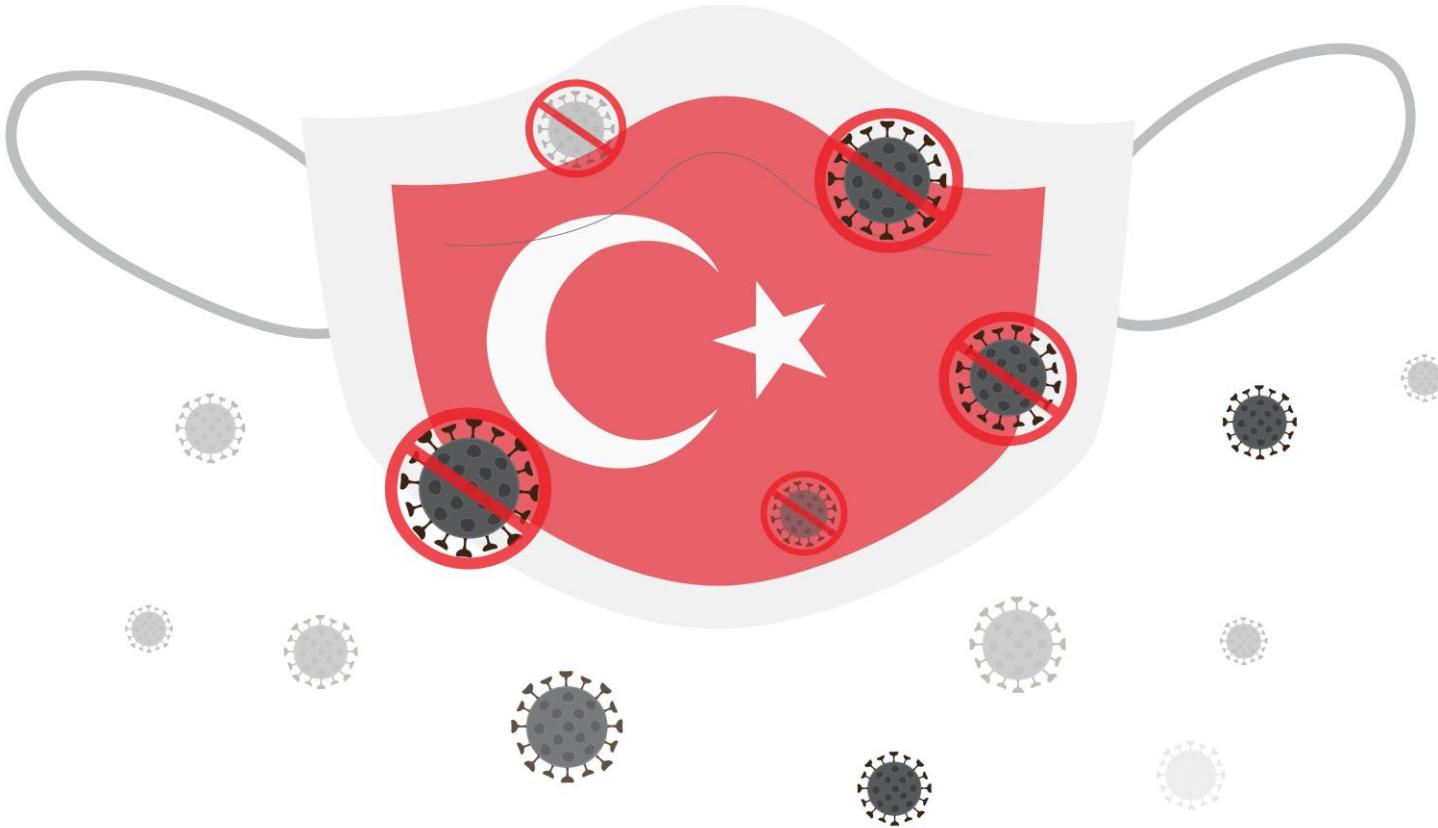


MEASURES TAKEN AGAINST  
**COVID-19**  
PANDEMIC  
AND  
WORKING SYSTEM



# THE PROCESS WITH COVID-19

As in the rest of the world, the COVID-19 pandemic completely changed the way we live and work. Since the very beginning, when the effects of the virus just started to be seen, as always our institute put the highest priority on occupational health and safety issues. In line with this, measures were taken for the health and safety of all our stakeholders, in particular, of our employees and their families, and the implementation of required actions were started.



