



UNITED NATIONS  
ALBANIA



COVID-19  
RESPONSE

A Special Covid-19 Response Newsletter

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#ONLY  
TOGETHER

WE WILL

HUG



LET'S MAKE SURE EVERYONE  
CAN GET THE VACCINE SO WE CAN  
ALL GET BACK TO WHAT WE LOVE

AGAIN





A second shipment of 40,800 AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines arrived in Albania 17 April, part of some 120,000 doses Albania will receive through COVAX facility. Over 650,000 people have now been vaccinated under the national vaccination campaign that kicked off in January (Source MoHSP - 14 May 2021). Albania joins COVAX as a self-financing country and will receive enough doses of vaccine from COVAX to cover 20% of its population by the end 2021. With a fast-moving pandemic, no one is safe, unless everyone is safe. COVAX is co-led by CEPI, Gavi and WHO, alongside key delivery partner UNICEF. It aims to vaccinate 20 percent of global population and is made possible through donations of vaccines and financial support from government, foundations and corporations.

**WHO in Albania** is supporting the Institute of Public Health (IPH) with a new modern laboratory information management system.

In a meeting with Prof. Dr. Lila Shundi, Head of Molecular Biology Laboratory, Department of National Reference Laboratories at the Institute of Public Health, Dr Gerald Rockenschaub and the technical mission led by Dr Abebayehu Assefa Mengistu, WHO Health Emergency Coordinator at Balkan Hub Europe, discussed the new LIMS – laboratory information management system, – project supported by WHO to be implemented soon at IPH.



**UNICEF** is supporting safe delivery of health care services in Albania. Over 700 health professionals, are using Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) protocols developed thanks to a partnership between UNICEF and University of Medicine.

The accredited trainings include elements of standard IPC precautions such as hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, use of PPE according to risk, safe injection practices, waste management, cleaning and disinfecting in the COVID-19 environment. Also, the supply assistance with PPE has complemented the support for the capacity development of the health professionals on infection prevention and control (IPC).



Around 10,000 health care workers in all 412 primary health care centers in Albania (116 urban and 296 rural) benefited from the supplies. The IPC trainings will continue, and the trained health personnel will be

**Cost to the global economy if we don't share COVID-19 vaccines equally around the world**

**\$9.2 TRILLION**

**Only together can we end the crisis**



Source: International Chamber of Commerce, Jan 2021



**UNICEF and WHO** run a communication campaign around the Immunization week 2021 to celebrate the past, present and future benefits of vaccines



Immunization Week 2021 Photo: UNICEF

**WHO Albania** is currently supporting the conduct of a study on the effectiveness of the COVID-19 vaccine in healthcare workers in hospitals in Albania, which aims at answering critical questions about the real-world performance of COVID-19 vaccines in one of the key target groups for vaccination.

Stakeholders in this research include the Albanian Institute of Public Health, the Albanian Ministry of Health and Social Protection, health workers and hospital administration at the four study hospitals, the WHO Regional Office for Europe.

The study will help measure the effectiveness and determine how well the COVID-19 vaccines protect against laboratory-confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection (both symptomatic and asymptomatic) amongst hospital health workers eligible for vaccination.



UNICEF Albania with support from the USAID is supporting the Maternity Hospital 'Koco Glozheni' in Tirana with medical supplies and equipment to prevent the spread of Coovid-19 and ensure the continuity of maternal, newborn and child health services . In a visit to the hospital, UNICEF Representative was joined by US Ambassador Yuri Kim and Deputy Minister of Health Mira Rakaçolli to thank and express gratitude to the health workers all over Albania for their dedicated and tireless work.



Dr Gerald Rockenschaub of WHO Albania with Dr. Perlat Kapisyzi

WHO Representative and Head of Country Office in Albania, Dr Gerald Rockenschaub met with Prof. Dr Najada Çomo, Head of the Infectious Disease Hospital at Tirana University Hospital Center "Mother Theresa" and COVID 1, 3 and 4 Hospitals, and Prof. Dr. Perlat Kapisyzi, Director of University Hospital "Shefqet Ndroqi,".

The meeting aimed to discuss the clinical case management challenges in Albania including issues related to antimicrobial resistance, infection prevention and control and outpatient management were among the

The top WHO official in Albania commended the great dedication and professionalism of Albanian healthcare workers and the collective efforts to ensure high quality treatment of #COVID19 patients and to save lives.

**The first refugee to receive the vaccine in Albania was a 66 years old man who received the first dose of COVID-19 vaccine on 24th April.** Thanks to cooperation between Ministry of Health, UNHCR and IOM, asylum seekers and migrants who are holders of residency permit can access the vaccination service through the same procedure and eligibility criteria as prescribed for Albanian citizens. Demarches will continue for the inclusion of asylum seekers who have not yet received residence permit.



IOM continues to provide an e-learning course on COVID-19 at Points of Entry for all officials who are in direct contact with people on the move. The five-module course is available in English on IOM's e-learning platform E-Campus and it will soon be translated into the main local languages of the Western Balkans.



The online course has been developed with the support of the EU through the project "Addressing COVID-19 Challenges within the Migrant and Refugee Response in the Western Balkans - a partnership of IOM and UNHCR to respond to the challenges generated by the COVID-19 pandemic in border and migration management. More info on the project [here](#).

During March-April 2021, UNHCR and its partner CARITAS supported a total of 1,950 individuals, including 74 persons with specific needs, arriving in Albania. Among them, 30 persons were identified as unaccompanied and separated children. UNHCR and its partner continue to play a central role in supporting the arrivals, pending their interviews with the Border and Migration Police.

