

Ukraine mulls reimposing virus restrictions as new cases surge

June 19 2020



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Ukraine said on Friday it was considering reimposing coronavirus restrictions in several regions as infections surged after the country lifted its lockdown.

Health Minister Maksym Stepanov told reporters that "in certain regions, strict restrictions must be imposed" again.

Stepanov did not clarify which restrictions should be reintroduced or where.

The minister said that the number of coronavirus patients who needed to be hospitalised was also rising across the country.

President Volodymyr Zelensky ordered officials explain to citizens the need to adhere to self-isolation and distancing conditions.

"When people understand this, they will stick to quarantine more," he said.

Ukraine registered its largest daily increase in coronavirus infections on Friday, the 921 new cases meaning the country's total is now approaching 35,000.

Ukrainian authorities said that the number of cases had risen in 15 out of 24 regions.

The western regions of Lviv and Rivne and the capital Kiev were the hardest-hit.

Officials have repeatedly pointed out that many people have ignored [safety rules](#) after lockdown restrictions were eased last month when parks, outdoor cafes and beauty salons were reopened.

But some critics have said the uptick in cases is linked to the authorities' inability to identify new cases and prevent the spread of infection.

On Friday, a court ruled it would fine Ukraine's top epidemiological inspector for 17,000 hryvnias (\$630) for breaching quarantine rules, in particular for appearing in a cafe without a [face mask](#).

Lockdown measures eased in late May and early June with a resumption of public transport, including metro systems and [long-distance](#) and local train services.

Ukraine restarted [international flights](#) this week after launching domestic flights earlier this month.

In addition to Ukraine, several other post-Soviet countries including Armenia and Azerbaijan have seen a surge in cases after easing lockdown measures.

From Sunday Azerbaijan will reinstate a tight [lockdown](#) to contain the spread of the virus, officials said this week.

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