## BUILDING OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TEAM



An UME Emergency Coordination Team was build up to analyze the situation and to react quickly through making decisions and implementation of required actions. The activity of the team is carried out in line with the recommendations from the publications of the Ministry of Health of the Turkish Republic and its Scientific Board, circulars of other relevant Ministries, as well as the information published by the Provincial Sanitary Board and the World Health Organization. The Emergency Coordination Team takes all required measures with a response to rapidly changing situation and makes follow up of implementation of actions and decisions.

## ADMINISTRATIVE AND SOCIAL SERVICES

### International and Domestic Business Trips

Restrictions were imposed on domestic and international travel planning, except for those that are compulsory. All our employees on the return from business trips abroad were informed

that the 14-days lockdown rule will be applied before they can start working. As a result, they stayed at home before starting work at the institute. Having checked the status of applications for annual leaves of institutional staff, the personnel who was planned to travel abroad for private reasons were contacted and advised to postpone their travels. On the return from a trip abroad, the 14-day rule was applied before they started working at the institute, and the status of all staff falling into this category was followed by the Occupational Health and Safety Unit during their stay at home.



## SOCIAL SERVICES

- Hygiene measures were increased in the cafeteria; it was started to serve food in disposable containers with disposable tools. Common salad buffets, sauces, spice tables were removed. Chairs in the cafeteria were placed in an appropriate way to guarantee a distance between them. Also, to reduce the frequency of gatherings of staff, serving food was arranged at an extended time interval.
- Extensive post-meal cleaning was arranged in the cafeteria.
- The emergency exit door was opened to enable the appropriate circulation of fresh air inside the cafeteria.
- Guesthouse services have been terminated.
- The use of personal and disposable materials was recalled in the masjids. Care has been taken to prevent appearance of more than one person in the masjids at the same time and keeping the required social distance.
- The sale of open products like toast, bagel, etc. has been stopped in the canteen. Only the sale of closed products like biscuits, etc. has been allowed to meet the needs of our employees.



## HYGIENE

- In line with the recommendations of the Health Service Unit of the institute, all laboratories, units and common areas, as well as the surfaces that are frequently touched by hands (door handles, handrails, etc.) were cleaned by using special sanitizers at the weekend just before the spread of the virus was first detected in our country. Ventilation systems were checked, and the building was ventilated by opening fire dampers and windows of all offices in the building.



- In addition, the periodic cleaning plans routinely implemented by the cleaning staff were made more frequent, and care was taken to the cleaning of the surfaces touched by the staff very frequently. Furthermore, mandatory arrangements for the cleaning staff to use personal protective equipment (disposable overalls, glasses, gloves, special respirators) and making cleaning with the disinfectants were put in force.
- Water dispensers were closed, and disposable cups of water were left in the tea brewing areas.
- The use of disposable cups was promoted, and these cups were placed at locations in the institute, where tea is brewed. The staff of the institute was encouraged not to touch teapots by hands directly, but to use single-use paper towels. Printed information notes were hung at the required locations as reminders.

## MEETINGS

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- The staff of the institute was informed to hold meetings as tele and video conference as much as possible.
- In case of physical meetings, information brochures were hung on the doors to encourage taking care of the social distance and wearing a mask during the meeting. Masks were given to the participant intending to participate at the meeting.
- The use of disposable cups for tea and coffee was started in the meeting rooms during meetings.
- Reminders were made about keeping the meetings short.
- After the meeting, the area was cleaned, and the room was ventilated.



