



Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

What is a coronavirus? Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The most recently discovered coronavirus causes coronavirus disease COVID-19.

What is COVID-19? COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. COVID-19 is now a pandemic affecting many countries globally.

Source: [World Health Organization \(WHO\) - Q&A on coronaviruses](#)



COVID-19 RESPONSE

UN Entities

- **World Health Organization (WHO)**

- Health Topics - Coronavirus: <https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>
- Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak: <https://www.who.int/covid-19>
 - Timeline of WHO's response to COVID-19 (29 June 2020): <https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/29-06-2020-covidtimeline>
 - "Immunity passports" in the context of COVID-19 (Scientific Brief, 24 April 2020): <https://bit.ly/2VGOOrSy>
 - WHO characterizes COVID-19 as a pandemic (11 March 2020): <https://bit.ly/2wNmAGc>
 - World experts and funders set priorities for COVID-19 research (12 February 2020): <https://bit.ly/2uznEgi>
 - WHO declares the new coronavirus outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern - Statement on the second meeting of the International Health Regulations (2005) Emergency Committee regarding the outbreak of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) (30 January 2020): <https://bit.ly/2S4Zi5F>
- Rolling updates on coronavirus disease (COVID-19): <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/events-as-they-happen>

- Situation reports: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports/>
- Travel advice: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/travel-advice>
- Advice for public / Infographics: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>
- Myth busters: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/myth-busters>
- Coronavirus Scam Alert - Beware of criminals pretending to be WHO: <https://www.who.int/about/communications/cyber-security>
- COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/donate>
- **WHO Europe - Novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV):**
<http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/health-emergencies/coronavirus-covid-19>
 - Infographics and videos in over 30 languages: <https://who.canto.global/v/coronavirus/folder/PQC9D>
- **United Nations**
 - Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): <https://www.un.org/en/coronavirus>
 - UN COVID-19 Response: <https://www.un.org/en/coronavirus/response>
 - Policy Briefs: <https://www.un.org/en/coronavirus/UN-response>
 - From the UN Secretary-General: <https://www.un.org/en/coronavirus/un-secretary-general>
 - 'Verified' initiative: <https://www.shareverified.com/en>
 - COVID-19 Data Portal: <https://data.uninfo.org/>
- Impact of COVID-19 on UN Peacekeeping: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/impact-of-covid-19-un-peacekeeping>
- Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)
 - UN DESA portal launched on response to COVID-19: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/covid-19.html>
 - UN COVID-19 Data Hub: <https://covid-19-data.unstatshub.org/>
 - Web portal for the statistical community: <https://covid-19-response.unstatshub.org/>
 - COVID-19 Outbreak and Persons with Disabilities: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/covid-19.html>
- Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA)
 - COVID-19: One War that Must Be Fought (In: Politically Speaking, 28 March 2020): <https://dppa-ps.atavist.com/covid-19-one-war-that-must-be-fought>
- Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform:
 - COVID-19 - Dispatches from the Field: Scientists, experts and policy makers addressing the Covid-19 crisis around the world: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/blog/covid19>
- **General Assembly**
 - 31st Special Session of the General Assembly "Coronavirus disease 2019": <https://www.un.org/en/ga/sessions/special.shtml>
 - Resolution 74/307 "United response against global health threats: combating COVID-19": <https://www.un.org/en/ga/74/resolutions.shtml>
 - Resolution 74/306 "Comprehensive and coordinated response to the COVID-19 pandemic": <https://www.un.org/en/ga/74/resolutions.shtml>
 - Resolution 74/274 "International cooperation to ensure global access to medicines, vaccines and medical equipment to face COVID-19", adopted on 20 April 2020: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/74/274>
 - Appointment of co-coordinators on COVID-19 initiatives (20 April 2020): <https://www.un.org/pga/74/2020/04/20/appointment-of-co-coordinators-for-covid-19-related-initiatives/>

