**Covid-19 and Islands**

***Croatian Islands Generally, Croatia***

1. What actions are being taken to protect the island community from Covid 19? In particular, how are travel restrictions being put in place and enforced?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Prof. Dr. Nenad StarcEmeritus at the Institute of Economics Zagrebnstarc@eizg.hr  | 4 April 2020 | * Protection actions in Croatia are hierarchically organized ad controlled. There are: The National Headquarters of Civil Protection (NHCP), 22 county headquarters (CHCP) and up to 556 municipal headquarters (MHCP). The measures prescribed by the NHCP are compulsory on all three levels. The prerogatives of the NHCP are given by a couple of laws enacted in mid-March. NH have been passing decrees ever since. Their web site <https://www.koronavirus.hr/en> is updated on a daily basis. It is in Croatian and in English but it does not report data on municipal level which means that no data is available for islands.
* The only Decree that refers particularly to islands was passed on 21 March restricting the mainland-island and island –island maritime travel (air transport has not been restricted but there is no news on flights to two existing island airports). The number of maritime lines is reduced and only the state company ferries can operate. Inner island bus lines on bigger islands have been cancelled.
* As of 21 March, travelling out of your place of residence has been prohibited in the entire country so that islanders must not leave the islands (there are exceptions) and only island residents that happened to be on the mainland before 21 March can come back home. There are exceptions: medics, police, epidemiologic teams authorized by the NH or CH, fire brigades, port authority officials and the like. This measure is rather easily enforced as islanders have had island IDs for years now.
 |

1. What actions will be taken should people on the island have Covid 19?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Mirna Dalićmirna.dalic@islandmovement.eu Island Movement | 6 May 2020 | * There have been a couple of cases positive for the corona virus on the islands. In this case, all people in close contact with the infected person are detected. Family and people living with the infected are in self-isolation for 28 days and other contacts of the infected are for 14 days.
* The infected person lives at home, if he or she can isolate himself from the rest of the family and is in good health, and if he cannot or is in poor condition, he is housed in a quarantined or onshore hospital depending on his medical condition.
 |
| Prof. Dr. Nenad StarcEmeritus at the Institute of Economics Zagrebnstarc@eizg.hr  | 4 April 2020 | * 14 days self-isolation is required for “contacts” (people that have been in contact with the COVID positive persons). Persons with symptoms are strongly advised to call their GP and follow the instructions. Following the GP’s assessment, the epidemiological team may decide to visit potential patients and test them. If the person is COVID positive with mild symptoms he/she will be ordered to stay at home self-isolated. Persons with serious clinical symptoms will be taken to the hospital.
* The problem is that only up to 10 out of 50 inhabited islands have adequate medical facilities and stuff to place the sick and take care of them. Islanders on the remaining 40 islands have to wait for medics from mainland to take them to mainland hospitals which may cause significant delays. Fortunately, a COVID outbreak has been detected only on the bridged Dalmatian island of Murter, and the CHCP and MHCP were instructed to take concrete measures. One week after, it appears that they are keeping the situation under control.
 |

1. What actions are being taken to ensure that essential goods and services are provided to the island community?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Mirna Dalićmirna.dalic@islandmovement.eu Island Movement | 6 May 2020 | * The food and medicine supply works as usual without any problems.
 |
| Prof. Dr. Nenad StarcEmeritus at the Institute of Economics Zagrebnstarc@eizg.hr  | 4 April 2020 | * As of 21 March the supply lines remained opened as the cargo transport has not been closed but limited to essentials. Wholesalers and retailers on island can order food and other essentials according to the revealed demand. No shortages have been recorded so far, apart for temporary lack of certain commodities on small islands caused by bad weather which blocked boats in harbours (not a COVID related problem). The lack of masks, gloves and disinfection material was a nation- wide problem at the beginning of the epidemic. It has been more or less solved by now, but the islands have been the last to get everything they needed in this respect.
 |

