DRC, in cooperation with IOM, relocated the most vulnerable population out of the center into the already overcrowded TRC Miral, including medical cases and patients in symptomatic isolation. PHI USC and SFA were involved in the advisory process.



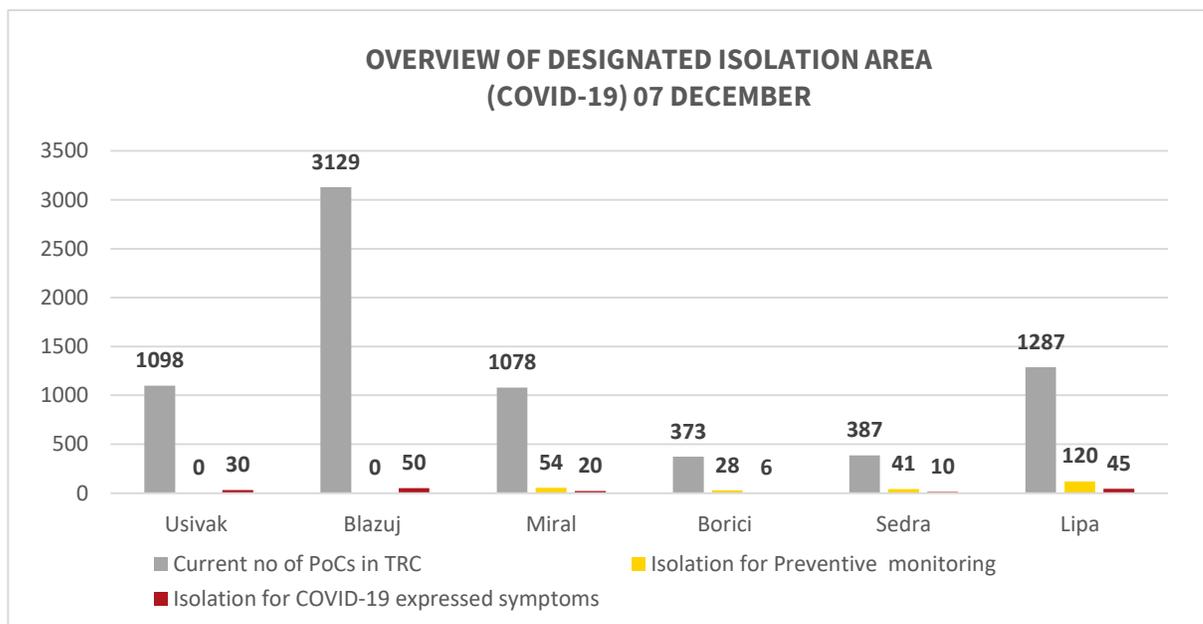
- The working hours of medical units have been modified in ETC Lipa, with the introduction of a rotation of two DRC medical teams on daily basis, in order to maintain the level of healthcare provision for the most vulnerable patients.
- A total of 237 PoCs were discharged from preventive isolation in TRCs in BiH, and 5 PoCs from symptomatic isolation, upon expiry of the isolation and monitoring period. In the same period, **50 PoCs left preventive isolation on their own.**
- **Outreach response:**
 - PoCs in out-of-site locations are provided with medical assistance by DRC and RC teams visiting the sites, delivering First Aid and performing medical screening of PoCs for COVID-19 symptoms.

- The unstable situation regarding the future of ETC Lipa is making planning of the response to medical cases in out-of-site locations difficult. Emergency coordination meetings regarding the general outreach response and COVID-19 response in USC are scheduled to happen in the next few days.

OPERATIONAL PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

- **COVID-19 Response in TRCs in BiH:**

- Capacities for preventive and symptomatic isolation in TRCs/ETC in USC remain stable. At the moment, a total of **243 beds** in TRCs/ETC in USC are available for preventive isolation and a total of **161 beds** for POCs with COVID-19 symptoms.
- In Sarajevo Canton, only symptomatic isolation premises are in use. A total of **80 beds**, **30** in TRC Usivak and **50** in TRC Blazuj, are available for isolation of PoCs with COVID-19 symptoms.



- In line with COVID-19 testing procedures for the local population, PoCs exhibiting mild or moderate symptoms are not tested, but frequently monitored in isolation areas by both PHC and DRC medical staff. MoH and PHIs are informed on daily basis on the conditions of these patients. Security of isolation areas needs to be improved in order to establish better compliance with COVID-19 preventive measures, since several beneficiaries left isolation during night hours.

- **Coordination with authorities and health actors:**

- Following the increased number of challenges regarding the health response in BiH, DRC has facilitated a thematic meeting “Healthcare for migrants and asylum seekers - key challenges and breakthroughs”, in which a significant part of discussion was focused on COVID-19. The conclusion of participants,

including MoH and WHO, was that the overall response regarding COVID-19, although challenging, has so far been efficient in preventing the spread of COVID-19 among the population of PoCs.

