

# Governance of COVID-19

**SAN MARINO**

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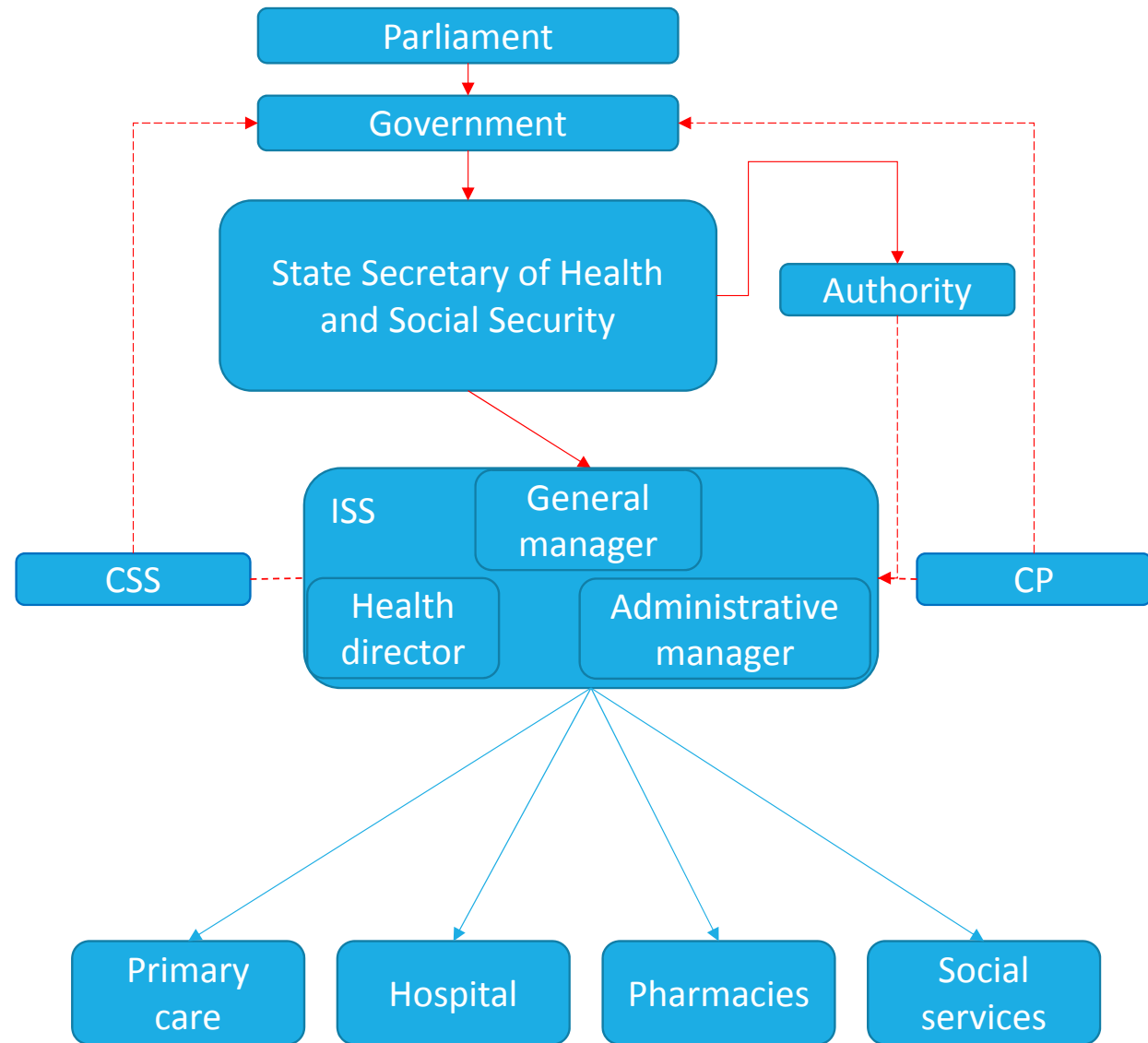
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# Characteristics of the governance system

- San Marino is a parliamentary democracy.
- The Sammarinese Parliament *Consiglio Grande e Generale* is the legislative and representative body of San Marino with 60 members elected every five year.
- The *Congresso di Stato* has the executive power. The Government of San Marino represents a coalition government and typically consists of 10 *State Secretaries*.
- The two *Capitani Reggenti* of San Marino are the head of state and they mainly fulfils representational and symbolic duties. They are elected every six months by the San Marino Parliament.

