

## **Cyprus ranks second among EU countries in terms of coronavirus testing**

Cyprus ranks high in relation to testing among the 27 member states of the European Union. According to [recent data](#) from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC – Week 4), Cyprus ranks 2nd highest for coronavirus testing (PCR and rapid test) per 100,000 inhabitants for the 14 days preceding 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021. Since the beginning of the pandemic, the increased number of tests has been a central pillar of the pandemic management strategy, with the aim of continuous epidemiological surveillance in the community.

From the first pandemic wave to this day, the Ministry of Health invested, in addition to the surveillance of the general population, in carrying out targeted tests, inter alia, in senior peoples' homes, migrant structures, other closed structures, professional sectors, but also in specific areas where large outbreaks of the disease were identified such as in Pafos and Aradippou. In total, since the beginning of the pandemic in Cyprus, more than 1.5 million tests have been carried out. This allowed the early detection of 31,379 cases and the immediate activation of the tracing process, by limiting and investigating the contacts of positive cases.

During this period and as part of the strategy for the gradual lifting of the restrictive measures, the Ministry of Health is strengthening the pillar of increased controls by utilizing the method of rapid antigen tests, aiming at examining employees who are reactivated in each phase of the strategy, as well as personnel in businesses/sectors already working, proportionally and on a weekly basis. The continuous and cyclical testing of employees enables early detection of positive cases among employees, and reduces the chances of concurrent cases occurring in workplaces, thus enabling their safe and continuous operation.

According to the World Health Organization and the ECDC, increased tests combined with the measures in force, contribute to monitoring the country's epidemiological situation and, therefore, to decision-making in relation to the lifting of restrictions and the restart of society and the economy.

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