## WASTES

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- Boxes were placed for separate collection of masks, gloves and cargo bags, and wastes were kept in the holding area for at least 72 hours; so that they could not be thrown into the household wastes.
- The cleaning staff doing the waste collection was instructed accordingly.

# TRANSPORTATION

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## Staff Transportation Services

- A decision was taken to use up to 50% of the current capacity of the personnel bus services and work plans were prepared following this decision.
- The staff was always reminded to follow the rules on the cross-sitting plan in the bus and to wear masks .
- The staff was informed that the vehicles are disinfected regularly.



## Vehicles

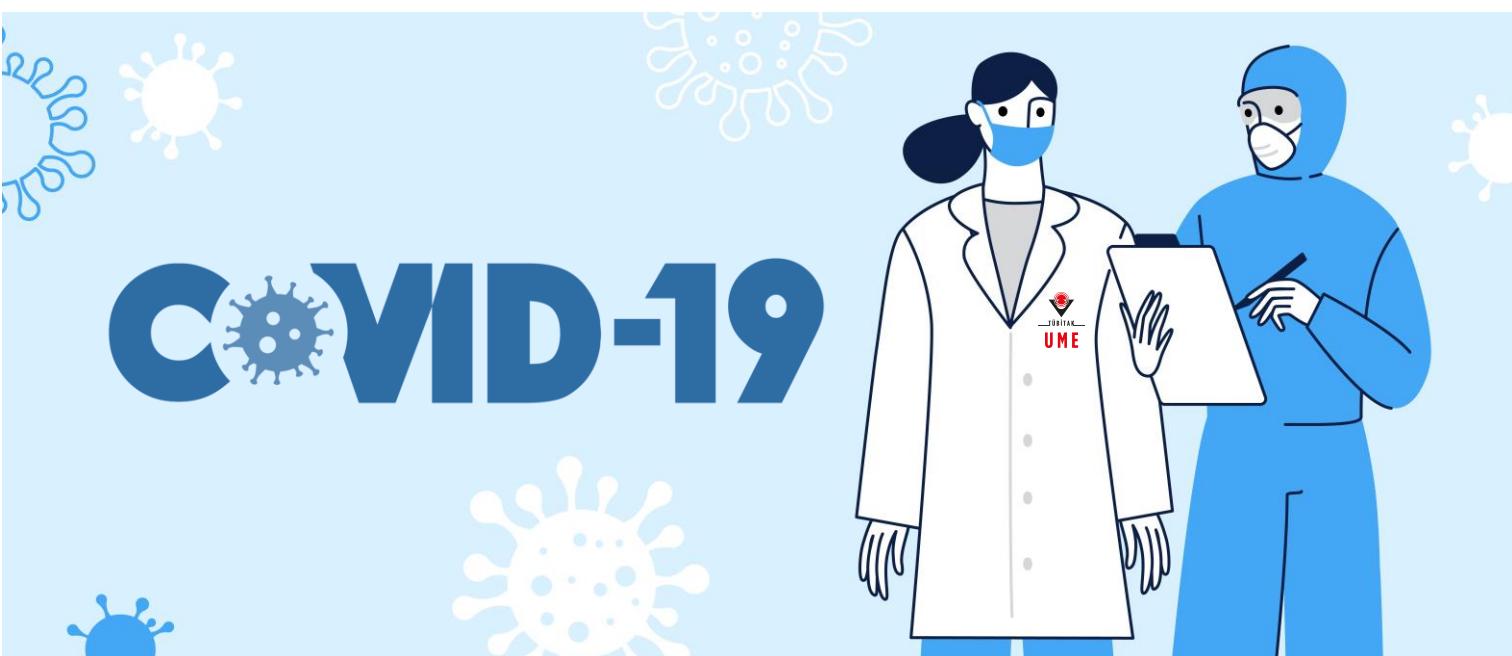
- The cars were ventilated after its each use.
- Regular disinfection of cars was carried out.
- Masks and hand sanitizers were put in the cars. Reminders were made for its use in the cars.
- Arrangements were made to take shift personnel from their homes avoiding the use of public transportation.

