As of 23 March of 2020, 20:00 hours, there are 61 total cases of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19. Out of all the cases, 23 of them are hospitalized at the Kosovo University Clinical Center, and 37 are self-isolated. One 82 year old person has died.

The government took early preventive measures and closed schools on 12 March 2020. On 15 March it declared COVID-19 a Public Health Emergency. And since closure of parks from public from 08:00hrs to 20:00 hrs, new measures as of 24 March, movement of citizens and private vehicles is prohibited starting between 10:00 - 16:00 and 20:00 - 06:00, except for the one carried out for medical needs, production, supply and sale of essential goods, and for services and activities related to pandemic management. Private and public gatherings are also restricted. These measures come in addition to other measures adopted by the government to prevent and containing the spread of the COVID-19, 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. 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. Measures are largely respected, and Police are present on the streets to ensure continued compliance.

The Ministry of Health has created a special website https://www.kosova.health/en/ with current official statistics, and measures to be taken to prevent further transmission of the disease. Also, visitors at the website have the chance to do an interactive self-evaluation to verify for COVID-19 symptoms. There is also a possibility to register for volunteering at the same website. An emergency phone line is aspirational: 038 200 80 800 (0.02 cents per minute).

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 public transport continuing but reduced, also hand sanitizers installed on the buses.

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

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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 patients.

From 23 March, Elementary public school-grades 1-5 commenced online classes over public broadcaster RTK in Albanian language.
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UPS Courier has suspended all services, domestic and international until 1 April 2020.

Situation in northern Kosovo

There are no confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 to date in the northern municipalities, according to the recent update from the Public Health Institute in Mitrovica North. The Municipal Emergency Committees have taken the decision to recommend people aged 65+ to not leave home, and prohibited movement for all categories of from 20hrs to 05hrs. There is compliance with these recommendations however; there is a certain level of contradiction between measures from Pristina and Belgrade hence important to monitor the situation. The parallel systems add a complexity also as Belgrade is starting widespread testing.

The supply of shops and pharmacies is at a satisfactory level for the time being. The Kosovo system-based Health House in North Mitrovica is working regularly. Considering reduced movement of the people over 65 years old, examinations and therapies for this category of patients is being performed at their homes by on-call health teams. Senior residents who are unable to acquire basic food or medical supplies have been invited to submit a request for public assistance. Municipal services are cleaning and disinfecting streets, public spaces and institutional premises. As of 17 March, students are following online classes broadcasted by Radio Television of Serbia.

Observations important to health & socio-economic impact of COVID-19 outbreak

Short to medium term socio-economic implications of the COVID-19 outbreak is already evident particularly on vulnerable and exposed groups. including Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian, but also low-income families. Socio-economic implications will grow quickly as the local economy is affected. To mitigate the impact, short to medium term response plans should reflect expanded social protection programmes (waiving fees for basic services, exploring new cash transfers, child vouchers etc) and other measures to mitigate the negative impact of the COVID-19.

Gender dimensions of the impact will be significant, including as reported by shelters and Agency for Gender Equality, are the slight increase in incidents of gender-based violence.

Yesterday marked the fourth 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.

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. Indications of cuts in salaries may impede the flow of news, something which need to be watched including as fake news need to be prevented.

Response of the UN system in Kosovo

WHO is the lead agency for health related coordination with Ministry of Health. Overall coordination led by the UN RC/DC. WHO remains in continuous contact with Ministry of Health and Institute of Public Health in supporting an effective response. The UNK COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan (CPPR) will be soon available at the WHO Partnership Platform https://covid-19-response.org/ to match needs and gaps with resources. Donors will have access to the platform.

UNOPS is leading efforts on procurement of health relates supplies supported by the EU in coordination with WHO and Ministry of Health.

Kosovo Police have reported a slight increase of domestic violence cases in the first week of the self-isolation measures. The joint Coordination Group on Gender and Security is sending a joint statement calling for a gender sensitive response to COVID-19 prevent Domestic Violence. Eight shelters have responded to UN Women’s call for support and provided lists of essential needs. UN Women is coordinating with UNFPA, UNDP, UNHCR and UNMIK to respond, and jointly with UNICEF distributing supplies to shelters. Yesterday, 20 hygiene family packs were delivered to Pristina Shelter.

