As of 21 March of 2020, 20:00 hours, there are 28 total cases of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19. Out of all the cases, 19 of them are hospitalized at the Kosovo University Clinical Center, and 9 are self-isolated.

The government declared COVID-19 a Public Health Emergency on 15 March 2020. The consequent measures adopted by the government influence public life, e.g. closure of education institutions at all levels, suspension of public gatherings including cultural, sport, and other events, closure of bars, restaurants, pubs, clubs, shopping malls except for pharmacies, bakeries and grocery shops. Banks are working with minimal teller capacity, while online banking, ATM-s and the banking system continues services. Public system pensions and social assistance subsidies are being paid earlier than usually scheduled. Central banking authority issued a specific measure making possible for all parties, individuals and businesses that might need an initial delay of one month for the next installment of all mortgages and loans. Since Saturday morning 21 March, all parks in Kosovo are closed to the public from 08:00 to 20:00hrs with the objective to further contain the spread of COVID-19. Measures are largely respected, and Police are present on the streets to ensure continued compliance.

Most international air travel to Kosovo is suspended as of 16 March 2020. Military flights and airplanes carrying cabin crew allowed to land in Pristina Airport for outgoing passengers. There is an exception for incoming medical flights, also from 18 March there is an exemption from incoming flights allowed to carry Kosovo Passport holders, by individual permission of the Ministry of Infrastructure. Travel by land is restricted to all travelers except Kosovo passport holders, staff of diplomatic/consular missions, international organizations, foreigners with residence in Kosovo, and freight. Every person, irrespective of nationality entering Kosovo are to be placed under mandatory 14-day self-quarantine/self-isolation. Intercity transport is suspended as well as organized international transport of passengers. Local transport within Pristina is ongoing as scheduled, except for Pristina – Airport line. 96 Kosovo passport holders were returned through air travel to Kosovo under controlled organized transport. All were escorted to improvised quarantine quarters at University of Prishtina. Additional planned returns of Kosovo passport holders will require additional quarantine capacities, services and equipment.

Currently all emergency and other core government functions are fully functional. Municipalities continue provide civil documentation, albeit with reduced capacities.

The Ministry of Health has created a special website https://www.kosova.health/en/ with relevant information, including preventive measures on COVID-19 and current official statistics. It has also introduced an emergency phone line: 038 200 80 800 (0.02 cents per minute)

Minister of Health announced that they have 140 respirators on stand-by. None are needed or being used for any patient currently. There are 120 beds at the Infectious Disease Clinic of University Clinical Centre in Pristina and 140 respirators from public and private institutions on standby for possible patients.
**Observations important to health & socio-economic impact of COVID-19 outbreak**

Short to medium term socio-economic implications on vulnerable group’s resilience and ability to cope is already evident particularly from already exposed groups, including Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian.

The Shelters for victims of domestic violence are reporting on an increased number of cases and are in need of additional PPE equipment, hygienic kits and other items.

Today marks the third day of the “Pots Protest” with people in Pristina, every evening expressing their discontent with the mounting political tensions in Kosovo by making noise with pots and pans from their balconies. The protesters are abiding by the ban of gathering rule imposed.

The recent suspension of tariff against raw material goods import from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina has increased the truck traffic in particular the crossing points in Merdare. Truck drivers are not subject to mandatory quarantine, but checkup at the crossing point.

Media coverage on the COVID-19 is being done through all TV, Radio and internet portal broadcasts. Fake news is largely contained, and the reporting is largely accurate and fast. Journalists are informed about the WHO precautionary measures, however, are lacking PPE’s and have asked for help in this regard. Prime minister today informed that physical press conferences are suspended while communication will be conducted remotely.

**United Nations Family in Kosovo**

UN remains operational. All UN agencies have activated their Business Continuity Plans (BCP) with non-critical staff working and operational from home. Main focus is now on helping authorities respond effectively to the COVID-19 outbreak.

**Response of the UN system in Kosovo**

WHO remains in continuous contact with Ministry of Health and Institute of Public Health in supporting an effective response. The UNKT COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan (CPRP) will be available early next week at the WHO Partnership Platform https://covid-19-response.org/ to match needs and gaps with resources. Donors will have access to the platform.

All UN agencies are having regular contact with respective counterparts in the government and other central and local level institutions. Additionally, agencies are exploring with partners how to redirect current programme funding to extend possible to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Since yesterday, UNICEF is intensifying its outreach activities targeting parents and primary caregivers isolated at home and young children who stay at home to provide educational and pedagogical learning opportunities.

UNWOMEN and UNFPA are in close cooperation with Agency for Gender Equality to respond to the concern of increasing cases of domestic violence and to support the shelters to remain operational. Currently, focus is on urgent supply of PPE, hygienic kits and other items. Overall trends around the world show that domestic violence is increasing as strategies for self-isolation are employed. Evidence shows that the economic impacts of COVID-19 will hit women harder: as more women work in low-paying, insecure and informal jobs. Addressing the prevalence of GBV to mitigate the immediate impact of self-isolation/quarantine will be made available for the public through communications products as well.

Overall, the UN continues to advocate for Human rights to be upheld in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak in Kosovo, as elsewhere. Particular vigilance will be observed for instances of discrimination and stigma, as well as limitations to fundamental freedoms such as freedom of movement, expression, assembly and association.

While current measures to contain the COVID-19 outbreak in Kosovo do not affect the enjoyment of human rights, they should remain in line with requirements of legality and necessity, and in accordance with international human rights law.

**GIS representation of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Kosovo & areas under quarantine**

**Restrictions in Albania:**

Since 13 March, Albania has implemented a lockdown in major cities, including Tirana.

Foreign nationals to go to the airport must receive written permission from the police to use the roads. All borders closed as of 15 March, except for transport of goods. Major intercity roads are closed.

**Restrictions in Montenegro:**

All international public air, railroad and road transport is suspended; ban on cruisers/yachts docking.

Borders closed for foreigners, except for freight. Travel ban to high-risk countries with mandatory self-isolation for all suspected. Schools are closed.

**Restrictions in Republic of North Macedonia:**

Closure of airports and land borders for foreign citizens; except for freight. Only members of diplomatic community and those persons with authorization from Ministry of Interior can enter. Travel ban to high-risk countries, with mandatory 14-day self-isolation for people returning from all countries. Advise- stay at home and avoid crowding in public spaces.

**Restrictions in Serbia:**

Since 18 March. Prohibition against convening and holding rallies and all other gatherings of citizens outdoors; prohibition of all indoor gatherings except those of interest for operation and functioning of state bodies and services. Borders closed to all foreign nationals, except freight and for Chinese nationals assisting with outbreak response. Curfew for people 65 and over at any time, and for all population from 20:00 pm to 06:00 am from 18 March.

**Main restriction from authorities in the region**

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