

Disclaimer: We kindly ask to acknowledge that due to the diverse and heterogeneous nature of the questions and the dynamic pandemic situation some of the information might be incomplete or only correct for the time being. Thus, please consider the date with the below information. All available information was provided by a country representative from the PHIRI network during or in connection to the respective meeting.

Date: 12.09.2022

Table 1: Country responses: Upcoming school and kindergarten year 2022/23

Country	Topic: Upcoming school and kindergarten year 2022/23 With regard to the upcoming school and kindergarten year and as follow-up to the situation in 2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there still mandatory measures in place or only voluntary initiatives? Are voluntary measures publicly supported? • If there are mandatory measures in place or planned for autumn/winter season what is foreseen in regard to quarantine / mask wearing / testing strategy in schools and kindergartens? 	Mandatory measures in place for schools/ kindergartens	Further plans as infections increase in place
Albania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No mandatory measures are in place for the moment. Use of face masks/testing/vaccination is not mandatory. People voluntary can use face masks or get testing but it's not a common practice. Life is more back to the situation prior to COVID-19 than ever and most of the population "has forgotten" COVID-19. • No specific measures are planned/discussed for the moment. As I mentioned above, COVID-19 "has been forgotten" not only by the population but also from policy makers. 	No	No
Austria	<p>Schools</p> <p>The aim of this school year in Austria is to keep restrictions in schools to a minimum and to adapt them to the regulations in other areas of life.</p> <p>The legal basis for measure implementation in schools is the COVID-19- School Regulation 2022/23 (Link in German: https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/Themen/schule/beratung/corona/sichereschule.html), which builds on the federal government's 'Variant Management Plan' (Link in German: https://www.sozialministerium.at/dam/jcr:a56f7052-a3ab-4796-93f7-d0bae1eb92bf/220901_Variantenmanagementplan_pdfUA.pdf), that provides a framework for COVID-19 measures in Austria including the school sector, based on the current severity of the COVID-19 scenario.</p> <p>There were public calls to vaccinate children fully, i.e. also with a 3rd shot, prior to school start in September.</p> <p>At the moment, the relatively benign 'Scenario 2' of the Variant Management Plan is applicable, which means concretely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall preventive and hygienic measures (e.g., natural cross-ventilation) shall be maintained • Cov+ students/pupils, especially with symptoms, shall stay at home • Students/pupils were encouraged to take a PCR test prior to the first day of school if feasible (5 free PCR test per month remain available to all residents in Austria). • The beginning of this school year includes a voluntary antigen testing offer in schools. In the first week of school antigen tests are offered at all schools, which can be used voluntarily by students, teachers and administrative staff. For students under the age of 14, a parent/guardian consent form is required. For the second week of school, all students who wish will receive three rapid antigen tests for use at home (for testing on Sunday evening or Monday morning, for example). A further contingent of antigen tests also remains available on-site in schools in case of ad-hoc need for testing. • Should the COVID-19 situation become more dire (i.e. transition towards Scenario 3 per the AT Variant Management Plan), mandatory masking and testing in schools may be reintroduced. 	No	Yes



