SITUATION REPORT #22
COVID-19

22 MAY 2020

UNITED NATIONS KOSOVO TEAM

1004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of cases identified with COVID-19 in Kosovo</th>
<th>961 cases¹</th>
<th>116 cases²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>745 recovered</td>
<td>104 recovered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 casualties</td>
<td>10 casualties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>196 active</td>
<td>2 active</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Tables, graphs and statistics as provided by the Kosovo Institute of Public Health

Globally according to WHO, as per 22 May 2020, 08:00 hours³

| 4,904,413 Confirmed COVID-19 Cases | 323,412 Deaths related to COVID-19 |

¹ Data provided by the Kosovo Institute of Health
² Data provided by Serbian health system in Kosovo
Achievement of the week:
A global COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund (COVID-19 MPTF) established by the UN in April 2020, have approved US$ 1 million for Kosovo. The Fund is a UN inter-agency finance mechanism launched by the UN Secretary-General to support low- and middle-income countries overcoming the health and development crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In Kosovo, the Funded activities will be implemented by UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM and UN Women with advice from WHO and UNFPA and will benefit both institutions as well as vulnerable families and communities to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 and better cope with its socio-economic impacts. Donors to the Global COVID-19 MPTF currently include Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands and Switzerland while additional partners are shortly joining the Fund. See LINK

Kosovo statistics and measures taken to prevent further transmission of the disease are available at LINK. Visitors can do an interactive self-evaluation to verify for COVID-19 symptoms and there is a possibility to register for volunteering at the same website. Emergency phone: 038 200 80 800 (0.02 cents per minute).

Kosovo government started implementation of second phase of measures from 18 May 2020. In addition to measures included in the graph below, the government via the Ministry of Health, approved decision to allow the activities of the Kosovo Football League with minimal support crew and no spectators during training session and matches. All the activities allowed, will have to comply with strict rules under guidelines published by the Ministry of Health.
All planned steps of return to “a new normal” are conditioned by the improvement of the epidemiological situation determined by the Ministry of Health and adherence to the recommendations issued by the government by the population. Activities will open gradually and may be postponed or withdrawn should compliance be lacking or should the epidemiological situation not allow.

Notice: All activities must adopt standard operation procedures in accordance to the rules set forth in the epidemiological protocol as published by the Ministry of Health. Currently


Ministry of Health updated and published a preliminary guidance for public and private institutions, based on existing knowledge about COVID-19 based on guidelines from WHO and CDC.

This guide is intended to be used by public and private institutions to develop protocols and activities specific to the nature of their work to prevent and combat the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. This guide will continue to be supplemented or amended, depending on the emerging epidemiological situation and new scientific data.

The guidance is available in: Albanian, Serbian and English

The Ministry of Finance and Transfers (MFT) announced that, the Kosovo Treasury has executed the payment of all pension and social schemes for over 310 thousand beneficiaries, few days before the regular time, due to the pandemic situation and in respect of the official holiday of Eid. Also, the MFT announced that it has ordered the execution of payments according to the measure 15, that related to the assistance to registered unemployed individuals, for 5,559 beneficiaries.

With regards to bussineses, the MFT announced a toll-free telephone number: 080044440 to inform individuals / businesses about the status of their application and obtain other related information. Calls will be accepted from Monday - Friday, during working hours (8:00 - 16:00).

At the same time, an email address: complaints.mft@rks-gov.net is set to receive official complaints from applicants (employers, tenants and individuals in the case of measure 15) who may have been refused a request.

**Failure to comply with restrictions:**

From 15 to 21 May, a total of 38 cases involving 74 persons have been reported by police, as failure to comply with government-imposed restrictions all over Kosovo. In total since the beginning of pandemics, 1318 cases involving 2551 persons for non-compliance with the restrictive measures.
Situation in the municipalities with Serbian majority community

There are no new cases of COVID-19 cases among Serbian Community in Kosovo during last week. Therefore, the number of identified cases remains 116, as identified by Serbian health system, out of which 104 have recovered fully and 10 have died. There are only 2 known active COVID-19 cases. There are no reported cases south of Ibër/Ibar river among Serb community in Kosovo.