In addition, UNICEF is distributing 12,000 hygiene family kits, targeting children and mothers, including leaflets with information on protection and prevention measures on COVID-19 and as of today, 400 families in Ferizaj, 200 in Obiliq and 20 to families who are in quarantine in student dormitory in Pristina received the kits. UNICEF is in close partnership with MoH following their request on oxygen concentrators, which will be delivered to primary health care centers across Kosovo.

UNICEF’s social media #WhileAtHome campaign reached in only five days more than 50,000 parents and children and engaged more than 100 parents on activities that contribute to child well-being and development.

UNDP is preparing a rapid socio-economic needs assessment, which would serve as platform for medium term socio-economic response plan. Currently UNDP is also distributing PPE to Kosovo Police.

UNHCR and IOM follows closely the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on situation of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. The about 200 migrants, asylum seekers, refugees pose an especially high risk of contracting COVID-19 due to their limited possibility to follow recommended hygiene regime and/or self-isolation/self-quarantine. Those who do not claim asylum, are not eligible to be accommodated in existing centers. Total number of 178 asylum seekers are accommodated in two asylum centers.

Reportedly, there are no movements to/from Kosovo of the refugees and migrants observed. The restricted movement measures have been introduced at the Asylum Centers requiring immediate assistance with PPEs.

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.

According to media reports, one of the first COVID-19 patients, a 77-year-old man from Viti/Vitina was subject to stigmatization and hate speech through insults and social media online attacks. The media notes this “campaign of hatred” affects not only the man’s relatives but also other potential victims in Kosovo.

For specific guidelines and thematic statements, see the list below:

- **UNWOMEN** Paying attention to women’s needs and leadership will strengthen COVID-19 response: [https://tinyurl.com/vpeedk9](https://tinyurl.com/vpeedk9)
- **UNFPA Statement on COVID-19 regarding Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers**: [https://tinyurl.com/swbwqvu](https://tinyurl.com/swbwqvu)
- **ILO Statement and Initial Assessment on Covid19 Impact to Jobs and Work**: [https://tinyurl.com/tfeqas4](https://tinyurl.com/tfeqas4)
- **IOM and UNHCR Statement on Temporary Suspension of Resettlement Travel for Refugees**: [https://tinyurl.com/uyfu8oz](https://tinyurl.com/uyfu8oz)
- **UNAIDS What People Living with HIV Need to Know on Covid19**: [https://tinyurl.com/u6n3nzn](https://tinyurl.com/u6n3nzn)
- **UNICEF Recommendations for parents**: [https://tinyurl.com/yx547rtl](https://tinyurl.com/yx547rtl)
- **UNICEF’s how to talk to your child about coronavirus**: [https://tinyurl.com/uewapd2](https://tinyurl.com/uewapd2)

For more information do not hesitate to visit or contact

UN Kosovo Team (15 Agencies and the Coordination Office)  
Social media accounts Facebook, Twitter and Instagram: @UNKosovoTeam  
UN Development Coordinator Ulrika Richardson: @UNDC_KT

**UNDP Website**: https://www.ks.undp.org/content/kosovo/en/home.html  
Facebook: /UNDP.Kosovo  Twitter: @UNDP_Kosovo

**UNICEF Web**: https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/  
Facebook: /UNICEFKosovoprogramme & /Kosovoinnovations  
Twitter: @UNICEFKosovo & @KosInnovations  Instagram: unicef_innovations_lab_kosovo

**UNFPA Website**: https://kosovo.unfpa.org/  Facebook: /unfpakosovo/  Twitter: @UnfpaKosovo

Kosovo authorities  
Kosovo Ministry of Health website: https://msh.rks-gov.net/  
Institute of Public Health: www.niph-rks.org/

Contact Shpend Qamili * UN Development Coordinator’s Office * shpend.qamili@one.un.org

Where to get verified information?

To stay up to date with the latest information, please visit:

- World Health Organization: https://tinyurl.com/yx0vexyp
- WHO guidance for countries: https://tinyurl.com/sz5zrl9
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) Situation: https://tinyurl.com/tp4rz2c