1. What actions are being taken to ensure that people working on the islands, not only in the tourism sector, are sustained financially in the short term and in the long term?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Mirna Dalićmirna.dalic@islandmovement.eu Island Movement | 6 May 2020 | * A package of different measures has been adopted for employers:
* from the national level, compensation for the preservation of jobs was paid and favorable guarantees for working capital were provided
* from the regional and local levels, some communities are allowed to write off rental costs, utility fees and other expenses related to seasonal business. In addition, some islands provided the restaurants and cafes with additional public space free of charge for a certain period in order to be able to receive a larger number of guests, given the introduced measures of social distancing.
* Some island mayors and mayors have waived part of their salaries and allowances
* Citizens are entitled to a moratorium on loan repayment, and this applies to those who have lost their jobs or their salaries have been drastically reduced.
 |
| Prof. Dr. Nenad StarcEmeritus at the Institute of Economics Zagrebnstarc@eizg.hr  | 4 April 2020 | * On 2 April a package of measures have been introduced by the Government. The measures are aimed mainly at small and medium entrepreneurs and their employees but none is island specific. A couple of measures refer to tourist sector i.e. SMEs on the coast and on the islands. The measures are short termed (three months) with the provision that they will be prolonged should the crisis extends to a longer period.
 |

1. What actions are being taken to ensure the mental well-being of people on the islands?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Mirna Dalićmirna.dalic@islandmovement.eu Island Movement | 6 May 2020 | * A state-level telephone line that can be called for psychological help has been introduced. Additionally, various arts organizations, bands artists, athletes and others, performers hold concerts, performances, exhibitions, educations, training classes through various online tools.
 |
| Prof. Dr. Nenad StarcEmeritus at the Institute of Economics Zagrebnstarc@eizg.hr  | 4 April 2020 | * Last week, call centres have been established on the national level. Psychological aid is offered but it is not island specific.
 |

1. If you consider it appropriate, feel free to share any data about people who have Covid 19 on your island and of people who, sadly, have passed away because of Covid 19.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Mirna Dalićmirna.dalic@islandmovement.eu Island Movement | 6 May 2020 | * There were only a few cases on the islands and they are all in good condition. We only have a problem on land where the virus breaks into health care facilities and nursing homes. The situation across the state is excellent and we currently count up to 10 newly infected on a daily state level.
 |
| Prof. Dr. Nenad StarcEmeritus at the Institute of Economics Zagrebnstarc@eizg.hr  | 4 April 2020 | * As of 4 April, only one island is experiencing the COVID outbreak, with some 10 positive islanders and 30 -40 more in self-isolation. Fortunately, no COVID related deaths have been recorded in the archipelago as yet. The peak of the epidemics on the national level is expected in two weeks. Let’s hope that there will be no further outbreaks on the Croatian islands .
 |

1. If applicable, how are lockdown measures being relaxed?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondent | Date | Response |
|  |  |  |

1. Is there anything else you want to share?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Prof. Dr. Nenad StarcEmeritus at the Institute of Economics Zagrebnstarc@eizg.hr  | 4 April 2020 | * We are witnessing an island controversy. Perhaps because of the habit of viewing islands as refugia, safe havens which are more or less well detached from the mainland troubles. The latest Croatian example goes back to the Homeland War 1991-1995 when islands hosted quite a number of refugees. They stayed there safely till the end of war.
* The newest example is different, however. Quite a number of second home owners from the Croatian interior and from Slovenia and Bosnia responded to corona virus by quickly moving to islands and settling in their second homes. They have been there for almost a month now. No one could guarantee that all of them are virus free and sure enough, cases of corona sickness were soon reported on three islands (the outbreak happened on only one). Trying to escape from the enemy they brought the enemy with them and into the environment which is far more suitable for the virus spread than the mainland. We are thus witnessing the controversy: spotted and chosen as refugia the islands have become a trap. Obviously, the smaller the island the more dangerous the trap (30 out of 50 inhabited Croatian island are small – up to 25 km2, up to 300 islanders). Furthermore, the epidemic exploded on the mainland; on islands, it threatens to implode.
* The “COVID refugee” problem reflects the familiar island need for a full capacity health services aimed at a relatively small number of users. If more outbreaks happen the standard island health service will be far from sufficient and not enough help can be expected from the mainland. In the peak of the epidemic expected in some two weeks most of the health service capacity will be primarily engaged in mainland urban areas and there will be hardly enough doctors and equipment left for the islands. No one stopped the “refugees” (or selected the healthy ones) when they flooded the islands. Results remain to be seen.
 |

**

*This information has been collated by the Strathclyde Centre for Environmental Law and Governance in collaboration with Island Innovation and can be found at* [*https://www.strath.ac.uk/research/strathclydecentreenvironmentallawgovernance/ourwork/research/labsincubators/eilean/islandsandcovid-19/*](https://www.strath.ac.uk/research/strathclydecentreenvironmentallawgovernance/ourwork/research/labsincubators/eilean/islandsandcovid-19/)*.*