



## Country Updates

On April 29, the European Investment Bank said it would provide a 1.7 billion-euro loan package for **Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia.**

**Belarus** is considering seeking financial assistance from the European Union to help mitigate the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic, according to European Commission Vice President Valdis Dombrovskis.

On May 5, the **Russian Federation's** Ombudsperson said the number of domestic violence complaints has jumped markedly since early April.

**Serbian** President Aleksandar Vucic says general elections delayed by the coronavirus pandemic will be held on June 21. Parliamentary and local elections were originally scheduled for April 26 but were put on hold after a nationwide state of emergency was declared in mid-March.

**Tajik** authorities said they had registered 15 coronavirus cases, the first to be recorded in the country.

Several hundred small-business owners have protested in the **Ukrainian** capital, Kyiv, demanding the authorities ease restrictions.

*\*References to Kosovo are in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244/1999*



## Latest Trends

In one month, the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEEECA) region increased seven-fold. Since the last sitrep (27 April), there was a 40 per cent from 257,631 to 361,311 cases.

In one month, the number of reported deaths in the region went from 753 to 6,254. The total number of deaths from COVID-19 in the region increased by 36 per cent from the 4,614 deaths reported a week ago. This is the same increase rate as last week. The comparable rate in Europe was also the same week on week for Europe (17 per cent) and Globally (23 per cent)

The five countries with the highest number of COVID-19 infections are now the Russian Federation (155,370), followed by Turkey (127,659), Belarus (17,489), Israel (16,237) and Ukraine (12,697). The number of COVID-19 cases reported by the Russian Federation registered a 78 per cent increase from 87,147 cases to 155,370 in a week. Turkey's rate of increase in cases over a one-week period has slowed from 21 to 16 per cent.

Turkey still has the highest number of deaths, (3,461), followed by the Russian Federation (1,451), Ukraine (316), Israel (234) and Serbia (197). The rate of increase in deaths in one week rose from 74 per cent to 83 per cent in the Russian Federation, Belarus (41 per cent to 43), Ukraine (37 per cent to 44), Israel (10 per cent to 18) and Serbia (21 per cent to 26).

In Austria, the increase in the total number of confirmed COVID-19 patients remained at three per cent from 15,189 to 15,621 per week. The weekly proportion of deaths over one week continues to slow from 15 per cent to 11 per cent.

COVID-19 Cases and Deaths in SEEECA Region & Austria

Reporting Country	Cases	Deaths
SEEECA Region	361,311	6,254
Austria	15,189	600
<b>Total</b>	<b>376,500</b>	<b>6,854</b>



## IOM Strategic Response

- 32 concept notes/project proposals to address COVID-19 were developed for the SEECA region, for a total of US\$ 33.5 million.
- The Regional Office for the SEECA region is providing intensified support to missions to develop innovative, migrant-centred programming, and ensuring these are well presented to potential donors, the UN and other partners.
- IOM's Global Response Appeal was launched 15 April 2020 and can be downloaded [here](#).

## Country-Specific Responses

### In Armenia:

- Financial support to small enterprises was provided by IOM Armenia to help resume operations and thus mitigate the immediate economic impacts on the local remittance-dependent population.
- IOM Armenia launched a social media campaign to raise awareness of migrants and the population at large, providing tips on how to avoid the virus while shopping, stressing the importance of physical distancing, and providing links to reliable sources of information.

### In Belarus:

- IOM Belarus is working in close cooperation with government and NGO partners to ensure that migrants affected by COVID-19 are not left behind, providing food, accommodation, and legal assistance to migrants.
- COVID-19-related hotline consultations make up 36 per cent of the total number of calls to the nationwide hotline on safe migration and travel administered by an NGO partner.
- IOM Belarus is using its social media channels to strengthen accurate and reliable information on COVID-19 and available services and with these efforts has reached over 37,000 people.

### In Georgia:

- Imedi, an Association of IDP Women's supported by IOM Georgia, are producing 10,000 face masks which will be distributed in settlements for internally displaced people in Zugdidi.

### In Kazakhstan:

- IOM Kazakhstan provided humanitarian assistance to 542 migrants in vulnerable situations from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, and Syria.
- More than 100 stranded migrants from Uzbekistan, including women and children, are receiving food and non-food assistance through an IOM partner NGO.