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	<p>Kindergartens Legislation and enforcement in this area lies with the federal states and can thus vary. Nationwide, individuals who test positive for SARS-CoV-2 are prohibited from entering kindergartens, daycare centers, elementary school, and childcare facilities for children under 11 years of age. An exception is made for employees, children in care and accompanying persons.</p> <p>Sewage monitoring is currently still in place but under debate to be terminated. Details see here: https://corona.hydro-it.com/dashboard/ The explicit monitoring of school sewage systems ended by 31/8/2022, see https://corona.hydro-it.com/schm/</p>																											
<p>Belgium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The COVID-19 measures related to primary and secondary schools are organized following the COVID-19 Barometer. This barometer serves to provide greater transparency and clarity to all stakeholders in education. The architecture of the barometer resembles federal corona barometer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 4 levels (green - yellow - orange - red). The lockdown scenario is not taken into account. There is a basic package of measures for each phase. The basic package includes the measures around: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ventilation, ventilation and distance face masks Illness and hand hygiene Because the concrete situation can never be completely predicted, the basic package can always be supplemented with additional measures, on the advice of experts. <table border="1" data-bbox="365 724 1673 1362"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Green</th> <th>Yellow</th> <th>Orange</th> <th>Red</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <th>Basic measures</th> <td>Contact education remains the rule. Depending on the quality of education, distance education or hybrid education can always be organised.</td> <td>Contact education remains the rule. Depending on the quality of education, distance education or hybrid education can always be organised.</td> <td>Contact education remains the rule. Depending on the quality of education, distance education or hybrid education can always be organised.</td> <td>Contact education remains the rule. Depending on the quality of education, distance education or hybrid education can always be organised.</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Ventilate and ventilate maximum based on CO2 measurements in every classroom, dining and meeting room and the staff room.</td> <td>Ventilate and ventilate maximum based on CO2 measurements in every classroom, dining and meeting room and the staff room.</td> <td>Ventilate and ventilate maximum based on CO2 measurements in every classroom, dining and meeting room and the staff room.</td> <td>Ventilate and ventilate maximum based on CO2 measurements in every classroom, dining and meeting room and the staff room.</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Check out the possibility to also organize outside what can easily be organized outside.</td> <td>Organize outside as much as possible.</td> <td>Organize outside as much as possible.</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Try to keep as much distance as possible where possible.</td> <td>Try to keep as much distance as possible where possible.</td> <td>Try to keep as much distance as possible where possible.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Green	Yellow	Orange	Red	Basic measures	Contact education remains the rule. Depending on the quality of education, distance education or hybrid education can always be organised.	Contact education remains the rule. Depending on the quality of education, distance education or hybrid education can always be organised.	Contact education remains the rule. Depending on the quality of education, distance education or hybrid education can always be organised.	Contact education remains the rule. Depending on the quality of education, distance education or hybrid education can always be organised.		Ventilate and ventilate maximum based on CO2 measurements in every classroom, dining and meeting room and the staff room.	Ventilate and ventilate maximum based on CO2 measurements in every classroom, dining and meeting room and the staff room.	Ventilate and ventilate maximum based on CO2 measurements in every classroom, dining and meeting room and the staff room.	Ventilate and ventilate maximum based on CO2 measurements in every classroom, dining and meeting room and the staff room.			Check out the possibility to also organize outside what can easily be organized outside.	Organize outside as much as possible.	Organize outside as much as possible.			Try to keep as much distance as possible where possible.	Try to keep as much distance as possible where possible.	Try to keep as much distance as possible where possible.	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Yes</p>
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		No mouth masks	No mouth masks	Mouthmasks: according to rules in society.	Mouthmasks: according to rules in society.		
		Anyone who is sick or infected stays at home	Anyone who is sick or infected stays at home	Anyone who is sick or infected stays at home	Anyone who is sick or infected stays at home		
		Basic hand hygiene	Basic hand hygiene	Basic hand hygiene	Basic hand hygiene		
		cough hygiene	cough hygiene	cough hygiene	cough hygiene		
			It is always and at any time possible that the local risk analysis gives rise to additional measures. Additional measures are possible in consultation with the prevention advisor. For example, extra measures can be taken in certain classrooms or schools.	It is always and at any time possible that the local risk analysis gives rise to additional measures. Additional measures are possible in consultation with the prevention advisor. For example, extra measures can be taken in certain classrooms or schools.	It is always and at any time possible that the local risk analysis gives rise to additional measures. Additional measures are possible in consultation with the prevention advisor. For example, extra measures can be taken in certain classrooms or schools.		
	Busy at the school gate		Try to avoid crowds at the school gate and point out the importance of keeping your distance.	Try to avoid crowds at the school gate and point out the importance of keeping your distance.	Try to avoid crowds at the school gate and point out the importance of keeping your distance.		
	extra-muros		Follow the rules in society	Follow the rules in society	Follow the rules in society		
	Meetings			Maximum digital	Only digital		
	Tele-work			For teleworkable positions, the measures relating to telework of the wider society apply.	For teleworkable positions, the measures relating to telework of the wider society apply.		



	Essential Third Parties			Non-essential third parties at school are not designated. The school determines who is essential for the operation.	Non-essential third parties at school are not allowed. The school determines who is essential for the operation. Parent contacts are digital. Physical contact with parents is exceptionally possible when digital contact cannot possibly achieve the objective of physical contact.		
	Place in the classroom			Pupils are given a maximum fixed place in the classroom.	Pupils are given a maximum fixed place in the classroom.		
	Mixing class groups			Try to avoid mixing of class groups within.	Avoid mixing class groups indoors as much as possible.		
	Registrations				In the context of a first registration, school visits are possible by reservation, outside class hours and in a limited group.		
	Multi-day trips				Multi-day trips with overnight stay follow the rules of society (youth and sports camps)		
Bulgaria	<p>• There are no mandatory measures in place for the moment in two of the Regions in Bulgaria. The recommended measures are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wearing a protective face mask indoors, especially in medical institutions and in social service facilities, public transport; • Keeping a physical distance of at least 1,5 m; • Hand hygiene and disinfection of surfaces; • Teleworking (homeworking), where possible and at the employer's discretion. Guidelines have been developed by the competent sectoral authorities to reduce the risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection in the workplace. <p>The mandatory measures are in place for remaining 4 Regions in the country.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wearing a protective face mask in medical and health care facilities, social service facilities, public transport and other facilities where the risk of contamination is high (e.g. prisons); 					Yes	Yes