# Governance of the health care system

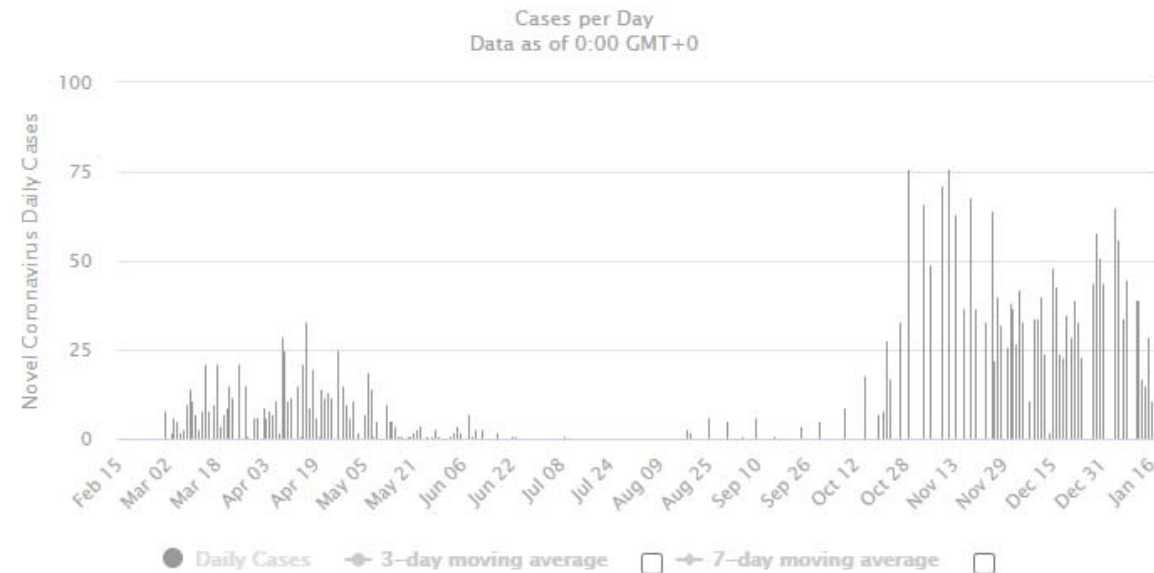
- The State Secretary of Health and Social Security is responsible for governing the health care system.
- Other main actors include the Social Security Institute (ISS), the Social and Health Consulting (CSS), the Council for Social Security (CP) and the Authority.
- San Marino grants a universal health coverage.



# COVID-19 pandemic

- The first case of the coronavirus infection was registered on February 27th 2020.
  - The peak number of hospitalizations during the first phase was 57 (March 2020).
  - The highest 14-day notification per 100,000 people was **566 in April**.
- The “second wave” of the pandemic began in September 2020.
  - The peak number of hospitalizations during the second phase was 30 (December 2020).
  - The highest 14-day notification per 100,000 people was **1343,9 in February 2021**.
- As of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 84 people have died after contracting the COVID-19 virus.
- During the 1<sup>st</sup> phase, San Marino suffered from low testing capacity because it was not autonomous in swab analysis. Then in May the hospital laboratory acquired the necessary skills in swab analysis and testing increased.

Daily New Cases in San Marino



# Governance of COVID-19 I

- At the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> phase a special commissioner for the health emergency was appointed and he lasted in charge until the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> phase.
- In the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase a health director was appointed as coordinator for the activities related to the pandemic in the hospital.
- In December 2020 a responsible for the vaccinations plan was identified in the person of the director of primary care.
- An emergency group, consisting of representatives of health authority, ISS health management and civil protection, meet regularly during both the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase.

# Governance of COVID-19 II

- In San Marino conflicting feelings emerged during the first and the second phase of pandemic, mainly between the protection of individual freedoms versus the need for stricter sanitary measures. Mandatory mask's wearing and strict lockdown during the first phase raised discontent in a small group of citizen. The protest was principally carried on in social networks.
- The lack of economic measures to support the economies, especially the ones hit by the pandemic, i.e. touristic and food sector, contribute to protests against the government.