- Based on the decision of the Presidency of TÜBİTAK, a collective annual leave for two weeks was announced at the very beginning of the detection of the spread of the virus in Turkey. Following the annual leave, in line with the Circulars and notifications of the Presidency of the Turkish Republic, arrangements were made for pregnant women, legal milk permit users, disabled staff and personnel who reported by Workplace Physician to have a chronic disease, to use an administrative leave and stay at home.
- Work of personnel remotely from home and on a rotational basis in the institute was launched. The minimum number of staff was identified by the top management for each week to execute compulsory work at the institute, and the work of this personnel in the institute was managed.



- In coordination with the Occupational Health and Safety Unit, an inventory of personal information about staff, who may pose a risk and problem coming to work, was prepared. This concerns with staff with disabilities and chronic illnesses, persons whose spouses are healthcare professionals, those who take care for their parents with the age over 65 years, those having family members with a disease requiring care, and personnel, who needs to use public transportation, etc. The prepared inventory was used by the management of the institute during the preparation of weekly work plan.
- Since the break in the high education was announced by the Council of Higher Education of Turkey, the break in the activities of students, who were in the institute for long-term internships and workplace engineering education, was made. The students were encouraged to stay at home during this break.
- TÜBİTAK has launched a Call to encourage and support students/researchers who will take part in projects concerning the diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19. Within the scope of the Trainee Researcher Scholarship Program (STAR), the process of engagement of 21 students who have been approved for 8 months in the projects was initiated and their work in the institute has started.

- To initiate immediate start of work of students under PhD student scholarship, the students were informed about necessary tests requested by the Workplace Doctor and they were asked to pass the tests as soon as possible. PhD student scholarship programme is in force in the frame of the protocol signed with the Council of Higher Education of Turkish Republic.
- The information requested by the Official Institutions (TÜBİTAK Presidency, District Governorate, Ministry of Science and Technology, etc.) was prepared and reported.
- Any potential legal problems were avoided by adopting practices in the institute to any changes in legislation. The changes were carefully tracked with the purpose of identification of any new regulations, changed as well as abolished requirements in national legislative documents.
- Various assignments and correspondences were made as well as information was provided to staff of the institute in order to prevent personnel from any potential problems during practices such as curfews and restrictions for intercity movements.
- Through the participation in online trainings new information and knowledge was gained, which was further disseminated to relevant units of the institute.
- New channels for rapid communication with the personnel were created and active communication with staff of the institute was ensured.
- The information about the personnel, who received a rest report, whose relatives passed away, and those who should accompany their relatives due to their health problems was shared with the Occupational Health and Safety Unit.



## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY SERVICES

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- Before the virus was widely seen, all employees were informed about the hygiene rules and safety precautions that should be followed with the announcement prepared by the Occupational Health and Safety Unit.



- A seminar entitled “New Coronavirus (COVID-19), Influenza (Flu)” was held at TÜBİTAK Gebze Campus. The seminar was given by Gebze District Health Directorate Public Health Specialist.
- The measures prepared by the UME Emergency Coordination Team were updated and announced at the beginning of each week.
- Collaborative works of the TÜBİTAK Gebze Campus such as food, personnel shuttle, vehicles, etc. were carried out in cooperation with other institutes.
- Notifications were sent via SMS to track not only COVID-19 but all health problems of our personnel and their families. Received feedback contributed to the preparation of the work plans.
- The Emergency Action Plan and risk assessment studies specific to infectious diseases and pandemic situations were updated.
- The instructions of relevant laboratories and units for infectious diseases and pandemic situations were updated.
- Staff of the institute with Incapacity Report were in touch; they were called on regular basis and supported by related personnel.

