

DATUM

April 8, 2020



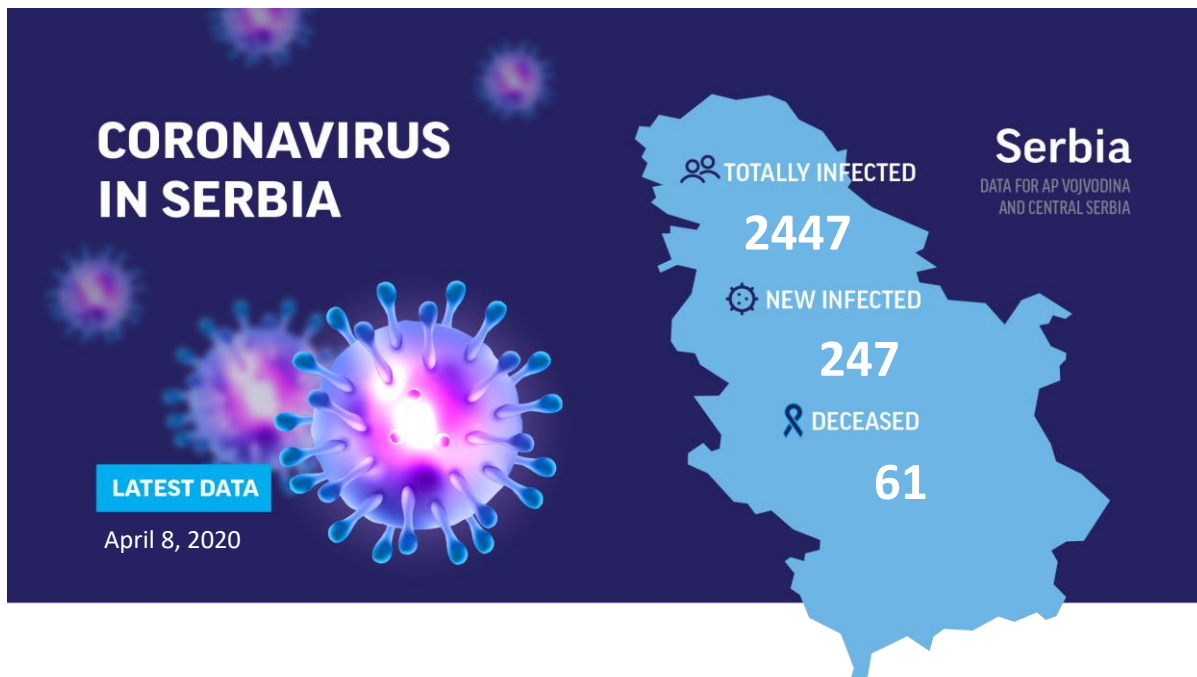
SPECIAL REPORT
CORONAVIRUS



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Caution is needed, virus at its most agile in the upcoming days

Dnevnik

Over the last 24 hours, 247 new cases of coronavirus infection have been confirmed in Serbia, bringing the total number of infected to 2,447. 1,394 patients are hospitalised, of which 109 are on ventilators. Three more people have died from the coronavirus over the past 24 hours – two men and one woman, with an average age of 62.66, bringing the total number of deaths to 61. Since the last report and until April 7 at 3 pm, 1,074 people were tested, which means that 9,626 people have been tested in total in Serbia so far. During the regular press conference of the Crisis Staff, epidemiologist Predrag Kon stated that we have reached a plateau in the last three days, which will last for another ten or so days. – During those two weeks, we should really implement the most restrictive measures we planned – Kon stated. Deputy Head of Batut Institute Darija Kisić Tepavčević stated that we have a stable number of infected in recent days, and even a small decline, during a week when there has been a spike in the number of infected in some other countries. She stated that this indicates we are on a good path, that we know what we are doing and that we are acting responsibly and conscientiously.

Quarantine for Belgrade and Niš a possibility

Politika

President Aleksandar Vučić said last night that he cannot rule out the option to isolate Belgrade and Niš as the biggest coronavirus hotbeds in Serbia. Vučić said that this decision will be made swiftly and efficiently and that citizens do not need to be informed about this decision 48 hours in advance. Additionally, it is certain that 24-hour curfew will be imposed in these two cities over the weekend, that is, from Friday afternoon to Monday morning. Vučić also said that people can forget family gatherings for Easter and that they will not be able to be with their families. “The situation is assessed daily, and doctors or experts will decide whether to introduce 24-hour curfew. We are making these decision to prevent having more deaths, to save lives. If these decisions are causing distress, I am sorry, but we will keep making them”, said the president.