- Resolution 74/270 "Global solidarity to fight the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)", adopted under a silence procedure on 2 April 2020: <https://www.un.org/pga/74/2020/03/30/global-solidarity-to-fight-covid-19/>
<http://undocs.org/A/RES/74/270>
- **Security Council**
<https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/meetings-2020-rtc>
 - 24 September 2020: Summit-level debate on the theme "Maintenance of international peace and security: global governance after COVID-19 – Concept note: <https://undocs.org/S/2020/883>
 - 12 August 2020: Peacebuilding and sustaining peace: Pandemics and the challenges of sustaining peace (see also: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/08/1070082>)
 - 2 July 2020: Maintenance of international peace and security: Implications of COVID-19
 - 9 April 2020 - Impact of COVID-19 pandemic
- **Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**
 - Joining Forces: Effective Policy Solutions for Covid-19 Response, ECOSOC Informal Briefing, 11 May 2020: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/events/2020/joining-forces-effective-policy-solutions-covid-19-response>
- **Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)**
 - COVID-19 Observatory: <https://www.cepal.org/en/topics/covid-19>
- **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**
 - Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak: <http://www.fao.org/2019-ncov/en/>
 - COVID-19 - Impact on food and agriculture: <http://www.fao.org/2019-ncov/q-and-a/en/>
 - FAO policy briefs related to COVID-19: <http://www.fao.org/2019-ncov/resources/policy-briefs/en/>
- **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)**
 - COVID-19: latest IAEA updates: <https://www.iaea.org/covid-19>
- **International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)**
 - COVID-19 Response and Recovery Platform: <https://www.icao.int/covid/Pages/default.aspx>
- **International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)**
 - COVID-19 pandemic: <https://www.ifad.org/en/covid19>
 - New IFAD fund launched to help prevent rural food crisis in wake of COVID-19 (20 April 2020): <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/latest/news-detail/asset/41877895>
- **International Labour Organisation (ILO)**
 - COVID-19 and the world of work: <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/lang--en/index.htm>
 - COVID-19 and the world of work: Global impact and policy responses: <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/impacts-and-responses/lang--en/index.htm>
- **International Monetary Fund (IMF)**
 - The IMF and COVID-19 (Coronavirus): <https://www.imf.org/en/Topics/imf-and-covid19>
 - Europe's COVID-19 Crisis and the Fund's Response (30 March 2020): <https://blogs.imf.org/2020/03/30/europes-covid-19-crisis-and-the-funds-response/>
- **International Maritime Organization (IMO)**
 - Coronavirus (COVID-19) - advice for seafarers and shipping: <http://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/HotTopics/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>

- Supporting seafarers on the frontline of COVID-19:
<http://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/HotTopics/Pages/Support-for-seafarers-during-COVID-19.aspx>
- **International Narcotics Control Board (INCB)**
 - Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic:
<https://www.incb.org/incb/en/coronavirus.html>
 - I2ES Forum - Platform for exchanging ideas on contingency measures during COVID-19 (24 March 2020):
https://www.incb.org/incb/en/news/news_2020/i2es_forum_covid-19.html
- **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**
 - IOM Responds to Covid-19: <https://www.iom.int/iom-responds-covid-19>
 - Mobility Restrictions COVID-19: <https://migration.iom.int/>
 - COVID-19 & Immigration Detention: What Can Governments and Other Stakeholders Do? (29 April 2020): <https://www.iom.int/news/covid-19-immigration-detention-what-can-governments-and-other-stakeholders-do>
 - IOM Releases Guidance for Employers and Businesses on Protection of Migrant Workers During the COVID-19 Crisis (7 April 2020):
<https://www.iom.int/news/iom-releases-guidance-employers-and-businesses-protection-migrant-workers-during-covid-19>
 - The Rights and Health of Refugees, Migrants and Stateless Must be Protected in COVID-19 Response (31 March 2020): <https://www.iom.int/news/rights-and-health-refugees-migrants-and-stateless-must-be-protected-covid-19-response>
 - COVID-19 Does Not Discriminate; Nor Should Our Response (20 March 2020):
<https://www.iom.int/news/covid-19-does-not-discriminate-nor-should-our-response>
- **International Telecommunication Union (ITU)**
 - COVID-19 updates: <https://www.itu.int/en/Pages/covid-19.aspx>
 - Global Network Resiliency Platform (#REG4COVID): <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regulatory-Market/Pages/REG4COVID.aspx>
 - Unleashing information technology to defeat COVID-19: Initiative builds on current efforts to disseminate health messages through the joint WHO-ITU BeHe@lthy BeMobile initiative (20 April 2020):
<https://www.itu.int/en/mediacentre/Pages/STMNT02-2020-who-itu-joint-statement-covid-19-be-healthy-be-mobile.aspx>
 - 3 key areas innovative tech is helping during the COVID-19 pandemic (17 April 2020): <https://news.itu.int/3-ways-innovative-tech-is-helping-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>
 - Working from home: Cybersecurity in the time of COVID-19 (9 April 2020):
<https://news.itu.int/working-from-home-cybersecurity-in-the-time-of-covid-19/>
- **United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)**
 - OCHA and COVID-19: <https://www.unocha.org/covid19>
 - ReliefWeb - COVID-19: <https://reliefweb.int/topics/covid-19>
 - The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) - COVID-19 Outbreak Readiness and Response: <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/covid-19-outbreak-readiness-and-response>
 - UN issues \$6.7 billion appeal to protect millions of lives and stem the spread of COVID-19 in fragile countries (7 May 2020): <https://www.unocha.org/story/un-issues-67-billion-appeal-protect-millions-lives-and-stem-spread-covid-19-fragile-countries>
- **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)**
 - COVID-19 and its human rights dimensions:
<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/COVID-19.aspx>
- **UN Technology Bank**
 - A COVID-19 technology sharing platform: <https://techaccesspartnership.org/>

