

Slovakia’s “COVID Automat” Traffic Light System

Slovakia’s COVID Automat Traffic Light plan, scheduled to come into effect on February 8 nationwide, is a system of automatically implemented disease control measures at both the national and regional level.

The system observes several real-time indicators of how well the spread of the virus is being contained and how stressed the national healthcare delivery system is, and assigns one of seven, color-coded phases. Each color-coded phase has a corresponding set of restrictions on daily activities, including mask requirements, mass gathering caps, and shop closures. The Ministry of Health will make phase determinations, both nationally and regionally, approximately every week.

Part 1 below discusses how the national and regional phases are determined, and Part 2 explains the various restrictions that come into force for each phase.

How It Works

Part 1 – What level are we in?

National Indicators

First, the Ministry of Health will assign a national phase by looking at the three following national indicators:

- 1) Number of people hospitalized for COVID-19
- 2) The average number of new COVID-19 cases over seven days
- 3) The effective reproduction number (R_t), which determines the potential for the virus to spread at a specific time

If two of indicators are higher than the amounts listed in Figure 1 below, then the entire country will be in that color phase. For example, if there are 1,600 people hospitalized for COVID-19, 1,200 new infections per week, but an effective reproduction rate of 1.0, then the entire country would be in the *Warning I* (pink) phase, and be subject to its corresponding restrictions (see Part 2).

To go up a phase (e.g., *Warning I* to *Warning II*), **any two** of the three indicators in Figure 1 must increase into that phase’s window. To go down a phase, two indicators from Figure 1 must decrease into that phase’s window, however, one of those indicators **must** be hospitalization.

The phase determined on the national level is the *floor* under which regions cannot drop, regardless of local conditions.

Figure 1 – National Indicators

Indicators	Monitoring	Watch I	Watch II	Warning I	Warning II	Warning III	Warning IV
Average Number of new cases per 7 days				800-1200	1200 - 2400	2400 - 4000	> 4000
Number of hospitalized				> 1500	2000 - 2500	2500-3000	> 3000
Effective Viral Reproduction Number				> 1.05	1.05 - 1.10	1.10 - 1.15	> 1.15

Regional Indicators

Next, using a different set of indicators, the Ministry of Health will also assign individual phases for each region based on how it is controlling the spread of the disease locally. These phases can be the same or more severe than the national phase. Each region can be in its own phase, with varying severity of restrictions on daily life. Because there is no national phase below *Warning I*, when national conditions drop below that level, all decisions and restrictions happen only at the regional level.

See Figure 2 below to see what indicators are measured for regionally assigning Traffic Light phases. Each of these indicators is measured, assigned a score from one to seven (green is one and black is seven), and averaged to determine the level of restrictions that will be in place in that region (see Part 2). For example, if, in a region, the 14-day incidence is 125 (score 3), the regional hospitalizations per 100,000 people is 15 (score 4), the regional seven-day incidence trend is 0.8 (score 2), and the local public health office, based on its own epidemiological rubric, assigns the region to level 3 (score 3), the average of the scores is 3, and the region is in phase *Watch II*, or orange. However, the lowest phase a region may be is one phase lower than the regional 14-day incidence level. So, in the example above, the lowest phase the region could be in is the *Watch I*, or yellow phase.

Figure 2 – Regional Criteria

Indicators	Monitoring	Watch I	Watch II	Warning I	Warning II	Warning III	Warning IV
Regional 14-day incidence per 100,000	< 40	40 - 80	80 - 120	120 - 240	240 - 800	800 - 1600	> 1600
Regional number of hospitalized per 100,000	< 3	3 - 5	5 - 10	10 - 20	20 - 40	40 - 60	> 60
Regional 7-day incidence trend	0.5 - 0.7	0.7 - 0.9	0.9 - 1	1 - 1.2	1.2 - 1.5	1.5 - 2	> 2
Regional evaluation level by Public Health Office	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Part 2 – And how does it affect me?

After determining which phase you are in, whether national or regional, consult Figure 3 below to determine the specific restriction on activities that will be in place. For example, if it is determined that Bratislava is in phase *Watch II*, or orange, then masks are mandatory indoors and at mass outdoor events, and private gatherings can have up to six attendees.

Figure 3 – Disease Control Measures

Measures	Monitoring	Watch I	Watch II	Warning I	Warning II	Warning III	Warning IV
Masks	Mandatory indoors and at mass events outdoors	Mandatory indoors and at mass events outdoors	Mandatory indoors and at mass events outdoors	Mandatory indoors and outdoors except in nature	Mandatory indoors and outdoors except in nature	Mandatory indoors, outdoors, and nature with specified exceptions	Mandatory indoors, outdoors, and nature with specified exceptions
Movement Restrictions	None	None	None	None	None	Movements only with negative test*, testing exceptions only for purchase of basic needs	Curfew with specified exceptions
Schools	No limitation	Kindergarten, Primary, Secondary - no limitation University - in person with limited capacity, dormitories closed	Kindergarten, Primary, Secondary - no limitation University - in person with limited capacity, dormitories closed	Kindergarten, Primary - no limitation Secondary - only ending grades in person University - online	Kindergarten, Primary 1-4 grades - in person Primary, Secondary - only ending grades - in person University - online	Kindergarten, Primary 1-4 grades - in person Primary, Secondary - only ending grades - in person Testing required University – online	Kindergarten, Primary 1-4 grades - in person Primary, Secondary - only ending grades - in person Testing required University – online
Mass Events	Max 50% of standing capacity, max 1,000 outdoors,	Only seating, max 50% capacity, max 500 outdoors,	Only seating, max 50% capacity, max 500 outdoors,	Max 6 people, with the exception of theaters,	Max 6 people with a negative test*, with the exception of	1 person per 15m ² , entry only with test*	Not allowed

