As of 26 March of 2020, 18:00 hours, there are 79 total cases of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19. Quarantined are 305, while 28 are hospitalized. One 82-year-old man has died.

Based on WHO, in Kosovo there are two new cases without knowledge of being in contact with a known COVID-19 patient. One is female of 34 years of age from Pristina city; and the other is male of 44 years of age from village Petrove/o, municipality of Shtime/Šrimlje.

The most recommended preventive measures: stay-at-home, self-isolation, social distance and frequent washing of hands.

The government took early preventive measures and closed schools on 12 March 2020. On 15 March it declared COVID-19 a Public Health Emergency. Additional measures as of 24 March restricted movement of citizens and private vehicles 10:00 - 16:00 and 20:00 - 06:00, except for medical needs, essential goods, and services related to COVID-19 response and management. These measures come in addition to other measures adopted by the government to prevent and contain 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 to delay installment of all mortgages and loans. 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 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 (hand sanitizers installed in the buses).

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/](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 can 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). 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.
Although there are no reported cases in northern Kosovo, on 25 March, the first COVID-19 case was confirmed in Vushtrri/Vučitrn municipality.

Medical personnel of the Belgrade sponsored-health system in Kosovo can now pass through the Administrative Boundary Line as an exemption to Pristina-issued instructions that anyone entering Kosovo must proceed to a quarantine facility in Pristina for two weeks.

Although for one day, stores and other institutions adapted to the movement restrictions from 20:00 to 06:00 and 10:00 to 16:00, on 26 March most reverted to the Belgrade issued curfew hours. The Serbian government announced on 26 March that they had made efforts to ensure the supply of basic alimentary products and the provision of 430 beds at the Clinical Hospital Centre and 1,600 beds in student dormitories in North Mitrovica, additional doctors and medical staff.

On 25 March, a platform of K-Serbian organizations issued a statement to underscore the need to improve support to non-majority communities since the COVID-19 outbreak (including lack of announcements in Serbian). On 25 March, UNICEF and Caritas delivered hygiene packages in Roma Mahala in South Mitrovica and to vulnerable families in Zubin Potok municipality.

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

Short to medium term socio-economic implications of the COVID-19 outbreak are already evident particularly among 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 (waving fees for basic services, exploring new cash transfers, child vouchers etc) and other measures to mitigate the negative impact of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Posters in English/Albanian/Serbian, Romani, Turkish and Arabic are available with UN agencies and Ministry of Health to be distributed in the communities where such information is much needed. 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.

Media coverage on the COVID-19 is being done through all TV, Radio and internet portal broadcasts. Fighting fake news needs special attention but is currently largely contained, and the reporting is largely accurate and fast. Journalists are informed about the COVID-19 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.

In order to increase protecting measures for inmates and employees of the Kosovo Correctional Service from the Covid-19 pandemic, inmates at women’s correctional facility have begun producing surgical masks.

### 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. Coordination mechanisms are established with partners and support intensified not only to authorities to respond effectively to the COVID-19 outbreak but also directly to vulnerable groups and families.
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 UNKT COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan (CPRP) 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.

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.

UNDP is working with partners to prepare a rapid socio-economic needs assessment that will help inform short-medium term support. UNDP provided 4000 masks, 4000 rubber gloves and hand sanitizers to the Kosovo Police. These protective items will be distributed at all Regional Police Directorates. This helps the Kosovo Police in their work which they do with professionalism commitment to serve in maintaining the safety and security of all citizens in Kosovo, particularly in this difficult situation.

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

UN Women continues to ensure that the shelters’ needs are met, in collaboration with UN Agencies. With UNICEF’s help the Mitrovica Shelter, and shelters in Gjakova and Gjilan have received hygienic kits. After consultations with CSOs in the North, information confirms that the shelter in the North is not operational, and Domestic Violence survivors are left without direct support. A joint UN Women and UNFPA a document on emerging gender issues and recommendations amid COVID-19 outbreak has been drafted and shared on social media.