- **UN WOMEN**
 - In Focus: Gender equality matters in COVID-19 response: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/in-focus-gender-equality-in-covid-19-response>
- **United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)**
 - COVID-19 Campaign: Take action with us in cities and communities: <https://unhabitat.org/covid-19>
 - UN-Habitat COVID-19 Response Plan: <https://unhabitat.org/un-habitat-covid-19-response-plan>
- **United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs / UN-SPIDER**
 - Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) : <http://www.un-spider.org/advisory-support/emergency-support/covid-1>
- **Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)**
 - COVID-19 and HIV: <https://www.unaids.org/en/covid19>
 - Opinion: Successful global epidemic responses put people at the centre (12 March 2020): https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/featurestories/2020/march/20200312_covid-19
- **United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)**
 - UNCDF Response to COVID-19: <https://www.uncdf.org/article/5452/covid-19>
- **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)**
 - Coronavirus (COVID-19) : News, Analysis and Resources: <https://unctad.org/en/Pages/coronavirus.aspx>
- **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**
 - COVID-19 pandemic: <https://www.undp.org/covid-19-pandemic-response.html>
 - COVID-19 and the SDGs: How the 'roadmap for humanity' could be changed by a pandemic: <https://feature.undp.org/covid-19-and-the-sdgs/>
 - Coronavirus vs. inequality: How we'll pay vastly different costs for the COVID-19 pandemic: <https://feature.undp.org/coronavirus-vs-inequality/>
 - UNDP Transparency Portal - COVID-19 Response: <https://open.undp.org/our-approaches/undpocr>
 - COVID-19: New UNDP data dashboards reveal huge disparities among countries in ability to cope and recover (29 April 2020): <https://bit.ly/3bSGnDL>
- **United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)**
 - The ripple effect of Covid-19: <https://www.undrr.org/drr-and-covid-19>
- **United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)**
 - COVID-19 Response: <https://www.uneca.org/eca-covid-19-response>
 - Africa Knowledge Hub on COVID-19: <https://knowledge.uneca.org/covid19/>
- **United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)**
 - Coronavirus Advisory: <https://www.unece.org/covid-19.html>
 - COVID-19 News & Press Releases: <https://www.unece.org/info/media/covid-19-news-press-releases.html>
- **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**
 - COVID-19 updates from the United Nations Environment Programme: <http://www.unep.org/covid-19-updates>
- **United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)**
 - COVID-19: <https://www.unescap.org/covid19>
- **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**
 - COVID-19 Response: <https://en.unesco.org/covid19>
 - Visual resources to download and share: <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/communicationinformationresponse/visualresources>

- **United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA)**
 - Prevalence of COVID-19 in the Arab Region: <https://www.unescwa.org/prevalence-covid-19-arab-region>
 - Socioeconomic Impact of COVID-19: Policy Briefs: <https://www.unescwa.org/publications/socioeconomic-impact-covid-19-policy-briefs>
- **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**
 - COVID-19 pandemic: <https://www.unfpa.org/covid19>
 - COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions: <https://www.unfpa.org/covid-19-FAQs>
 - UNFPA Appeal: Coronavirus Emergency – Protect Pregnant Women, New Mothers and Newborns: <https://donate.unfpa.org/us-en/covid-19-3>
- **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**
 - Coronavirus Emergency: <https://www.unhcr.org/coronavirus-covid-19.html>
 - COVID-19 Platform: Temporary Measures and Impact on Protection: https://im.unhcr.org/covid19_platform/
 - Live blog: Refugees in the COVID-19 crisis: <https://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/2020/3/5e79e2410/>
 - refworld Special Feature on COVID-19: <https://www.refworld.org/covid19.html>
- **United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)**
 - Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) - What you need to know about the virus to protect you and your family: <https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/covid-19>
 - Data to inform the COVID-19 response - Interactive data visualizations (April 2020): <https://data.unicef.org/resources/data-to-inform-the-covid-19-response/>
 - Protecting the most vulnerable children from the impact of coronavirus: An agenda for action (3 April 2020): <https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/agenda-for-action>
 - Fact or fiction: How much do you know about the coronavirus disease (COVID-19)? <https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/fact-or-fiction-how-much-do-you-actually-know-about-coronavirus-covid-19>
 - Key messages and actions for coronavirus disease (COVID-19) prevention and control in schools: Guidance from UNICEF, the World Health Organization and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies: <https://www.unicef.org/reports/key-messages-actions-coronavirus-disease-prevention-control-schools>
- **United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)**
 - UNICRI'S Work to Address COVID-19 and its Exploitation by Criminal and Terrorist Groups: http://www.unicri.it/in_focus/on/covid19_landing_page
- **United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)**
 - COVID-19 Response: <https://www.unido.org/unidos-comprehensive-response-covid-19>
- **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)**
 - Information about the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/covid-19.html>
 - Wildlife trafficking harms animals and human health - the case of Pangolins (22 April 2020): <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/frontpage/2020/April/wildlife-trafficking-harms-animals-and-human-health---the-case-of-pangolins.html>
- **United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)**
 - COVID-19: Stay up-to-date with the latest on UNOPS support to response efforts: <https://www.unops.org/news-and-stories/news/covid-19-stay-up-to-date-with-the-latest-on-unops-support-to-response-efforts>
 - UNOPS pledges its support to help tackle the Coronavirus crisis (24 March 2020): <https://www.unops.org/news-and-stories/news/unops-pledges-its-support-to-help-tackle-the-coronavirus-crisis>