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[No new coronavirus cases in the North, overall number remains 33](#)

kossev.info

Out of 25 citizens tested in the north of Kosovo, none are positive for coronavirus, said epidemiologist Aleksandar Antonijević from Kosovska Mitrovica Institute of Public Health. Ever since this Institute began sending samples to be tested for coronavirus in Torlak Institute and Kraljevo Veterinary Institute, a total of 210 have been tested. There are still 33 people positive for coronavirus in majority Serbian municipalities. Kosovska Mitrovica has confirmed 18 cases, Zvečan has 9 and Leposavić has three.

[Easier to obtain movement permits](#)

Dnevnik

In a conversation with Ombudsman Zoran Pašalić, Prime Minister Ana Brnabić stated that the difficulties citizens face when applying for permits to move during curfew will be eliminated as soon as possible. These are the permits for those who care for people with disabilities, elderly disabled person and children, and anyone who needs assistance from others, especially during the extended curfew, from Saturday at 1 pm to Monday at 5 am. Citizens will be able to apply for this permit electronically, and receive approval in the same manner, to make the whole system more efficient.

[Safest to sow with a permit during curfew](#)

Dnevnik

Optimal period for spring sowing has begun, which is why it should be completed as soon as possible, and so the farmers would not have legal issues due to the rules imposed because of the coronavirus, and so they would not rely on oral agreements and recommendations, it is safest to have permits for working after 5 pm when working in their fields. The police only issued warnings to farmers who were in the field or on the road in tractors in certain municipalities during the curfew, while one young farmer was arrested and fined with RSD 50,000 in Silbaš. In order to avoid this, it is best to wait for a permit. Farmers need to go to the Ministry of Agriculture's website, where there is a notice about how they can obtain a permit for moving after 5 pm.

[How reliable are coronavirus tests](#)

Politika

Taking Covid-19 swabs can now be done in special clinics at healthcare centres around Serbia, and given that more labs are now processing samples, results no longer take days, but less than 24 hours. Authorities said that they will begin mass testing in order to detect everyone infected and stop the disease from spreading. However, some people think our country doesn't have a large number of tests, and that they are unreliable. Health Ministry has told Politika daily that all tests are procured in accordance with WHO guidelines and that every test, in all parts of the world, has certain discrepancies. All labs that are testing the samples are equipped in line with WHO recommendations and standards.

[Vučić criticizes VMA, Dedinje hospitals...](#)

Tanjug

Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić said he was not happy with the attitude and unpreparedness of people at VMA and Dedinje hospitals and said that these hospitals will have to take in patients who do not have Covid-19. Vučić did not criticize VMA directly, but he said that VMA must admit patients who are not for coronavirus hospitals, and that there were issues. "They started doing a good job three days ago. They finally started admitting people", said the president, meaning patients who are not infected with Covid-19, but rather have other health issues.

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[Joksimović: We bought 75 ventilators from EU money](#)

Politika

So far, Serbia has bought 75 ventilators from the money approved by the EU. These ventilators haven't yet arrived in Serbia, but they are paid for, said Minister of European Integrations, Jadranka Joksimović, explaining that the ventilators haven't been delivered yet because of numerous restrictions, including export restrictions in certain countries. Joksimović said that since day one of the crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic, she has been in contact with EU representatives, asking them to repurpose the funds we haven't spend from IPA funds. She said that European Commissioner for Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Olivér Várhelyi immediately approved that EUR 93.4 million be repurposed, EUR 15 million of which was allocated directly for medical equipment, and the rest for the day after the crisis.

[China to gift two laboratories to Serbia](#)

Politika

System of laboratory samples taken from citizens who are suspected of having the coronavirus will be improved very soon in Serbia. Minister of Agriculture Branislav Nedimović stated this during a visit to the Specialist Veterinarian Institute in Niš, adding that an agreement for construction of two cutting-edge laboratories will be signed in Belgrade today, which will be a gift from China.