- The posters about hand hygiene, disinfectant use, wearing a mask, etc. were prepared, and announced both by e-mail and by putting up them to common places within the institute.
- Hand disinfectants prepared by our Chemistry Laboratory were placed in the relevant areas.
- Announcements were made to personnel about new scientific updates on COVID-19.
- All personnel were reminded and followed up about keeping social distance and wearing masks especially in cases where more than one staff is working in an office or in a laboratory.
- A brief information regarding ergonomics for staff members working from home remotely were prepared and shared with personnel.
- Announcements about necessary measures were made not only by e-mail but also via SMS in order to reach all personnel.
- The personnel applying to the Health Service of the institute were informed, oriented and followed in line with the needs of themselves and their families.
- The personnel who has cold/flu alike complaints about her/himself or for her/his relatives were instructed not to come to work.
- Instructions were prepared and reminders were made to first aid attendant and security personnel in order to be prepared for any emergency situation.



# COVID-19

- A COVID-19 file which includes all necessary and updated information was prepared and made open access to UME Emergency Coordination Team to use when necessary.
- In addition to the General OHS Training, Scholars under the Trainee Researcher Scholarship Program (STAR) were provided with information on COVID-19 measures.

## INDUSTRIAL SERVICES

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- In order to assure continuity of on-site calibration and testing services, necessary precautions were taken, and related personnel were reminded of these measures.
- It was ensured that all devices from customers would be kept apart from personnel at least for 2 hours before delivery and after acceptance of the device.
- It was ensured that the personnel did not receive devices without gloves and mask. A hand sanitizer with a sensor was ready to use if there wasn't time to wash hands with soap.



## GENERAL DOCUMENT AND ARCHIVE SERVICES

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- It has been ensured that documents are not accepted and delivered without gloves and masks.
- Announcements were made to the personnel regarding access to the archives of the companies providing online services within this period.
- A waiting area was allocated for the acceptance of packages belonging to the institute or staff. Waste box for disposal of package bags; hand sanitizers and gloves were placed at this location. In order to prevent contact as much as possible, separate bags were left for carrying the boxes into the building.