Furthermore, UNHCR, Caritas and the Ombudsperson's Office work to advocate vis a vis authorities to ensure that persons with international protection needs are referred to the asylum system and that persons with identified vulnerabilities are referred to service providers in the border areas.

In this line, and within the scope of an SDG Acceleration fund project, UNHCR, in a joint effort with UN Women, UNICEF, IOM, UNFPA and WHO, continued to increase capacity of border service providers to improve referrals and services to address the situation of persons with specific needs.



## What Is Vaccination?

- **Strengthens Your Immune System**
- **Protects Against Harmful Diseases**
- **Simple, Safe, and Effective**

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**Child Protection:** UNICEF continues to assist 53 child protection workers in the target municipalities, through online and face-to-face coaching.

Adaptation of field work strategy helped to cover the scale and scope of increased protection risks children are facing in the backdrop of dwindling state allocated resources.

An increase in the intensity of mobile child protection teams' presence in the target communities is a must to reach out to most deprived and vulnerable groups, especially in the areas where internet penetration or its cost limits people's exposure to online services, including timely reporting of violence and abuse of children.

Through UNICEF support 50,000 people benefit continued access to safe channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse.



Photo: UNICEF

## 5 Tips to Keeping Kids Learning



**Plan a routine together**



**Have open conversations**



**Take your time**



**Protect your children online**



**Stay in touch with your children's school**



### Shkolla "Gjergj Kastrioti" Lezhë Aktiviteti "Emocionet"



Kingdom of the Netherlands



watch  
video

**Education:** To minimize disruption to schooling, UNICEF supported education authorities' to provide online solutions for the continuity of learning. More than 100.000 children are expected to be reached as part of this support which has just kicked off. The initiative is made possible also thanks to Albanian Public TV, through the dedicated Programme "RTSH Shkolla intends".

UNICEF as part of the interventions in reducing drop out is supporting directly 530 students in schools affected by Earthquake with foundational skills and after classes remedial learning lessons in math, early literacy as well as socio-emotional skills. So far 1,350 teachers, and 465 schools have been reached through teachers' professional networks on Early Warning System for school dropout.

# PROTECTING PEOPLE

To address inequity, exclusion and deprivation, UNDP in partnership with civil society organizations and local governments in Tirana, Kamza, Puka, Rrogozhina, Pogradec and Devoll are contributing to give a boost TO integrated social care service for Roma and Egyptians and persons with disabilities and other vulnerable communities as a response to COVID-19 and any other emergencies. This is done through the implementation of projects as part of municipalities' own Social Care Plans.

In the context of the UN Joint Programme "Improving Municipal Social Protection Service Delivery" several events were organized:

- The Puka peer youth platform "Everyone supports one youth with special abilities" focused its discussion on the digital divide and the need to have digital skills for social inclusion in times of COVID-19. Youth with disabilities and their parents were provided with digital equipment to help with the education process.



Tackling Digital Divide; Photo: UNDP Albania

- In partnership with Aleanca LGBTI in Tirana, free health check-up for LGBTI community members is being provided, alongside online psychological and health counselling with emergency food and hygienic items for those most in need.

According to the study conducted by Aleanca on the Situation of the LGBTI community during the pandemic, 72% of people reported symptoms of anxiety during this period, including frustration, irritability, nervousness, fear as if something bad would happen.

According to the Alliance Against Discrimination of LGBTI study, 1 to 4 LGBTI community members are facing difficulties in covering basic needs such as food.

- In Rrogozhina marginalized communities and victims of domestic violence were heavily affected by COVID -19. The staff of health and social service centers within the municipality of Rrogozhina received training on providing quality services to address the special needs of marginalized groups.



Staff Training at Rrogozhina Municipality ; Photo: UNDP Albania

UN Joint Programme "Improving Municipal Social Protection Service Delivery", funded by the SDG Joint Fund focuses on catalyzing a step-change in the quantity and quality of integrated social care services delivery d at the local level, as part of an effective integrated social protection system.

The programme supports the Government of Albania towards implementation of the newly shaped vision of the social sector, in line with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the country's aspirations towards European Union (EU) integration, through translating the policy intent into proper local actions, targeting six



Photo: Helping with Education process. Photo: UNDP Albania

municipalities, so that vulnerable groups have access to integrated, quality social care services.

The programme is implemented by UNDP, UNICEF, UN Women, UNFPA, UNHCR, WHO and ILO, in close partnership with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection.



# COMMUNICATION AND AWARENESS

UNICEF is partnering with USAID to continue running the awareness campaign for children and families towards protection measures against COVID-19. Thanks to a new partnership VODAFONE Albania one TV ad was broadcasted pro bono on national Albanian TV channels for a period of two weeks expanding the reach up to 1 million viewers. Click image below to watch TV ad.



UN agencies in Albania continue to promote the global campaign 'Only Together' part of the wider 'Verified' campaign, aiming to advance fair and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines worldwide.

With the biggest vaccine rollout in history now underway, millions of doses are being delivered across the globe, including to some of the world's poorest countries, through the efforts of COVAX, the UN-led global vaccine equity mechanism. For more information [click here](#).

## THE LARGEST IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM IN HISTORY HAS BEGUN



#ONLY TOGETHER



IOM is running a campaign to raise awareness on Vaccine Equity for Migrants so that no one is left behind. The inclusion of migrants, including those in irregular situations makes it more likely that we will overcome this crisis. The cost of their exclusion could be devastating. In our fight against COVID-19, no one will be safe until everyone is. Video in [English](#) and [Albanian](#)



Our monthly COVID-19 Newsletters provide brief and fresh updates on how we work of UN family of agencies in Albania addressing the health emergency, support the vulnerable and fight misinformation.

Click image below to access and read all our newsletters.



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