[Vulin and Shoygu on containing the coronavirus in Serbia](#)

Politika

Minister of Defence Aleksandar Vulin talked via video-link with Russian Minister of Defence Sergey Shoygu, who he thanked for the help that the Russian Federation sent to Serbia to fight the coronavirus, Ministry of Defence stated. Head of teams of Russian experts Major General Mikhail Chernyshov also participated in the conversation, and he reported to the ministers on the activities of Russian doctors and CBRN teams, who are disinfecting premises and medical institutions and examining patients suspected of having the coronavirus throughout Serbia.

[Đurić: Ventilator and 1,000 protective suits to be delivered to the hospital in Kosovska Mitrovica](#)

kossev.info

Head of the Office for Kosovo and Metohija Marko Đurić announced that a ventilator will be delivered to the Clinical Hospital Centre Kosovska Mitrovica today. According to CINS report, and data by the Public Health Institute of Serbia Dr Milan Jovanović Batut, 7 ventilators are being used in the Kosovska Mitrovica District, and one in Kosovo District. Đurić stated that 1,000 protective suits have been procured for workers at CHC Kosovska Mitrovica. He confirmed that 20 boxes of chloroquine have been delivered to CHC Kosovska Mitrovica, for patients undergoing the same treatment as in central Serbia. Thermometers, pulse oximeters, blood pressure monitors, 40 protective suits, 16 protective visors, 2,000 gloves, 200 surgical masks and 500 shoe protectors have been delivered to the Leposavić Community Health Centre.

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[Ombudsman: It is unacceptable for Roma minority to be excluded from getting packages for the vulnerable](#)

Beta

Ombudsman Zoran Pašalić said on April 8 – the International Roma Day, that the position of Roma community in Serbia during the state of emergency is difficult, especially for Roma families living in informal settlements. “While the media are constantly appealing to the people to adhere to the measures including the curfew and social distancing, and they are insisting on increased hygiene measures, they are overlooking the fact that inhabitants of informal settlements, of which there are close to 600 in Serbia, have no access to water, power or internet and they are not able to take care of basic hygiene”, said Pašalić.

[Act as if you are infected, even if you are not](#)

Kurir

The next two weeks are crucial and if people follow the measures, we could expect a reduction in the number of new infections. If we are negligent and if we don't follow all the measures, our healthcare system will not manage to provide timely care for everyone. We will have to consider even stricter measures. It depends on all our citizens how this will go. My message to everyone is: Don't act like you are not infected and do everything you can not to get infected, but rather act like you absolutely are infected and do everything in your power not to infect others, said Dr. Zoran Gojković, Health Secretary in AP Vojvodina.

[Body for implementing the Economic Measures Programme created](#)

Tanjug

Serbian Government has created a 14-member Coordination Body for implementing the programme of economic measures for assuaging the negative effects of the pandemic, which will be headed by Minister of Finance Siniša Mali. The task of this body is to coordinate the activities that will be taken with the goal of implementing the programme, review issues, make necessary decisions and propose acts regarding its implementation to the Serbian Government, it is said in a Decision published in the Official Gazette. Members of the coordination body, among others, are ministers Zorana Mihajlović, Branislav Nedimović and Zoran Đorđević, NBS Governor Jorgovanka Tabaković, head of Serbian President's Cabinet Ivica Kojić, President of the CCIS Marko Čadež, Head of Tax Administration Dragana Marković, President's advisor Danilo Cicmil and Stefan Badža from the Serbian Prime Minister's cabinet.

[Government decision on borrowing money during the state of emergency](#)

Tanjug

During the state of emergency declared due to the Covid-19 epidemic, Serbian Government may initiate a process of borrowing money by taking out additional loans, emitting sovereign bonds on the financial market and providing state guarantees in amounts higher than stipulated by the Law on the Budget. This is said in a Decision adopted by the Serbian Government on April 6, co-signed by the Serbian President, and it was published in the Official Gazette today and enters into force on the day of publication.