## SECURITY AND SAFETY SERVICES

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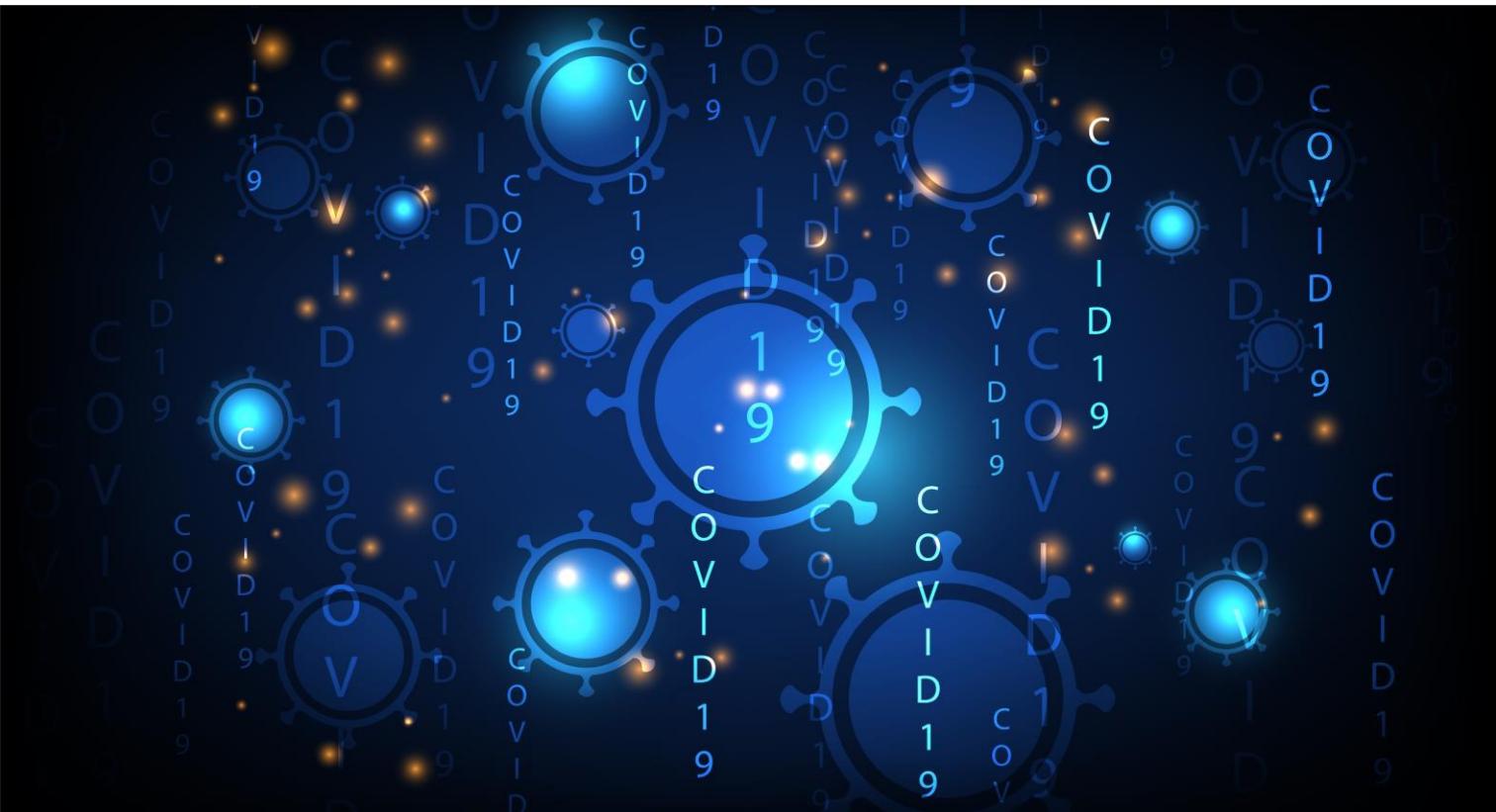
- Entrance to the building was provided from a single point.
- Security personnel were instructed about wearing masks and keeping social distance. Gloves were made compulsory for services such as identity control, card issuing, etc. which requires hand contact.
- A thermal camera was placed at the entrance of the building and fever screening by thermometer was initiated. An instruction was prepared on how to handle results which are higher than the level determined by the workplace doctor; and all security personnel were informed accordingly.
- It was ensured to use disinfectant at the entrance to the building.
- The doors were kept open to reduce contact within the building. The number of patrols were augmented in order to avoid security breaches.
- At the entrance regular reminders were given to the staff about wearing masks and keeping social distance.
- Masks were distributed to the personnel in need right after the symptoms of the virus were began to be seen.
- Visitors were not allowed to get into the institute without personnel approval.



## R&D SUPPORT SERVICES

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- Information systems infrastructure required for remote working was prepared. Projects and users were identified according to the security procedures we are obliged to comply with and the system was made ready for their use.
- The necessary infrastructure for tele / video conferencing was prepared and one staff member was present in institute alternately, to provide service if needed.
- Announcements were made to personnel to participate to meetings via tele/video conferencing.



## PROCUREMENT SERVICES

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- Priority was given to the supply of masks and consumables used for hygiene and to the purchases that should be done by the Occupational Health and Safety Unit to manage required processes. Continuous contact was held with suppliers.
- It was ensured that our staff responsible for management of operations at customs use disposable coveralls, masks, gloves and disinfectants; and that the vehicle is covered with pallet wrap and cleaned after transportation to minimize contact with incoming customs materials.

