

HIGHLIGHTS

- Tbilisi-Riga and Tbilisi-Paris flights to resume from the beginning of August
- Government of Georgia to expand coronavirus testing in the Gardabani municipality
- StopCov fund has accumulated GEL 134 323 240 as of 31 July

940
Total recovered

1,168
Confirmed cases

17
Total deaths

6,588
People in quarantine

Source: www.stopcov.ge July 31 2020

Georgia Situation Overview

- AirBaltic will resume weekly Tbilisi-Riga flights starting from 5 August. Depending on the epidemiological situation, the airline carrier might be allowed to perform flights twice a week starting from 20 August. Tbilisi-Paris direct flights, carried out by AirFrance, will resume from 8 August and will be performed twice a week as well. Georgia will maintain a ban on regular flights throughout August, except for the flights connecting the country to five countries – Germany, France, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia – that Georgia unconditionally opened its borders earlier this month.
- On 21 July, the Government of Georgia expanded coronavirus testing in the Gardabani municipality, which has recently seen a spike in COVID-19 cases. Thermal screenings at the entry/exit points of the town of Gardabani and those villages that recorded a surge in coronavirus cases, have been carried out as well.
- The Georgian health authorities carried out mass testing of vendors of the Lilo Mall after four employees of one of the Tbilisi's largest bazaars tested positive for COVID-19 on 23 July.
- A two-week quarantine in government-designated facilities for all Georgian nationals arriving from different states remains mandatory. Wearing face masks in public spaces and observing social distancing remain compulsory as well.

Coordination Arrangements

The Prime Minister of Georgia has established and leads an Inter-Governmental Coordination Council to combat the COVID-19 crisis.

Mitigation and Response

Mitigation measures taken by the Government of Georgia

Detailed report on measures taken by the GoG is translated in English and can be accessed at: http://gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=41&info_id=76497

Response by the UN agencies, funds and programmes (AFPs)

- On 24 July, the WHO and EU officially handed over 1.5 million pieces of personal protective equipment (medical respirators, masks, goggles, face shields and gowns) to the Ministry of IDPs from Occupied

Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs for enabling health-care workers in Georgia to continue to respond effectively and safely to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Preparatory work is ongoing between WHO and the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) to develop posters, billboards and videos, also webinars for communication interventions in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti ethnic districts, under the USAID supported project.
- WHO is exploring options to procure PAPR respirators requested by the NCDC for field works while preparing for the next possible increase of the COVID-19 cases.
- WHO CO consultants have developed the distance training programs and started a series of distance trainings for the lab personnel and clinical epidemiologists on IPC. Lab and clinical personnel are able to receive training using the video-conferencing equipment provided under the USAID project.
- WHO RO consultant continued development of the online training course on IPC issues and coordinated the first TC with health care facility epidemiologists from Abkhazia.
- WHO continued risk assessment of IPC capabilities in regional health care facilities and conducted joint site visits together with the MoH representatives from the Health Police division to seven regional designated COVID-19/fever clinics in Rustavi, Marneuli, Bolnisi, Akhaltsikhe, Khashuri, Kareli and Mtskheta.
- The UNICEF Representative and the Education team held a meeting with the Deputy Minister of Education, Deputy Minister of Health, and the Director of NCDC: a multi-disciplinary team has been established to follow up meticulously on safe reopening of schools.
- The Majoritarian MP of the Kakheti region, the Mayor of Akhmeta, Kakheti, and the UNICEF Representative had discussions on the situation of children and handed over essential hygiene and food supplies for further distribution to 115 vulnerable families in the villages of Pankisi Gorge, mostly populated by minority ethnic group Kists, of Chechen roots.
- The UNICEF Representative had discussions with religious leaders in Duisi, Pankisi Gorge, highlighting the role of religious leaders in upholding child rights, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Safe reopening of schools and kindergartens was also discussed with school and kindergarten representatives of Duisi, Pankisi Gorge.
- Meetings between UNICEF and the [community-based and youth organizations in Duisi, Pankisi](#), contributed to identifying the challenges related to COVID-19 and defining the areas of risk communication and community engagement interventions.
- In partnership with NCDC and Administration of All Muslims of Georgia, UNICEF organized a second webinar aimed at educating Muslim religious leaders on COVID-19 prevention measures.
- UNICEF, the National Youth Agency, and Helping Hand launched the project - Youth Volunteering Engagement in COVID-19 Pandemic Response in Georgia. Around 150 young volunteers actively engaged in the discussion.
- In partnership with the Parliament and State Care Agency, the UNICEF-supported child hotline “111” continues to provide assistance to children and their families, supporting around 634 cases to date, of which 480 already received assistance and were closed accordingly.
- UNFPA finalized and submitted standards of care during COVID-19 for older persons in residential institutions and community care homes to the Ministry of IDPs from Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs. Standards were developed based on the WHO Infection Prevention and Control guidance for Long-Term Care Facilities in the context of COVID-19, in cooperation with the ministry, the State Care Agency, service providers and other interested stakeholders.

- Under an EU-funded parliamentary strengthening project, UNDP launched a new initiative to establish a business continuity management (BCM) system for the Parliament of Georgia. Inspired by pandemic disruptions, the BCM system will help to build institutional resilience and improve Parliament's responsiveness to crisis situations, including during cyberattacks, lockdowns and other emergencies. The initiative is implemented in cooperation with the Westminster Foundation for Democracy.
- With UNDP support, the Public Defender's Office (PDO) and the members of its Consultative Council for monitoring Georgia's compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) held a two-day discussion about upgrading their strategy and action plan by taking into consideration the new challenges raised by the COVID-19 crisis. Agreement was reached on adjusting activities to the COVID context and adopting a future crisis response plan.
- With EU funding under the ENPARD rural development program, UNDP helped the Department of Tourism and Resorts of Ajara to purchase PPEs for tourist guides and provided protective equipment to Tourism Information Centres to deliver services safely during the pandemic. Ajara-based tour guides were struggling owing to a lack of the equipment required under National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) guidelines. This includes medical masks, face shields and hand sanitizers as well as remote thermometers and barriers to maintain proper distancing, in line with NCDC regulations.
- As part of a joint EU-UN project on private-sector competitiveness, UNDP conducted a study on the pandemic's impact on the packaging supply chain. Based on interviews with 718 respondents, the research showed that over half of enterprises lost more than 50 percent of their income during the lockdown and 83 percent considered the pandemic a significant threat to their continued operation. 88 percent of companies had no business-continuity insurance, and 58 percent said they lack the financial resources needed to survive the crisis. Company workforces have also been hurt, but 54 percent of packaging companies managed to avoid firing or laying off staff; 17 percent put staff on unpaid leave while 17 percent temporarily laid off their employees. Yet despite these sobering results, more than 70 percent of respondents saw business opportunities emerging alongside pandemic challenges. Most of them aimed to develop new products and services, enter new markets or explore online business tools to modernise their operations. The assessment was carried out in May 2020 by the Georgian research agency ACT.
- With UNDP funding, the Charity Humanitarian Centre "Abkhazeti" (CHCA) has been working to prevent the spread of COVID-19 infection and to support vulnerable households in IDP collective centres in Shida Kartli, Imereti, and Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti regions. As a result of a quantitative research, the 300 most vulnerable families were identified and will receive monthly food supplies. In addition, 70 elderly persons living alone with special needs were identified; the 20 most frail will receive home-care services, while the others will be referred to relevant round-the-clock or daycare services.
- UNDP continued to support regular consultations between Abkhaz and Georgian medical professionals to share information on COVID-19. During the past two weeks the CSO Society for Future Generation (SFG) facilitated an online discussion between specialists from the Tbilisi Infectious Disease Hospital's COVID centre and medical staff of two Sukhumi Hospitals, and the Association Peaceful and Business Caucasus organized an online consultation involving some 50 beneficiaries from conflict-affected regions who in the past received healthcare services in Georgia.
- Online trainings in business development were provided to women (informed with elements of business planning in COVID-19 context), a total of 27 women from Akhmeta, Telavi, Tetritskaro, Lagodekhi, Akhaltsikhe, Aspindza have completed their training. Training was provided by UN Women Responsible partner the Ministry of Finance Training Academy.
- UN Women announced a special call for proposals for women's businesses that can operate in the context of COVID-19. As a result, 53 business grants are being provided with a total value of approximately GEL 160,436.
- A special call for proposals for education and vocational trainings for women (again in the context of COVID-19) was launched. In total, six women were awarded with online vocational education grants with a total value of GEL 4,250.

