

## **CPR PALAZZO SAN GERVASIO**

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### **1. How many people are currently detained in the center and what is the centre's maximum capacity?**

Amidst the Covid-19 outbreak, the number of foreign nationals detained in the centre has assumedly remained stable. As of 23 March, the detained migrant population was of 40 men in a facility for 152 people. No subsequent data has been revealed.

### **2. Are people still entering this detention centre? If so, what are the measures taken to prevent contagion and safeguard their right to health?**

Although there is no precise data on the entries in the center during the epidemic, it appears that a few people have been brought in the centre. The [circular note](#) of the Minister of the Interior issued on 26 March 2020 specifies the precautionary measures to take in the event of new arrivals. These include a preliminary medical examination and, where possible, a 14-day isolation period. Although there is no specific information on the measures that have been taken in the Potenza center, the National Guarantor has reported that most of the CPRs have set up quarantine wards for incomers and ensured a quarantine period of two weeks.

### **3. Have detainees been released from this centre due to COVID-19? If yes, which groups?**

There is no public information on the matter.

### **4. What information has been provided to detainees in this centre, in which language(s) and through what means?**

Until the end of March, detainees apparently had received no information about the health crisis nor about the necessary precautions to take. “We don’t know how much we will stay or what will happen”, a detainee [explained](#), “we are abandoned”. According to the National Guarantor's [bulletin](#), however, this information seems to have been provided.

### **5. What healthcare measures have been taken in response to the virus? Has the number of health workers working inside the center increased?**

On 23 March, a detainee reported the scarce healthcare measures of the centre: medical assistance was not provided on a regular basis, people who had presented flu symptoms were not examined, and detainees with illnesses were not appropriately checked on or taken care of. “A young man has had a hernia problem for a while and it got very bad, he cannot sleep, and yet the doctor tells him he should push it back in its place, as he has to stay in the center anyways”, he added. Although a medical isolation area was then set up, the care detainees were receiving was questionable - on 27 March, one of them was found on the roof of the facility, asking for medical assistance. In accordance with the National Guarantor’s [bulletin](#), however, it appears that by 21 April, almost all CPRs have improved their healthcare measures. They have established a thorough screening procedure and detainees’ health conditions are checked regularly regardless of the specific symptomatology. The exact number of health workers working inside the center is still not available.

### **6. What hygiene measures have been taken in response to the virus?**

In March, the detainees of the center stated that that they had received no gloves, masks or disinfectant, and that they had been given uncleaned bed sheets and covers. The unsanitary conditions of the CPR led to various protests and a hunger strike among the detainees. As of 21 April the situation seems to have improved. The National Guarantor [reports](#) that “almost all the CPRs’ managers declared that they had regularly carried out disinfections to ensure the premises’ hygienic conditions. They all reported having increased the number of personal hygiene kits for all persons detained and making protective masks

available to them at release. In addition, they have informed in multiple languages all detainees about the health emergency and instructed hosts on how to behave to prevent the spread of the virus”. On 27 April, however, Alda Re of the [LasciateCIEntare campaign](#) contradicted these statements. She [claimed](#) that: “personal protective equipment have never been provided, even though we are aware that the State has granted specific fundings for these centres to make up for equipment deficiencies, we are also sure that the areas have never been sanitised”.

#### **7. What measures have been taken to comply with necessary social distancing requirements?**

Throughout the entire health emergency, precise information on the measures taken to satisfy social distancing requirements in the centre have been unavailable. The National Guarantor observes that the structures of these facilities make social spacing extremely difficult.

#### **8. What measures have been taken to ensure that detainees continue to maintain contact with their family and friends in such a difficult time?**

At the outbreak of the epidemic, detainees were worried that they could not contact their families. The circumstances were the following: as per protocol, upon their arrival, police broke phone cameras, there was no internet connection, and, differently from prison, no video calls had been allowed. As of 21 April, the situation appears to have changed. The National Guarantor affirmed that the a video call system has been facilitated and expanded in the centre. It is used to maintain contact with family, friends, legal advisors and local Guarantors.

#### **9. Are NGOs, monitors and/or volunteers continuing to enter in detention and meet detainees? If yes, what measures have been put in place to ensure their health protection? If no, what measures have been put in place to ensure that detainees continue to receive the kind of support they used to receive from these groups?**

According to available information, no social assistants, NGOs or volunteers were allowed in the centre. However, it appears that, contact with legal advisors and monitors was maintained through video call systems.

#### **10. What measures have been taken to protect vulnerable groups (e.g., victims of gender violence and torture; people facing mental health challenges)?**

Differently from the other of the centres, in the Potenza vulnerable groups received at least some degree of attention. “The are people who should not be here. People that are sick, also mentally”, a detainee [affirmed](#) on 23 March. He goes on saying that one of them tried to escape, he was caught, brought back and beaten – “and he is crazy, what is he doing here?”, he asked. Nevertheless, indications on whether and how these issues have been addressed are not available.

#### **11. What measures have been taken to protect staff working with detainees? Has there been an increase or decrease in the number of staff since the COVID-19 crisis started?**

On 22 March, it was reported that the centre’s guards were working with no protection. With regard to the National Guarantor’s [bulletin](#), it can be assumed that they were eventually provided with appropriate hygiene and protection equipment.

#### **12. What kind of legal measures are individuals and/or organisations pursuing in response to COVID?**

Since early March, there has been a wide mobilisation of the civil society all over the country. Both jointly and individually organisations have pursued several actions - these include:

- [Letter to the Minister of the Interior, to Prefectures, to Police Headquarters;](#)
- [Proposals of Tavolo Asilo to Government and Parliament on the health emergency and on measures affecting foreign nationals;](#)

- [Letter to the Justices of the Peace;](#)
- [Letter to the Councils of the Bar Associations;](#)
- [Appeal of the National Bar Association to the Government.](#)

In this framework, legal measures have been based on the of illegitimacy and unreasonableness of immigration detention in the current national and international contexts. Requests to stop entries in CPRs emerged right at the start of the health emergency. Appeals have been submitted to Courts' specialised departments and Justices of the Peace asking them not confirm nor extend detention orders, as well as to local bar associations urging them to monitor detention hearings and provide public defenders with all the information. Core arguments have been: the impossibility to comply with the measures foreseen to guarantee individuals' health; the lack of real possibilities of effective repatriation; the suspension of hearings; and the availability of accommodation outside detention. On top of that, calls have been launched to ensure adequate reception protocols, and guarantee detainees' relations with the outside world.