- **United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)**
 - UNRISD Covid-19 Series: [http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BE6B5/\(httpNewsCovid19Blog\)/\\$First?OpenDocument&count=10000](http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BE6B5/(httpNewsCovid19Blog)/$First?OpenDocument&count=10000)
In this blog series, authors explore the uneven distribution of impacts of both the pandemic and the crisis response, as well as the social, political and economic drivers of these disparities. The series engages UNRISD's networks and draws on its vast body of social development research to provide evidence-based responses to the current crisis as it develops and suggest viable strategies for a future where similar crises are not only less devastating, but also less likely to happen.
- **United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)**
 - UNRWA responds to COVID-19: https://www.unrwa.org/covid_19
- **United Nations University (UNU)**
 - Real-time Research - COVID-19 Response: <https://unu.edu/covid-19>
 - UNU-CRIS: Call for Blog Contributions: Regional Dimension of the COVID-19 Response: <http://cris.unu.edu/covid19discussion>
 - UNU-WIDER joins research consortium to launch survey on COVID-19 (31 March 2020): <https://lebenmitcorona.org/life-with-corona/>
 - UNU Evidence, Policy, and Interventions for COVID-19 Tracker (UNU EPIC Tracker): <https://epictracker.org/>
- **United Nations Volunteers (UNV)**
 - UNV's COVID-19 pandemic response: <https://www.unv.org/UNVs-COVID-19-pandemic-response>
 - Current assignments: <https://www.unv.org/special-calls> (search by keyword COVID-19)
 - Volunteering online during lockdown to fight COVID-19 (8 May 2020): <https://www.unv.org/News/Volunteering-online-during-lockdown-fight-COVID-19>
 - UNV invests in COVID-19 response (11 April 2020): <https://www.unv.org/Success-stories/UNV-invests-COVID-19-response>
- **World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)**
 - Tourism and COVID-19: <https://www.unwto.org/tourism-covid-19>
- **Universal Postal Union (UPU)**
 - COVID-19: Information and updates from the UPU: <https://www.upu.int/en/Postal-Solutions/COVID-19>
- **World Food Programme (WFP)**
 - COVID-19 pandemic: <https://www.wfp.org/emergencies/covid-19-pandemic>
- **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)**
 - WIPO's COVID-19 Response: <https://www.wipo.int/covid-19/en/>
- **World Meteorological Organization (WMO)**
 - Coronavirus (COVID-19): <https://public.wmo.int/en/resources/coronavirus-covid-19>
- **World Trade Organization (WTO)**
 - COVID-19 and world trade: https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/covid19_e/covid19_e.htm
- **World Bank**
 - The World Bank Group and COVID-19 (coronavirus): <https://www.worldbank.org/en/who-we-are/news/coronavirus-covid19>

Further Information

- **Ask DAG: How is the United Nations responding to the Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) outbreak in China?** <http://ask.un.org/faq/281723>

- **UN documents on the topic "COVID-19" :**
[https://digitallibrary.un.org/search?ln=en&as=0&p=subjectheading:\[COVID-19\]](https://digitallibrary.un.org/search?ln=en&as=0&p=subjectheading:[COVID-19])

- **Coronavirus global health emergency: Coverage from UN News**
<https://news.un.org/en/events/un-news-coverage-coronavirus-outbreak>

This page brings together information and guidance from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations regarding the current outbreak of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) that was first reported in Wuhan, China, on 31 December 2019. Please visit this page for daily updates. WHO is working closely with global experts, governments and partners to rapidly expand scientific knowledge on this new virus, to track the spread and virulence of the virus, and to provide advice to countries and individuals on measures to protect health and prevent the spread of this outbreak.

- **United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law**
"International Law and Infectious Disease Control", lecture by Professor Gian Luca Burci, Former Legal Counsel of the WHO: https://legal.un.org/avl/ls/Burci_HS.html

14 September 2020

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<https://unric.org/en/unric-library-backgrounder-novel-coronavirus/>