# COVID-19 measures

- On the 8<sup>th</sup> of March the first decree about urgent measures to contain the pandemic was promulgated. Then from 14<sup>th</sup> of March till 4<sup>th</sup> of May, San Marino imposed a full lockdown. For 2 months all museums and cultural institutes, gyms and swimming pools were closed. Every shop was closed except for grocery stores and pharmacies. Restaurants, bars and food shops could make deliveries. Public transports were stopped.
- People couldn't live their homes except for working or health reasons or for primary needs. Public events and activities were suspended.
- The presence of workers in production companies and industries was limited to a maximum of 50% and a full screening of workers was carried on.
- At the end of the first phase some restrictions were lifted: it was possible to visit relatives, businesses reopened. In June a gradual return to normality was permitted by a new decree.
- During the second wave there have been mobility limitations: in particular a curfew from 10 pm to 5 am, except for working or health reasons or for primary needs, but the measures didn't reach the severity of the first phase.

# COVID-19 and education

- From the 8<sup>th</sup> of March all schools were closed until the summer holidays. University couldn't restart lessons in presence after the winter exam session.
- Both schools and university were able to grant distance or e-learning lessons. Some difficulties were experienced by the population in the first period because of lacks of internet connectivity, mainly in families with more than one child of school age.
- During the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase both schools and university restarted with lessons in presence in September, but after a three month (30th of November) university and high schools were closed again. Kindergarten, primary and middle schools remained open. From November 30, the use of masks at school became mandatory for children over 6 years old.
- Since January 2021, all schools have reopened. Occasional closures were applied in the classroom where outbreaks were detected.



# COVID-19 and borders

- San Marino shares its only border with Italy and normally everybody can cross it without any custom control. There are 17 border crossing points, but in the lockdown during the first phase of pandemic only 5 of them remained open. The police set checkpoints in all of the 5 opened border crossing points. Nobody could cross the border, except for working or health reasons or for primary needs.
- At the end of the first phase all the border crossing points were reopened.
- During the second wave some mobility limitations were restored, including travel ban across the border in some periods.

# COVID-19 and economies

- San Marino is not a member of the European Union and for this reason it will not be able to benefit from the European support funds for the health emergency. This causes a situation of disadvantage and greater economic suffering than that of other EU countries.
- San Marino government decided to issue some decrees to sustain economy. The first one was issued on 29 March 2020 and provided support measures for mortgages and loans for families, enterprises, the self-employed, and agricultural professionals.
- Other decrees provided solution in terms of extraordinary redundancy fund, deferred payment of contributions and utilities, reduced tax rates and early maternity leaves.
- Some few temporary pay cut were applied to State Secretaries and judges, to public employees because of the closure or hour reduction of public offices and to teachers because of distance teaching.

# COVID-19 vaccines

- San Marino status as non-UE country and the absence of an EU association agreement precluded the possibility for San Marino to access the single European supply system and this created numerous complexities for San Marino in the supply of vaccines.
- The only way to get vaccines in the first phase was through Italy and San Marino signed an agreement with Italy for the supply of vaccines.
- Due to the delay in the vaccines supply, San Marino also got the Russian Sputnik vaccine directly from The Russian Direct Investment Fund, even if it isn't approved by European Medicines Agency (EMA). A first supply of 7.500 double doses of Sputnik arrived on the 23 February 2021.
- 1.170 doses of Pfizer vaccine arrived then from Italy on the 1<sup>st</sup> March.
- New Sputnik vaccine doses have been ordered from The Russian Direct Investment Fund and they are coming.
- Currently the anti-COVID vaccination campaign in San Marino is progressing quickly, and it have reached 26% of the total vaccinatable population.

# Conclusion: Lessons and prospects

- The COVID-10 pandemic was obviously highly unexpected and showed the lack of emergency plans in San Marino, useful to face this kind of situation.
- Nevertheless, the health system of San Marino was able to face the critic situation, albeit with some difficulties. In the first phase some of the hospital activities were stopped to cure COVID-19 patients, while in the second phase the intensive care often got closer to the saturation of beds.
- The public sentiment about the government approach to the pandemic is varied, but there is in the population a sort of resignation to the inevitability of the situation.
- The economic consequences of COVID-19 aren't easily quantifiable, but it's clear that a rise of public debt and a worsening in the main economic indicators (unemployment, per capita income) are predictable.
- The crisis has increased the digitalization in San Marino, both in the public sector, i.e. with the implementation of online reservation and request for services and certifications, both in the private sector, with an higher request for broadband internet connections and electronic devices.