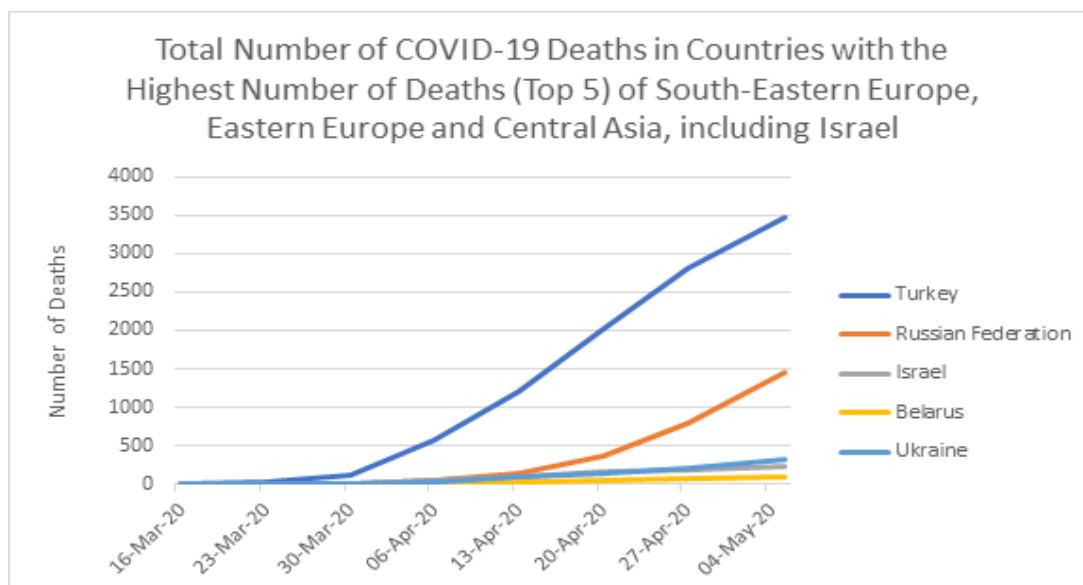
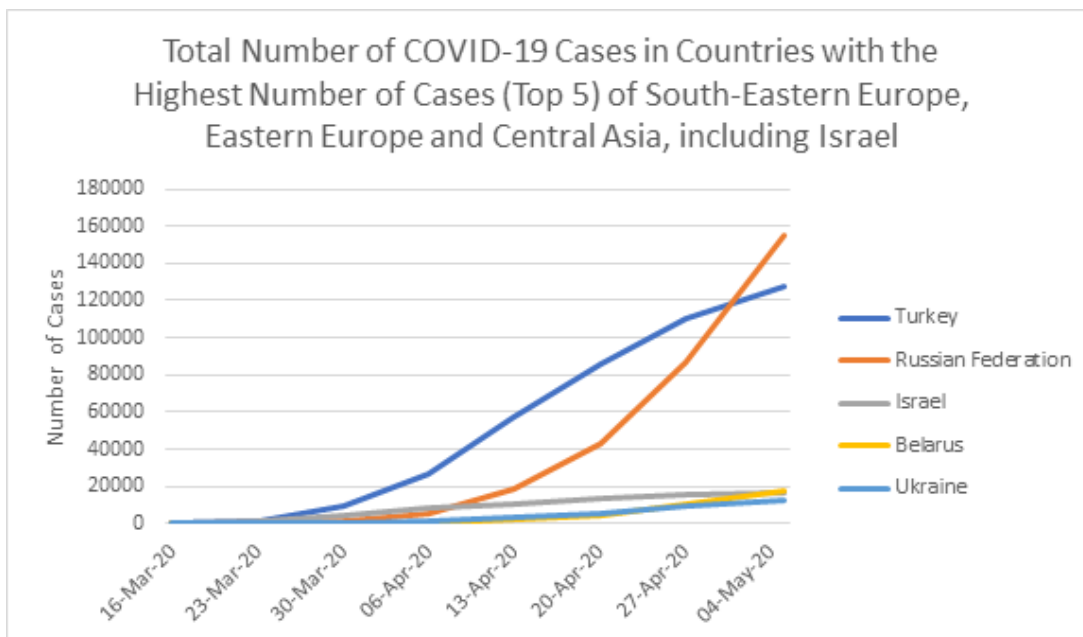


*An elderly migrant in Azerbaijan receives an aid parcel from a member of the State Migration Service, one of IOM's key partners in the southern Caucasus nation.*



## Challenges and Needs

- IOM Missions require additional funding to further operate, especially to provide immediate assistance to stranded migrants.
- Looking forward, social cohesion will be extremely important as returned migrants compete with the new jobless in their home societies for scarce employment.
- It has been observed that unregistered migrants who do not apply for asylum and are not accommodated in government or IOM shelters, likely fall outside national COVID-19 prevention and assistance programmes.



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**Links to WHO Europe COVID information:**

<http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/health-emergencies/coronavirus-covid-19/weekly-surveillance-report>