UN in Kosovo

Since the onset of the COVID-19 outbreak, the UN family in Kosovo have provided (i) emergency support to the health system in terms of supplies, advise and other technical support, (ii) humanitarian assistance to vulnerable families and groups, (iii) technical and normative guidance to institutions and civil society, and (iv) coordination support, totaling a value of approx. US$ 8 M of core and non-core contributions.

Support and assistance of the UN system in Kosovo

WHO is the lead agency for health related coordination with Ministry of Health. Overall UN response to COVID-19 is led by the UN RC/DC.

UN rapid socio-economic impact assessment and UN Socio-Economic Response Plan

The results of the UN led socio-economic assessment supported by UNDP are ready and will be launched next week together with the UN Interagency Socio-Economic Response Plan, developed under the strategic leadership of the UN Development Coordinator and the technical lead of UNDP. This assessment will provide valuable information about how households and small businesses have been impacted. The Plan represents an integrated support package that the United Nations development system can offer as it tailors its immediate and medium-term socio-economic response to Kosovo to support systems and institutions and protect the needs and rights of people most affected by the COVID-19.

The UNDP led, with substantive input from UN Women and UNFPA - rapid assessment survey on socio-economic impacts for individual families and businesses has been completed and will make available information on the socio-economic impact of the crisis in households, with special focus on vulnerable groups as well as assessment on the performance of small and medium-sized enterprises, opportunity losses and business recovery needs.
Additionally, the COVID-19 Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan (SPRP) developed by the UNKT in coordination with Ministry of Health and other authorities outlines the initial immediate needs and gaps of the public health measures, including the financial gap. The SPRP is available to review by partners and donors at https://covid-19-response.org/.

Asylum Seekers, refugees and migrants

Currently, there are 201 asylum seekers in Kosovo. Legal advice and psychological assistance for asylum seekers is available online. UNHCR provided to some of the asylum-seekers a pre-paid refill cards. They were informed about the internet packages and instructed about the refill procedure. There are two persons under quarantine applied by the authorities at a detention centre for foreigners in Vranidoll/Vranidol.

Internally Displaced Persons and Voluntary Returnees

Situation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) at collective shelters is monitored regularly by focal points and local municipal crises team representatives. Hygienic items and dry food assistance was delivered to beneficiaries at collective shelters through donations of different organizations. UNHCR’s partner organization Advancing Together (AT) has launched counselling phone line in order to support and assist returnees, IDPs and members of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in need, during the pandemic. The phone line 0800 200 20 will be free of charge every working day from 8.30 a.m., to 16:30 p.m. AT gathered information from several locations about children of vulnerable minority communities, who needs equipment for distance learning. A request on behalf of persons of concern will be made to Municipal Education Department for their support. AT supported 13 persons of concern to submit applications to call for proposals for START-UP and existing businesses from the Grant Scheme Balanced Regional Development Program. In addition, persons of concern were supported to submit applications Advocacy for provision of medicaments for vulnerable returnee and IDPs from Municipal Health Department is continuing.

Human Rights dimension of COVID-19

It is of the utmost importance that human rights are upheld during the COVID-19 crisis in Kosovo, including by ensuring that human rights limitations are as non-intrusive as possible and comply with the requirements of legality and necessity under international human rights law. Measures to contain and recover from COVID-19 should be tailored to the specific needs of communities and persons in vulnerable situations to ensure their equal treatment. Even though COVID-19 measures were relaxed further on 18 May, they still restrict the freedoms of movement and peaceful assembly and have the potential to also affect the enjoyment of a wide range of human rights, including the rights to education and an adequate standard of living.

Non-majority communities, in particular Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities, still urgently need health, food, and economic assistance to enjoy their economic and social rights as they face the COVID-19 pandemic. They continue to have particular challenges in accessing online education and information on COVID-19 prevention measures. The right to adequate housing of 51 Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian returnee families in seven municipalities may be violated as they face possible evictions because of their inability to pay rent due to COVID-19.