## INVENTORY and STOCK WAREHOUSE SERVICES

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- Stocks (mask, disposable overalls, gloves, chemicals used within the scope of hygiene needs) were monitored weekly; related personnel were informed, consumables were purchased before they were exhausted.
- The consumables coming to the warehouse were taken to a separate area for at least 2 hours before they were placed in the shelves or delivered to the relevant laboratories and units.
- No material was received without using mask and gloves.
- A hand sanitizer with a sensor was placed in case the hands could not be washed with soap.



## BUILDING MAINTENANCE, REPAIR AND OPERATION SERVICES

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- Elevators were turned out of order to prevent contact and maintain social distance. However, in cases that carrying cannot be made without elevators, they were turned operational.
- Ventilation systems were revised.
- For keeping all systems operational, teams from each group were identified and they started to work alternately.

# VISITORS AND CONTRACTOR WORKS

- All personnel were instructed not to accept visitors.
- Executive approval is required for the acceptance of the visitors whose visit is essential for ongoing projects. The approved visitor was asked to fill in the “Visitor Health Screening Form” before getting into the building. The approval of the workplace doctor for the visitor, whose health status is ambiguous, was made mandatory before letting him/her getting into the building. Otherwise, it was ensured that the person applied to the nearest health institution or he/she called on Alo184 line.



## For contractors serving in construction works;

- The workers were reminded about the instruction entitled "Measures to be taken for COVID-19 in Construction Works" issued by the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services of the Turkish Republic, and it was ensured that the work was carried out accordingly.
- Fever screening was initiated at the entrance to the building.
- A form called “COVID-19 test form” was prepared for employees to fill in on daily basis. The Chief of the Construction Site was informed about directing suspicious cases to health institutions or reporting them by calling Alo 184 line.
- The posters were prepared and put up in the relevant places.
- Hand sanitizer and hygiene cleaning materials were provided.
- 50% occupancy rate was assured in personnel shuttles.
- Workers were reminded about and followed up regarding keeping social distance while eating and working.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

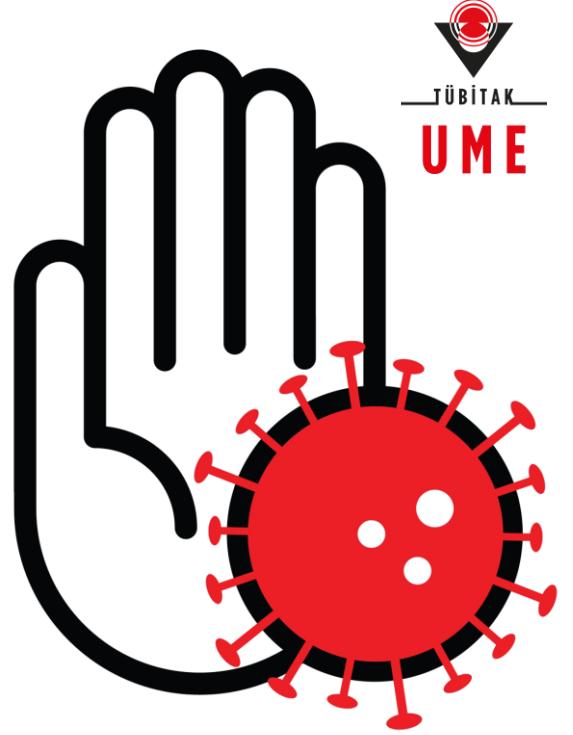
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- Right after the first Covid-19 cases were seen in Turkey, all required actions were taken to assist the participants of the BIPM Training Program to go back to their homes safely.
- In order to continue our cooperation with our stakeholders and to carry out the projects, it was ensured that our reserachers were able to participate in meetings via tele / video conferences.



COVID-19

WE WILL  
**DEFEAT**  
THIS  
**TOGETHER**



TRUE  
MEASUREMENT  
EXCELLENCE