# Latvia

## COVID-19 cases

On 31st August 2020 there were 1,396 registered COVID-19 cases and 34 deaths for in the overall population.[[1]](#endnote-1) To our knowledge, data on COVID-19 cases, deaths, job-loss, and poverty were not disaggregated by disability.

## Emergency, lockdown, and confinement

The state of emergency in Latvia started on 12th March 2020 and ended on 9th June 2020.[[2]](#endnote-2) According to Cabinet of Ministers Order No. 103 “On Declaring a State of Emergency” health and rehabilitation services were suspended. Some disability-related services were excluded from the suspension along with life-saving services that require continuity of treatment.[[3]](#endnote-3) Persons with disability where able to receive assistant services to full extent.[[4]](#endnote-4)

## Involvement of organisations of persons with disabilities

DPOs were not included in task forces or the development of national policy during or after the state of emergency. They were able to affect the decision-making process by directly advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities to key government officials, writing open letters, and organising public campaigns regarding issues with the emergency legislature. Using this approach, The Latvian Umbrella Body for Disability Organisations SUSTENTO was able to positively influence changes in the emergency legislature, for example:

* Persons with disabilities eligible for national downtime allowance – initially this allowance was not allocated to employees with disabilities because they already received governments support in the form of disability benefits.
* NGOs were eligible to financial relief for rent, like business owners – initially this allowance was not allocated to NGOs.[[5]](#endnote-5)

## Communications and announcements

Government key announcements and communications had limited accessibility features. They were only available with sign-language interpretation on specific government media platforms and for a limited time.[[6]](#endnote-6) Sign-language interpretation of these announcements was discontinued on 13th May.[[7]](#endnote-7) Mostly information accessibility was ensured by DPOs, for example, Latvian Association of the Deaf.[[8]](#endnote-8)

## Institutions and closed settings

There was no official data on COVID-19 cases and deaths in institutions and closed settings. Nevertheless, Latvian television had acquired disaggregated data from the National Disease and Prevention Control Centre showing that by 26th June 2020 - 9 from 30 deaths had occurred in institutions.[[9]](#endnote-9) Overall, during and after the state emergency, institutions were on a lockdown and visiting clients is still prohibited. No new clients were admitted into care facilities except for victims of violence, children left without parental care and persons experiencing homelessness.[[10]](#endnote-10)

## Healthcare

We found no information that indicated prioritization of COVID-19 treatment.

## Social protection

The government gave a one-time benefit and ensured continuous eligibility:

* one-time benefit of €150 for families with children with disabilities (12 May 2020).[[11]](#endnote-11)
* Disability status is automatically extended during the state emergency and three months after the end of state emergency.[[12]](#endnote-12)

1. Information website on the prevalence of COVID-19 in Latvia, available at: <https://covid19.gov.lv/> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Cabinet of Ministers Order No.103, adopted on 12th March 2020, “On Declaring a State of Emergency”, available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/313191-par-arkartejas-situacijas-izsludinasanu> [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Cabinet of Ministers Order No.103, adopted on 12th March 2020, “On Declaring a State of Emergency”, available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/313191-par-arkartejas-situacijas-izsludinasanu> [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Ministry of Welfare news page, available at: <http://www.lm.gov.lv/lv/aktuali/presei/91726-speka-stajusas-normas-iedzivotaju-atbalstam-covid-19-slimibas-izplatibas-laika> [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Information provided by the Latvian Umbrella Body for Disability Organisations SUSTENTO, 10 September 2020. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Latvian Association of the Deaf news, “”Emergency situation - LTV "Panorama" every night with sign language interpretation”, available at: <http://www.lns.lv/lat/?doc=19690> [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Latvian Association of the Deaf news, “As of today, LTV stops broadcasting emergency announcements on "Panorama" with sign translation”, available at: <http://www.lns.lv/lat/?doc=19813> [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Latvian Association of the Deaf website, available at: <http://www.lns.lv/eng/> [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Public broadcasting of Latvia, “COVID-19 in Latvia: 16% without symptoms; almost a third of the dead - in nursing homes”, available at: <https://www.lsm.lv/raksts/zinas/latvija/covid-19-seja-latvija-16-bez-slimibas-pazimem-gandriz-tresdala-miruso-pansionatos.a365139/?fbclid=IwAR1wjV5HYqhb-XertahipNXyEUqQcjH2q9euQI2Yq91O2rGCtzV4LSXqaZQ> [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Law on the Operation of State Authorities During the Emergency Situation Related to the Spread of COVID-19, available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/313730-par-valsts-instituciju-darbibu-arkartejas-situacijas-laika-saistiba-ar-covid-19-izplatibu> [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Cabinet of Ministers information page, available at: <https://www.mk.gov.lv/lv/aktualitates/noteikta-150-eiro-vienreizeja-piemaksa-pie-valsts-pabalsta-par-bernu-invalidu> [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Disability law, available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/211494-invaliditates-likums> [↑](#endnote-ref-12)