Particular vigilance should be maintained to address instances of gender-based and sexual violence and incidents against non-majority communities that continue to occur in the context of COVID-19. Civil society organizations have been especially active in this regard. On 17 May, Kosovo institutions and NGOs marked the International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, highlighting that COVID-19 has increased the vulnerability of LGBTI+ persons in Kosovo. Measures taken so far to protect persons deprived of liberty from COVID-19 are slowly being relaxed, allowing family members to bring them essential items and lawyers as well as NGOs to conduct visits. Despite the ongoing restriction of peaceful assembly, a protest prayer occurred in Pristina against the Ministry of Health’s decision to not reopen mosques.
In two separate events, UNDP handed over IT equipment and personal protective items to the Division of Social Assistance (DSA) and Kosovo Employment Agency (KEA) to help them improve the effectiveness of service delivery. Minister of Finance and Transfers joined, Austrian Ambassador to Kosovo and UNDP Resident Representative at the first event. At the second event, Minister of Economy, Employment, Trade, Industry, Entrepreneurship and Strategic Investments was present. The donated equipment will help DSA to effectively implement the measures of the Emergency Fiscal Package dedicated to the most vulnerable. Also, KEA staff will be able to work remotely to provide services for their clients through the digital platform which is established to serve jobseeker. Both donations were provided as part of the regional “Promoting Inclusive Labor Market Solutions in the Western Balkans (ILMS II)” to benefit from Emergency Fiscal Package.

**UN appeals and global initiatives to respond to COVID-19 Pandemic**

**On 21 May 2020** the United Nations is launching ‘Verified’, an initiative to combat the growing scourge of COVID-19 misinformation by increasing the volume and reach of trusted, accurate information. “We cannot cede our virtual spaces to those who traffic in lies, fear and hate,” said UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, who announced the initiative. As a main hub for the initiative is the Share-Verified website [LINK](https://bit.ly/2yVtOZY).

**On May 2020** the UN Innovation Network (UNIN)- an informal, collaborative community of UN innovators interested in sharing their expertise and experience with others to promote and advance innovation within the UN System, published their quarterly publication, this time as a special edition on COVID-19 Innovative measures across the globe. To access the full publication please see [LINK](https://bit.ly/2YoHZ4u).

**On 7 May 2020** United Nations announced the increased appeal to fight the coronavirus pandemic in fragile and vulnerable countries from $2 billion to $6.7 billion. UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator (OCHA) Mark Lowcock reiterated that the peak of the pandemic is not expected to hit the world’s poorest countries for three to six months. In the meantime, there is already evidence of incomes plunging and jobs disappearing, food supplies falling and prices soaring, and children missing vaccinations and meals.

**On 4 May**, world leaders pledged 7.4 billion euro to support research and development for medicines to fight COVID-19. WHO Chief, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has welcomed as “a powerful and inspiring demonstration of global solidarity”. More information can be found at [LINK](https://bit.ly/2yVtOZY).

**On 1 May**, UNSG launched a policy brief that provides analysis and recommendations to address challenges of elderly in COVID-19 pandemic. The policy brief has four main messages: 1. No person, young or old, is expendable. Older people have the same rights; 2. We need to improve social support and reach older; 3. All measures against COVID-19 must consider elderly; 4. Contribution of elderly voices and leadership count. Full paper can be found at [LINK](https://bit.ly/2yVtOZY).

**Advocacy of the week:** On 17 May UNICEF laid 120 wheelchairs with schoolbags at Skenderbeu Boulevard to call for greater inclusion of children with disabilities. The installation, which will run from 17 to 25 May is a call to 120 decision makers, civil society, media and private sector for grater inclusion of children living with disabilities. Only in three days UNICEF reached more than 1 million views, engagements and impressions in social media with the call for inclusion of children living with disabilities. Speaker of the Parliament, prime Minister of Kosovo, 15 members of the parliament, 3 Ambassadors and many other important public figures joined the cause of UNICEF. 6 TV Interviews were organized “and one of the most prominent TV Shows “RUBIKON” initiated advocacy discussion with the Speaker of the Parliament, UNICEF, HANDIKOS and Child Rights Advocate on inclusion of children living with disabilities.

For previous UN Appeals, SGs appeals, events and messages please see [LINK](https://bit.ly/2yVtOZY).

For official sources of information on COVID-19 as well as official online sources of UN entities please see [LINK](https://bit.ly/2YoHZ4u).

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**Assistance delivered to Kosovo institutions related to COVID-19 pandemic measures**

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