

COVID-19 cases rising in Moldova, seen as 'out of control'

June 8 2020



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Moldova registered a record number of new cases of the coronavirus during the first week of June, the government said Monday, as a former health minister described the pandemic situation in the country as "out

of control."

Moldova, one of the [poorest countries](#) in Europe and plagued by corruption and political turmoil, confirmed 1,449 new cases of COVID-19 the week of June 1-7, nearly 300 more than the previous week, according to data from the Ministry of Health. It was the fourth consecutive week with more than 1,000 new cases.

During the first week of June, Moldova also suffered 46 [coronavirus](#) deaths, including two medical workers, compared to 45 deaths a week earlier.

A country of 3.3 million people, Moldova has become a politically strategic area for both the West and Russia since gaining independence after the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union.

Since its first confirmed case on March 7, Moldova has registered 9,700 cases of the coronavirus and 346 deaths.

Dr. Ala Nemerenco, a former [health minister](#), was very critical of the government's handling of the pandemic.

"You don't have to be an epidemiologist, a virologist, or even a doctor to understand that the situation has gotten out of control," Nemerenco said in a Facebook post in reference to the rising number of cases.

Regarding difficulties in reaching the COVID-19 center at the Moldexpo exhibition hall because of [heavy traffic](#), she said that "everything that happens demonstrates disorganization and chaos, which can't lead to any good."

Nemerenco, an ex-official of the World Health Organization, was Moldova's health minister last year in the previous government led by

then Prime Minister Maia Sandu—whose administration was ousted in a no-confidence vote in November and replaced by opposition forces led by Ion Chicu.

The number of new cases in Moldova of COVID-19 began to rise noticeably after May 15, when a nationwide state of emergency, declared by parliament on March 17, ceased.

While authorities imposed a number of restrictions after May 15, like the mandatory wearing of protective masks on public transportation and in [public institutions](#), the rules often weren't respected even by authorities.

Chicu, who is now prime minister, and President Igor Dodon, for example, usually don't wear a mask during public appearances.

An opinion poll conducted May 5-11 by the Moldovan non-governmental organization WatchDog.md and polling and marketing firm CBS Research, showed that 50.4% of those surveyed believed that the coronavirus is no more dangerous than a common flu and that the crisis was orchestrated to destroy the economy. The poll has a margin of error of 3.1%.

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