- Relocation of PoCs from Bosanska Bojna to family TRCs in USC was implemented in compliance with IPC measures for prevention of COVID-19 infection, as proposed by DRC. Upon arrival to TRCs, an intensive medical screening was organized by PHC and DRC medical teams inside TRCs, as well as setup of temporary preventive and symptomatic isolation areas in the centers.
- **Measures related to humanitarian staff:**
 - Camp Coordination and Camp Management Meetings and other large scale gatherings are recommended to be organized through online platforms (Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Skype, etc.), following the recommendations of the Federal Public Health Institute and DRC.
 - **Humanitarian staff working in the reception centers should continuously self-monitor².** In case humanitarian staff have been in contact with persons confirmed positive for COVID-19, they should inform their health provider and follow the suggested measures. **Staff exhibiting COVID-19 like symptoms, including fever, should suspend their presence from the reception centers until fully recovered. Additionally, information should be shared with DRC medical teams, to ensure contact tracing and mitigating the risk of spread of COVID-19 infection.**

MEASURES ANNOUNCED BY BIH AUTHORITIES

The Federal Ministry of Health issued an order by which all measures remain in force for additional 14 days. The order was issued on 04 December and is applied as of 07 December:

<https://covid19.fmoh.gov.ba/uploads/files/naredba%2007122020-662e98dbf23722f79a3733ae7a12ad7d0b4dd1c3.pdf>

MEDIA REPORTING

1. Bosnia reports 437 new coronavirus cases and 46 fatalities

Bosnian health officials reported 437 new Covid-19 cases on Monday, along with 60 virus-related fatalities.

<http://ba.n1info.com/English/NEWS/a493095/Bosnia-sees-another-60-COVID-19-fatalities-437-new-coronavirus-cases.html>

2. Bosnia records over 1,400 Deaths related to COVID-19 in November

In November 2020, 1,479 people lost their lives because of coronavirus in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thus, the number of deaths has more than doubled compared to the period from the beginning of the pandemic to November 1.

² The Federal Institute for Public Health has made available the online self-assessment test on COVID-19, available at <https://www.zzjzfbih.ba/covid-19/>

These are alarming data that can be found on the official website of the Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH, writes [Vijesti.ba](#). Namely, the number of deaths caused by the coronavirus as of December 1st at noon is 2,727, while exactly one month ago, i.e. on November 1, it was 1,248.

89,085 cases of coronavirus have been confirmed in Bosnia and Herzegovina so far.

[Bosnia records over 1,400 Deaths related to COVID-19 in November - Sarajevo Times](#)

3. Croatia makes new Decision on a Temporary Ban and Restriction of Crossings

The Civil Protection Headquarters of the Republic of Croatia has made a new decision on a temporary ban and restriction of crossings at Croatian border crossings. Under the new decision, third-country nationals, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, can enter Croatia only under certain conditions.

[Croatia makes new Decision on a Temporary Ban and Restriction of Crossings - Sarajevo Times](#)

4. Germany helping Bosnia overcome pandemic crisis with additional €5 mn

Germany approved an additional amount of €5 million to help Bosnia and Herzegovina mitigate negative consequences of the coronavirus pandemic, the German embassy confirmed on Wednesday.

[Germany helping Bosnia overcome pandemic crisis with additional €5 mn | N1 BA \(n1info.com\)](#)

5. Council of Ministers decides on Procurement of 1.2 Million Doses of Vaccines

At the session of Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina today, the Report of the Ministry of Civil Affairs on the conclusion of the Vaccine Procurement Agreement "*Commitment agreement-committed purchase arrangement*" between the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Global Alliance for Vaccines (GAVI) was adopted. The Minister and Deputy Minister of Civil Affairs, Ankica Gudeljevic and Sinisa Ilic, signed an agreement on the procurement of vaccines in September this year. It was said at the session that the procurement of 1,230,000 doses of vaccines against Covid-19 is planned, which, according to the announcements, could arrive in BiH in the first quarter of next year.

[Council of Ministers decides on Procurement of 1.2 Million Doses of Vaccines - Sarajevo Times](#)

6. WHO Europe Director concerned about coronavirus situation in the region

The Regional Director for Europe at the World Health Organization (WHO), Dr. Hans P. Kluge, told N1 in a press conference on Thursday that he is concerned about the situation in light of the coronavirus pandemic in southern Europe and urged governments to gradually implement stricter measures.

"I am definitely concerned, and not only about southern Europe, but also across the region. Why? Because the virus is not going to wait," he said.

"Countries need to gradually implement restrictive measures," he said, adding that this is not a call for introducing lockdowns, but gradual measures, *"depending on the severity of transmissions in the community, to be stricter."*

[WHO Europe Director concerned about coronavirus situation in the region | N1 BA \(n1info.com\)](#)

Stay informed – find the latest information from WHO or related sources:

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports/>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

<https://www.epi-win.com/>

We thank you for your responsible behavior in the interest of your own health, but also in the interest of the health of all the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina.