

HIGHLIGHTS

- Number of regular flights scheduled for renewal in November have been cancelled due to new border and sanitary restrictions.
- Tbilisi to close Pre-schools starting 5 Nov.
- Face masks become mandatory also outdoors, restaurants close at 22:00 nationwide.
- PM Says Gov't will reimburse Utility fees for next 4 Months
- StopCov fund has accumulated GEL 134 415 083 as of 6 November 2020

37,019
Total recovered

51,993
Confirmed cases

423
Total deaths

3,094
People in quarantine

Source: www.stopcov.ge 6 November 2020

Georgia Situation Overview

- 6 Nov - According to the GCCA, Wizz Air airline regular flights from Kutaisi to Riga and back have been cancelled until December 19, while flights from Dortmund to Kutaisi and back have been cancelled until December 18; flights from Vilnius to Kutaisi and back have also been cancelled until January 12, 2021. The decision to cancel said flights is due to border and sanitary restrictions imposed by Latvia, Germany and Lithuania, the GCCA said. Due to the same restrictions, AirBaltic has canceled regular flights until November 28; though, the airline will continue carrying out repatriation flights to bring Georgian citizens in and out of the country.
- 3 Nov - To contain the spread of COVID-19, wearing face masks will be compulsory outdoors as well. In addition, Georgian authorities decided to extend the working hours limitation of restaurants till 22:00 nationwide.
- 29 Oct - According to Georgia's Prime Minister (PM) Giorgi Gakharia, the Government will reimburse utility fees for households consuming less than 200 cubic meters of gas and 200 kilowatt-hours of electricity per month in November, December, January, and February. The reimbursement will also apply to water and cleaning bills.

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)

UNICEF

- With support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), UNICEF conducted an assessment of water and sanitary conditions in schools in Abkhazia, Georgia.
- UNICEF initiated a partnership with Czech Caritas in Georgia to support the continuity of maternal and child health services amid COVID-19.
- COVID-19 prevention and control measures were assessed in maternities in Shida Kartli and partially in Samegrelo regions, with recommendations provided to clinic management and staff.
- Following the success of the UNICEF-supported virtual shared antenatal consultations, the National Center for Disease Control and Public Health will utilize this well-tested service modality for maternal and child health interventions.
- The partnership with the Georgian Rugby Federation continued to amplify risk communication messages, targeting young people, with an initiative calling for using protective measures – such as face masks – at all times to minimize the risks of contracting COVID-19.
- A video of two girls from Tbilisi volunteering to help children and elders in need highlighted the importance of community response to COVID-19.
- In collaboration with the Ministry of Education of Adjara, psychological support was initiated for students in Batumi and remote villages of the Adjara region using online training sessions delivered by GIP-T. The sessions focused on stress management, emotional health, problem-solving, etc. During the reporting week, GIP-T psychologists reached 339 students.
- Two-day seminar was organized by the Patriarchy of Georgia and UNICEF in Telavi for representatives from the Orthodox Church. The main topic of the seminar was child rights, including in emergencies and the role of religious leaders in promoting child rights.
- UNICEF Representative held a workshop with the Councils of Elders and Women in Duisi, Pankisi Gorge. The workshop covered topics related to children's access to justice, violence against children and promotion of child rights, including in emergencies.

UNDP

- With funding from the UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund and the Danish Government, UNDP distributed farm equipment and fertilizers, pesticides and other agricultural inputs to 300 rural women in four regions: Guria, Imereti, Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti and Ratcha-Lechkhumi-Kvemo Svaneti. The aim is to support women-headed households that are relying on farming as a coping strategy during the pandemic. Recipients include single mothers, women with large families, women taking care of persons with disabilities, and ethnic minority and IDP women. Working with the Association of Women Farmers, UNDP is also providing recipients of the support packages with online training in cattle breeding, poultry raising, beekeeping, fruit growing, vegetable gardening and organic farming. Funding for the training was provided by Austria, Denmark, Sweden and Switzerland. UNDP plans to expand the support program to cover another 200 women in three regions: Kakheti, Kvemo Kartli and Mtskheta-Mtianeti.