UNICEF Kosovo Office continued today distribution of family hygiene kits. 600 Family Hygiene Kits were distributed in Mitrovica North with 300 being distributed in Roma Mahala and the remaining 300 for families in Zubin Potok. 400 were distributed in Fushe Kosovo for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities through NGO “ Balkan Sunflowers” and 20 family hygiene kits were distributed to mothers and children in Shelter for Protection of Women and Children in Prishtina and 61 to the Shelter for Protection of Women and Children in Mitrovica. During the first four days, out of 12000 Family Hygiene Kits, UNICEF distributed 3641 for mother children and the most in need families, including Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian and Serbian community in Lipjan, Obiliq (Plemitin), Ferizaj, Gjakove, Gjilan, Zubin Potok, Fushe Kosovo and Roma Mahala. Today, UNICEF distributed 140 Family Hygiene Kits to Center for Protection of Woman and Children in Gjakova and Gjilan municipalities. The UNICEF social media campaign #WhileAtHome as of today reached more than 85,000.00 with 15,000 view or engagement of communities in online activities.

UNHCR and IOM follows closely the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on situation of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees and advocates for making available information to these groups on how they can protect themselves and others from the COVID-19. As is the information is not sufficient in the Asylum Centre and the reception center. UNHCR and its partners advocacy resulted in integrating vulnerable Internally Displaced Population (IDPs) and returnees into the ongoing distributions done by humanitarian NGOs and charity organizations such as Mother Theresa Society and the Red Cross Kosovo. In Peje/Pec 17 returnee families were included in the food distribution, in Kamenica 1 family and in Istok/Istok 17 returnee families. UNHCR has initiated additional procurement of supplies aiming to assist the most vulnerable persons of concern.

The IOM EU-Return and Reintegration- project provided additional support in the form of food and non-food items to the 50 most vulnerable families, selected based on their vulnerability including large family structures with small children, those having no income, female headed households as well as elderly persons. The primary aim of the assistance is to help the families mitigate and overcome the current difficulties and enhance their level of reintegration.
Ministry of Internal Affairs and Public Administration (MIPA) has issued a decision to designate the Detention Center of Foreigners in Vranidoll as a quarantine area for applicants for international protection and new migrants. MIPA will provide services such as food and hygiene. However, MIPA staff and persons hosted in the center need protective material: masks, gloves, disinfectants and protective clothing. IDPs in centers will be assisted by UNICEF with hygienic packages as of next week.

Just today, a family of four members requested asylum at the asylum center in Magure. After the medical examination they were registered and provided with ID card and transported to the Center in Vranidoll. Total number of asylum seekers is 191. According to UNHCR’s monitoring teams, no movements of refugees and migrants are observed (entries/exits).

Office of Language Commissioner is actively working with all central level institutions to ensure equal access to services and information to all citizens, as per Law on the use of languages, and support them in dissemination of official announcements. IOM and its partners are supporting this work including translations, disseminating information and creating tailor made COVID-19 content on VocUp platform (#stayathome video, and promotion of online language learning).

Global support to fighting COVID19, and support for Kosovo

On 21 March EU announced a support package for Kosovo: 5 M for immediate needs; 50 M to ease socio-economic impact, and up to 13 M in budget support.

The UN launched yesterday a $2 billion global humanitarian response plan to fund the fight against COVID-19 in the world’s poorest countries. Coordinated by the UN’s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, this interagency plan brings together existing appeals from the World Health Organization and other UN partners. Properly funded, it will save lives and arm humanitarian agencies and NGOs with laboratory supplies for testing, and with medical equipment to treat the sick while protecting health care workers.
For more information do not hesitate to visit or contact

UN Kosovo Team (15 Agencies and the Coordination Office)
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UN Development Coordinator Ulrika Richardson:   https://twitter.com/UNKT_DC

UNDP  
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Facebook:  https://www.facebook.com/unfpakosovo/
Twitter:  https://twitter.com/UnfpaKosovo

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

WhatsApp established an automatic information line. Send a message containing “hi” over WhatsApp to +41225017615. This will open a dialogue box enabling you to obtain direct information from WHO, UNICEF and UNDP partner with WhatsApp. The aim is to get real time health information to billions around the world on COVID-19: The WhatsApp Coronavirus Information Hub provides simple, actionable guidance for health workers, educators, community leaders, nonprofits, local governments and local businesses and offers general tips and resources to reduce the spread of rumors and connect with accurate health information. https://www.whatsapp.com/coronavirus

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

World Health Organization:  https://tinyurl.com/yx6vexyp
WHO guidance for countries:  https://tinyurl.com/sz5zrl9
Coronavirus (COVID-19) Situation:  https://tinyurl.com/tpr4rzc