- IOM Provided cash assistance to respond to the basic needs of vulnerable migrants from Bangladesh, Guinea and Uzbekistan, who are stranded in Georgia due to COVID-19.
- In response to the Rapid Needs Assessment conducted by IOM in April 2020, IOM contracted six local NGOs active in Tbilisi, Batumi and Kutaisi, to respond to the needs of migrants during COVID-19. Over the next five months, the organizations will also participate in IOM's Facebook group Migrants in Georgia to answer some of the most frequently asked questions of foreigners living in Georgia. With the short-term projects IOM hopes to enhance information flow to foreign migrants in Georgia, raise awareness of their needs, provide legal aid and counselling and further build capacity of the NGOs on migration issues.

Response by international development partners

- The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank's Board of Directors has approved a loan of EUR45 million to Georgia to mitigate the negative economic and social impacts of COVID-19 and sustain the momentum of pre-pandemic reforms that support economic growth and resilience. [More](#)
- The government of Japan has given medical equipment worth USD 2.8 million to the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia in order to contribute to Georgia's medium and long-term socio-economic development, including enhancement of the medical system to help the country to combat COVID-19 pandemic.
- With financial support from USAID and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Georgia Red Cross Society volunteers have delivered food and hygiene supplies to more than 80,000 people, including Georgia's most vulnerable citizens.
- With the financial support from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Caucasus Research Resource Center (CRRC-Georgia) has carried out a study 'Understanding Public Opinion on the Coronavirus.' [Survey](#)
- "COVID-19 Era and Investment Prospects" policy paper has been developed by the Konrad Adenauer Fund (KAS) and the Economic Policy Research Center (EPRC). [Policy Paper](#)

Important Links to Follow

General:

- <https://hr.un.org/page/coronavirus-disease-covid-19>
- <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>
- <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports/>
- <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>
- <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/covid-19-outbreak-readiness-and-response>
- <https://www.who.int/publications-detail/strategic-preparedness-and-response-plan-for-the-new-coronavirus>
- Disaster management and contingency planning: <https://www.preventionweb.net/publications/view/2527>
- WHO Whatsapp Thread for Q&A: <http://bit.ly/who-covid19-whatsapp>
- UNIDO COVID-19 Industrial Recovery Programme, <https://www.unido.org/news/unido-launches-covid-19-industrial-recovery-programme>
- UNIDO's publication "COVID-19: Digital Transformation and Industrial Recovery" <https://hub.unido.org/sites/default/files/publications/UNIDO-COVID-Digital%20Transformation.pdf>.
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Georgia:

- Government of Georgia website on COVID-19 <https://stopcov.ge/en>
- National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health [COVID-19 related information, including epidemiology, education materials and regulations: <https://www.ncdc.ge/Pages/User/News.aspx?ID=66254a4e-6c23-49ef-9157-4fcc247db00c>

To contribute to regular Situation Reports and to be included in the mailing lists, please contact: Nino Zhvania, OCHA NDRA at +995 599552330; nino.zhvania@un.org

- Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia hotline: 1505 U
- UNICEF Georgia supported COVID-19 hotline to provide assistance to children and their families: **111**
- Government of Georgia hotline: **144**
- Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs, Emergency and Operative Response Centre: **112**
- COVID-19 Georgia live blog: <https://civil.ge/archives/342486>