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- Under the EU-funded ENPARD programme, the first ten rural businesses that received grants under the Rural Development Programme launched work on projects worth a total of GEL 2 million. A total of GEL 3.8 million will be awarded in 2020 under this matching-grants programme that UNDP implements in partnership with Rural Development Agency. The aim is to promote the diversification of the rural economy by supporting non-farm businesses in areas from agritourism to energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions in rural areas.
- Under an EU-funded initiative to support private-sector competitiveness, UNDP brought together 30 companies in the packaging supply chain to discuss options for cooperation to withstand the pandemic and recover faster. This yielded 14 inter-firm cooperation schemes for packaging firms that UNDP will support.
- Amidst a dramatic upsurge in COVID-19 cases in Abkhazia, UNDP made two further deliveries of medical supplies, including two Mindray-brand ventilators, 6,048 N95 respirator masks and ten infrared thermometers. The supplies, with a total value of USD 48,550, were distributed among nine different medical facilities in Abkhazia. The shipment also included a 40-kW diesel generator that was installed in the laboratory of the Sanitary and Epidemiological Service to ensure a continuous supply of electricity. Frequent power cuts had previously interrupted COVID-19 testing and diagnostics. This was part of a larger UNDP effort supported by the USAID-funded Horizons project to enhance the accessibility and quality of healthcare services for vulnerable groups of the population in Abkhazia.
- Under the same USAID-funded program, UNDP continued to support regular consultations between Abkhaz and Georgian medical professionals on the latest pandemic trends and protocols for COVID-19. The NGO Association Peaceful and Business Caucasus (APBC) organized two further online consultations involving medical representatives from various clinics in Abkhazia. For the first time, 25 members of the public participated in the discussions alongside medical staff. Topics included recommended responses to the recent deterioration in the epidemiological situation; how to differentiate COVID-19 from seasonal flu and colds; and the importance of vaccinations for seasonal flu.
- As part of an EU-funded programme to improve vocational education and training (VET) in Abkhazia, UNDP organized a training session for VET apprenticeship trainers on integrating WHO-recommended safety measures into their current practical training activities. Instructions were provided on safety, sanitary and hygienic measures for on-the-job learning environments throughout the duration of the apprenticeship, including the concept of social distancing and utilizing online tools such as online announcement boards and short videos for communicating with students. UNDP also distributed plastic protection shields, masks and information packages to apprenticeship trainers.
- In an effort to protect rural livelihoods from pandemic consequences, UNDP selected four agricultural projects for support in Gagra, Gudauta, and Ochamchire districts in Abkhazia. The projects include setting up green nurseries and intensive bio-cultivation for mushrooms, berries and other crops. The projects will create 11 new jobs with another 60 direct beneficiaries. With disposable income falling in Abkhazia as a result of COVID-19 restrictions, many residents have become more interested in growing their own produce and are increasingly seeking agricultural extension services from UNDP. The four projects offer high potential for replication beyond the target communities.

UNFPA

- An assessment on impact of Covid-19 on older persons under the poverty line living alone in four targeted municipalities has been completed. The findings will feed into the larger report within the frames of the Administration of the Government led assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on different vulnerable groups in the country, including socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on older persons and will analyze pandemic response measures undertaken so far, and provide recommendations for subsequent response.
- By November 5, UNFPA in partnership with the Georgia Red Cross Society managed to reach total about 3,520 beneficiaries in 7 municipalities (Bolnisi, Dmanisi, Tianeti, Kaspi, Gori, Qeda and Shuakhevi). The beneficiaries received food & hygiene and PPE packages along with the information booklets specially designed for older persons and translated in 3 languages: Georgian, Azeri and Armenian languages. This work has become possible with the support of both the UN COVID 19 MPTF and German Government funding to UNFPA allocated to mitigate the COVID 19 impact.

IOM

- IOM provided direct humanitarian assistance - accommodation, food, medical assistance - to 36 vulnerable migrants from Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Guinea, India, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Nigeria, Pakistan, Russia, South Africa, Syria, Turkey, Ukraine Uzbekistan to support them during the time of COVID-19.
- IOM provided voluntary return assistance on regular flights to 22 vulnerable migrants going back to Ghana, India, Iran, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, South Africa and Uzbekistan, stranded in Georgia due to COVID-19. IOM has also made preparations for the voluntary return of 5 other stranded migrants to return to Pakistan, scheduled in the coming days.
- IOM supported return of 47 Georgian nationals from Germany (36 persons), Netherlands (4 persons), Switzerland (3 persons), Finland (3 persons), Czech Republic (1 person), Post-arrival reintegration assistance was provided to 31 returnees from Greece, Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands. IOM Georgia provides on-line counselling to all new arrivals.
- IOM's Migrant Resource Centres in Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Batumi, Telavi and Poti, offer in-depth counselling on safe migration, visa-free travel, return and reintegration to Georgian nationals residing abroad or stranded during COVID-19. IOM Georgia continues to provide online counselling sessions to the citizens of Georgia in Germany to provide comprehensive and up-to-date information about return to Georgia in these challenging times. Virtual counselling was also launched jointly with IOM Ireland, to reach out to Georgian nationals in Ireland, planning to return to Georgia. After return, IOM is actively engaged in provision of reintegration assistance, incl. support with addressing medical needs of returnees.

FAO

- FAO, under the EU-funded ENPARD programme signed 7 agricultural grant agreements for the total budget of \$ 265,260.05. Grants will co-fund farmer's capital investments in agriculture, in 22 municipalities of Georgia.
- FAO, under the EU-supported ENPARD programme continues training modules for farmers in business, finances and marketing basics. Up to 70 farmers who attended meetings in Akhmeta, Dedoplistskharo, Lagodekhi and Tbilisi learned how to link with relevant markets and how to manage record keeping and budget.

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- FAO, under the Austria-funded project arranged Farmer Field School (FFS) trainings in Shida Kartli da Racha-lechkhumi. Topics of the trainings covered vegetable production, beekeeping and wine production.

Response by international development partners

- 30 Oct - Georgia and German Credit Reconstruction Bank (KfW) [signed](#) loan and grant agreements aiming social security “in the context of COVID-19 pandemic”. The project considers allocation of EUR 15 Million to provide those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic with social assistance, while EUR 5.8 Million will be distributed to the population influenced by extreme poverty.

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>.

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>
- 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>