	max 500 indoors	max 250 indoors, with exceptions	max 250 indoors, with exceptions	concert halls, movies and masses	theaters, concert halls, movies and masses		
Private gatherings	Max 50 people	Max 30 people	Max 6 people	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed
Alcohol consumption in public	No limitation	No limitation	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed
Ceremonies (wedding, funeral, etc.)	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Limited numbers	Max 6 people with the exception of funerals	Max 6 people with the exception of funerals	Max 6 people with the exception of funerals
Professional sporting	Same as Mass Events	Same as Mass Events	Same as Mass Events	No spectators	No spectators	No spectators	Not allowed
Recreational sporting	Based on activity risks (specified separately)	Based on activity risks (specified separately)	Based on activity risks (specified separately)	Based on activity risks (specified separately)	Based on activity risks (specified separately)	Based on activity risks (specified separately)	Based on activity risks (specified separately)
Skiing resorts	Based on Tourism Board level with hygienic measures	Based on Tourism Board level with hygienic measures	Based on Tourism Board level with negative test not older than 72 hours	Based on Tourism Board level with negative test not older than 72 hours, then every 72 hours	Based on Tourism Board level with negative test not older than 72 hours, then every 72 hours, gondolas only for individuals or household members	Based on Tourism Board level with negative test not older than 72 hours, then every 48 hours for longer stay, only open lifts but not gondolas	Not allowed
Fitness centers	Max 50 people	Max 30 people	Max 6 people	Max 6 people with a minimum of 15 m ² per person,	Max 6 people with a minimum of 15 m ² per person,	Not allowed	Not allowed

				entry only with negative test*	entry only with negative test*		
Wellness, aqua parks, spas	Same as Mass Events with 15 m ² per person	Same as Mass Events with 15 m ² per person	Same as Mass Events with 15 m ² per person	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed
Pools indoor/outdoor	No limitation	Max 50% of capacity	Max 30% of capacity	Max 6 people with a negative test*	Max 6 people with a negative test*	Max 6 people with a negative test*	Not allowed
Stores, services, and shopping malls	Hygienic measures	Hygienic measures	Max 1 person per 10m ² , kids corners and seating areas closed	Max 1 person per 15m ² , kids corners and seating areas closed, entry to non-essential shops with negative test*	Max 1 person per 15m ² , kids corners and seating areas closed, entry to non-essential shops with negative test *	Max 1 person per 15m ² , kids corners and seating areas closed, entry to non-essential shops with negative test *	Only essential stores and services open, max 1 person per 15m ²
Restaurants	Max 6 people per table or household members, tables with 2m distance	Max 4 people per table or household members, tables with 2m distance	Max 2 people per table or household members, tables with 2m distance	Take-away, terrace open - tables with 2m distance, terrace entry only with test*	Take-away, terrace open - tables with 2m distance, terrace entry only with test*	Take-away or delivery only	Take-away or delivery only
Museums, galleries and exhibition halls	Hygienic measures	Group tours with max 30 people	Group tours with max 6 people	Individual tours with 15m ² per person, entry only with test*	Individual tours with 15m ² per person, entry only with test*	Individual tours with 15m ² per person, entry only with test*	Closed
Libraries	No limitation	No limitation	Public book reading only for seated attendees with max 50% capacity	Public book reading only for seated attendees with max 6 people, otherwise only window services	Public book reading only for seated attendees with max 6 people, otherwise only window services	Public book reading only for seated attendees with max 6 people, otherwise only window services	Closed

Businesses and organizations	Hygienic recommendations	Stricter hygienic measures, home-offices recommended	Stricter hygienic measures, home-offices recommended	Home-offices recommended, testing in the service sector	Home-offices recommended, testing in the service sector	Home-office recommended, testing across sectors	Home-office ordered whenever possible, tests control
Hospitality	Hygienic measures, and the same restrictions as restaurants and wellness above	Hygienic measures, and the same restrictions as restaurants and wellness above	Hygienic measures, and the same restrictions as restaurants and wellness above	No restaurants or use of public areas, max 2 adults per room or household members, entry only with test*	No restaurants or use of public areas, max 2 adults per room or household members, entry only with test*, including employees	No restaurants or use of public areas, max 2 adults per room or household members, entry only with test*, including employees	Not allowed except for quarantine facilities and facilities for critical infrastructure members long term
Taxi	Masks, regular air ventilation	Max 2 passengers per row, masks, regular air ventilation	Max 2 passengers per row, masks, regular air ventilation	Max 2 passengers per row, masks, regular air ventilation, disinfection after each client	Max 2 passengers per row, masks, regular air ventilation, disinfection after each client	Max 2 passengers per row, masks, regular air ventilation, disinfection after each client	Max 2 passengers, only back seats, masks, regular air ventilation, disinfection after each client
*Test validity	n/a	n/a	n/a	21 days (children 5th grade and higher)	14 days (children 5th grade and higher)	7 days (children 5th grade and higher)	-