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[State of emergency for another month?](#)

Večernje novosti

Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić said that even after we win coronavirus, difficult days are upon us when it comes to the economy, but that the situation will nevertheless be less difficult than in most European countries. The president suggested he expects the IMF to estimate Germany's economy decline by six percent, America's by seven percent, while Serbia expects an estimate of a fall between two and three percent: However, we will strive to make the decline smaller, around 1.8 percent, which would be one of the best results in Europe. Next year will be the year of greatest economic growth and we expect the IMF to estimate our growth for 2021 at eight percent of GDP. It all means that we will have to fight harder than ever, to work harder than ever. I believe that many people have been filled with energy and the desire to work, and that we will be able to make up for much in Q3. When it comes to economic measures, the president said that all measures are implemented immediately except for the payment of the minimum wage so that there will be no abuse and dismissal after the payment of that money.

[58,000 freight vehicles enter Serbia](#)

Dnevnik

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure Zorana Mihajlović said since the declaration of the state of emergency until last morning 58,000 freight vehicles and trucks have entered the territory of Serbia, half of which for the supply of our country. She added that transportation has become a pillar of democracy. Thanks to transport which is operational, we have secured a proper supply, returned our people to the country, and transported foreign nationals to their home and therefore received the praise of everyone, because, no matter what, life must go on - said Zorana Mihajlović. She said that 7,700 passengers had been transported since the ban on regular traffic, 4,500 of which were returned to the country. The Minister said that the three main tasks were to preserve the largest construction sites, secure the supply of citizens and facilitate the return of people to Serbia and the arrival of humanitarian aid.

[Minimum wage secured for everyone](#)

Večernje novosti

For every private sector worker in Serbia, the state guarantees a minimum wage of RSD 30,367 over the next three months. Whether they will be paid more depends solely on the employer, who, depending on whether the employee worked regularly, from home or was on forced leave due to a state of emergency, will pay the salary. The state's economic assistance program has pledged to entrepreneurs to pay a minimum wage for each employee, as well as to pause their taxes and contributions until January next year. This means that if a worker works for a minimum wage, in the next three months, the employer will not have to pay a penny of his salary. For all other situations, when an employee receives more than the minimum wage, the calculation is different. For a worker who has earned an average wage, which is RSD 59,941 net in Serbia, or RSD 97,033 gross, the state will give RSD 30,367, while the employer will only add a difference of RSD 29,574 over three months.

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[BIRODI proposes measures](#)

Fonet

Bureau for Social Research (BIRODI) proposed to the Serbian Government to adopt the measures it imposed in the form of the Law on Government Assistance during and after the coronavirus pandemic, which would be adopted by the Serbian Parliament during an online session, the organisation stated. As part of the talks regarding the measures for assuaging the negative effects of the coronavirus pandemic, based on an online survey conducted by BIRODI over the past 10 days, it is proposed to the Serbian Government, among other things, to create a body for monitoring the realisation of economic measures with that law, which will consist of the most renowned experts from the spheres of economy, law, revision, sociology of social development, MPs from all parliamentary clubs and representatives of the State Audit Institution.

[Banks donate RSD 100 million of assistance](#)

Alo

Banks in Serbia have joined the fight against the epidemic of Covid-19 in Serbia through donations. Direct financial support to the National Health Insurance Fund at the level of the banking sector so far is worth about RSD 100 million, and individual shares of banks continue, say the Association of Serbian Banks.

[Close to 80,000 people died from the coronavirus around the world](#)

Tanjug

Close to 80,000 people have died from the coronavirus around the world, specifically, 79,152, Worldometers reports. According to data on the website, a total of 1,391,154 people are infected around the world, while 298,489 people recovered. There are 1,013,513 active cases in total, of which 95% are with mild symptoms, while the remaining 5% are in grave or critical condition. USA still has the highest number of infected (380,918), and there have been 13,914 new cases over the last 24 hours. Next is Spain with 140,511 infected and 13,897 deaths, while Italy has the highest number of deaths (17,127) and 135,586 infected. Germany is fourth with 105,604 infected and 1,905 deaths, France is fifth with 98,010 infected and 8,911 deaths, while China is sixth with 81,740 infected and 3,331 deaths.

[WHO: Do not lift measures too soon](#)

Dnevnik

World Health Organisation has no recommendation for countries and regions to ease measures imposed to contain the coronavirus pandemic, but instead asked them to not lift the measures too soon, WHO spokesman Christian Lindmeier stated today. He said that this is one of the most important instructions during a virtual press conference.

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