Overview of the ongoing COVID-19 epidemic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, June 28th

(Credit: WHO Country Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina; Sources: IPH FBiH, IPH RS, FMoH, MoCA)
SITUATION OVERVIEW

The BiH Council of Ministers decision on State of Natural or Other Disaster (BiH’s equivalent of „State of Emergency“) remains in place. At the entity levels, however, the previously declared State of Emergency in the RS was terminated on 20 May, and the State of Natural Disaster in FBiH was, likewise, lifted on 29 May. Both the RS and the Federation entities now allow movement of all population categories with a mandatory requirement that everyone wear face masks in enclosed spaces/areas. Curfews have been lifted across the entire territory of BiH. BiH citizens entering into the country no longer need to observe self-isolation, while foreign citizens entering the country on business need to show a letter of invitation from a legal body/institution which is engaging that person, as well as certificate reflecting a negative COVID-19 test result that is not older than 48hours. Borders are open for citizens of Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia as of 1 June; air travel resumed. Due to the recent rise in numbers of new cases across the region, stricter measures upon entry apply for anyone coming from BiH into Montenegro and Slovenia. Croatia is expected to relax some of the recently imposed restrictive measures towards entry from BiH as of 1 July. BiH Council of Ministers Chairman noted that BiH will most likely not open its borders for EU citizens until a reciprocal decision is endorsed.

Localized clusters continued to appear throughout BiH, raising the overall numbers of new cases to daily record highs in the past week (reaching a peak of 172 new cases on 27 June), with over 15 more people passing away due to Covid-19 induced health complications. Due to the deteriorating situation, some of the measures in place in the FBiH Entity were strengthened as of 29 June, including limiting the working hours for catering services and facilities (midnight), visiting bans for the centers for the elderly, as well as intensified inspectorate units presence. Similar measures and recommendations are already in place in the RS Entity, where the decision was also made on 29 June to gradually dismiss all quarantine areas and replace them by home self-isolation.

BiH Council of Ministers endorsed a decision on the distribution of funds received via in-country donations (private and public) on 30 June. Around 747,625 BAM will be distributed as per already set percentages. Despite urgency caused by strains on medical facilities throughout BiH, the decision on the distribution of the recently donated medical equipment and PPE is still pending with the BiH Coordination Body. While over 500 public procurements were conducted thus far, clinical universities are still in need of the donated medical equipment, which – in some cases – is yet to be examined and certified for use.
Distribution of COVID-19 positive cases and trendline in Bosnia and Herzegovina, June 28th

Total number of tests performed by entities and Brcko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina, June 28th

(Credit: WHO Country Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina; Sources: IPH FBiH, IPH RS, FMoH, MoCA)
**UN SUPPORT IN RESPONSE – LATEST**

The UN team continues with the weekly presentation of key findings with regards to the sectoral and cross-cutting assessments conducted. Following the presentation held by UNICEF, covering COVID-19, Youth and Mental Health, on 25 June, the next one is announced for 3 July. On this occasion, findings from the assessment conducted by the Association of Employers in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Union of Employer’s Associations of the Republika Srpska with support of the ILO and EBRD, as well as findings from the most recent UNESCO and UNDP assessments will be presented.

UNESCO launched a global campaign questioning perceptions of “normal” and the “next normal” in the world changed by the Covid-19 pandemics. The “Next normal” film presents factual information about the world before and during the pandemic. Put together, these facts invite viewers to question their ideas about what is normal, suggesting that we have accepted the unacceptable for far too long and that the time for change has arrived. The campaign is part of a wider effort by UNESCO to reflect on the world to come, notably through the UNESCO forum initiative, a laboratory of ideas bringing together prominent thinkers, the Resiliart movement, a series of panel debates on the future of culture and the cultural industries, the Futures Literacy Network,

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as well as the Futures of education programme and the global recommendations for open science and the ethics of artificial Intelligence.

In partnership with the BiH Ministry of Civil Affairs, UNESCO and UNICEF have presented the global Framework for reopening of schools to all the Ministries of Education in BiH. UNICEF and UNESCO will continue to provide technical support to the education authorities to develop and implement school reopening action plans. Relatedly, UNICEF and UNESCO are conducting the second phase of the Rapid Needs Assessment in education, which aims to provide consolidated information regarding access and quality of education during the pandemic. The Assessment, which should be completed in July, will inform further actions of the two agencies.

In Una-Sana Canton, UNICEF, with its partner Save the Children, continues to provide 24/7 on-site child protection support to the unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) within the designated zones in Bira and Miral TRCs including protection support at the Sedra and Borići TRCs. Child Protection Officers provide 24/7 support including information sharing, case management, general assistance and referral to relevant institutions/organizations; medical escort and follow-up on medical cases. A new partnership is also established with the Médecins du Monde (MdM), whose team has been performing initial sessions with the beneficiaries. Efforts in facilitating non-formal education in TRCs, and online formal education in Una – Sana Canton continued, with 75 children in USC finalizing their school year last week. Non-formal education activities gathered 324 children in Una-Sana and Sarajevo Cantons (SC), with 64 non-formal educational workshops. In cooperation with DRC four preventive and informative health workshops were held for children and parents in two TRCs.

UNFPA, in collaboration with NGO Association XY, continued developing videos for young people on prevention of COVID19. In addition, online information sharing and counselling on Sexual Reproductive Health issues was provided to young people giving them opportunity to learn more and protect themselves at the time of pandemic. Following the first online conference “Governments in BiH on the Digital Transformation Journey” organized by UNDP and the British Embassy on 10 and 11 June, Ms. Steliana Nedera, UNDP Resident Representative, and H.E. Matt Field, Ambassador of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in BiH published a joint blog on “Digital Transformation in the Public Sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina”.

Check the running list of United Nations resources at the UNCT BiH website.