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining a physical distance of at least 1.5 m; • Hand hygiene and disinfection of surfaces, regular ventilation; • Teleworking (home-based) where possible. Guidelines have been developed by the competent sectoral authorities to reduce the risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection in the workplace. • Conduct an enhanced morning filter in child care settings to prevent presence of children with clinical symptoms for COVID-19, as well as other acute communicable diseases. • Conduct a daily filter in educational settings for students with clinical symptoms for COVID-19 and removal of them from the educational process until diagnosis and clinical recovery. • Conduct a daily filter in specialized social service institutions and residential social services for children and adults for the presence of users and staff with clinical symptoms of COVID-19 and removal the staff from work until diagnosis and clinical recovery. <p>• There is a strategy for the measures based on the new COVID-19 cases by the Regions, which is in place. Please find it in Bulgarian on the link: https://coronavirus.bg/bg/1215</p>		
Croatia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no mandatory measures for schools or kindergartens. However, there are recommendations for general measures and prevention. Self-testing is recommended for students on the fifth day after close contact with a Covid-19 infected person or when symptoms appear. Masks are not mandatory in schools, but are recommended for children in poor health conditions. • There are no plans at the moment for changing the recommendations for autumn or winter season. 	No	No
Czech Republic	In Czech Republic schools already started without mandatory measures or specific recommendations by schools.	No	N/A
Estonia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory measures are not actively in place. Whom-ever feel ill stays home and test themselves. If the situation worsens then schoolchildren and staff will start testing and might take other precautionary actions like wearing a mask etc • There is a readiness plan in place, reviewed once a month. COVID-19 valmisolekukava 2022/2023 viirushooajaks Sotsiaalministeerium (sm.ee) 	No	Yes
Finland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Finland, schools started already 4 weeks ago without any mandatory or voluntary measures. There has not been an increase in reported COVID-19 cases during that time. • For upcoming winter season, there is no specific plans for any mandatory measures. The general idea is that COVID-19 is here to stay and with high vaccination coverage we need to start living as normal as possible. 	No	No
Germany	In the period from 1 October 2022 to 7 April 2023, specific protective measures are to apply in certain areas throughout Germany. The Länder can prescribe compulsory testing in schools and day-care centres, as well as compulsory masks in schools from the fifth grade onwards, if otherwise classroom teaching would be jeopardized.	Yes	N/A
Italy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the new circular issued by the Ministry of Health, cases that are asymptomatic, or that become asymptomatic for at least two days, after a period of manifestation of symptoms, will be able to end isolation after five days compared to the current seven. To return to work, a negative test result (molecular or antigenic) is required at the end of isolation. Schools are going to start without strict measures: there is no obligation to wear a mask for all the pupils, except those with frailty (recommended), and there is no digital distance learning for positive pupils. • For upcoming winter season, there is no specific plans for any mandatory measures. According to the new circular issued by the Ministry of Health, the new anti-COVID vaccines (the 'updated' anti-COVID vaccines, Pfizer and Moderna's bivalent boosters approved by the Italian Medicines Agency (Aifa) are recommended as a priority) are currently indicated for the over 60 and the frail who have not yet received the fourth dose. The list also includes health workers, guests of residential facilities for the elderly and pregnant women. Furthermore, the new booster is also recommended for those over 12 years old and who have not received the first booster, third dose, with any other vaccine among those used in the past in Italy (AstraZeneca, 	No	No



	Janssen, Pfizer-Biontech or Moderna). To carry out the new vaccination it will be necessary to wait at least 120 days from the last administration. The new vaccines are expected to arrive in the next months.		
Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are currently no mandatory public health measures in place in Ireland, including in schools (e.g., mask wearing is no longer required). However, there is some public health advice in place for schools which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> continuing infection prevention and control measures including ventilation, hygiene measures and staying at home if symptomatic If a child has symptoms of COVID-19 they should stay at home until 48 hours after the symptoms have gone. They do not need to get a PCR test unless they have a condition that puts them at higher risk or live with someone who has a weak immune system. If a child has a confirmed COVID-19 infection, they should isolate at home for 7 days. More information on when children should stay home from school is available here: https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/covid19/preventing-the-spread/child-returning-to-school-or-childcare/ COVID-19 vaccination is currently available to children aged 5 and older. Children aged 5-11 can get a first and second dose, while children aged 12+ can also get a first booster dose. Children aged 12 and older with a weak immune system or who are at higher risk from COVID-19 can get a second booster dose. More information is available here: https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/children/ No measures have been announced for autumn/winter. 	No	No
Latvia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No mandatory measures are in place for the moment. Use of face masks/testing/vaccination is not mandatory. People voluntary can use face masks or etc but it's not a common practice. Antigen self-tests will be available in schools, which can be used if a student has symptoms of Covid-19. However, extensive testing of all students, as was the case in the first half of the last school year, is not planned. Basic recommendations are provided - ventilation of rooms, disinfection of hands, in case of high morbidity, also planning separated flows of students as much as possible. If there is a local outbreak of infection in education, the head of the institution will be able to establish stricter security measures. 	No	Yes
Lithuania	There are no mandatory measures related with COVID-19. The testing is available only for symptomatic persons, testing for screening it is not planned. In the event of a municipal or national epidemic, the criteria of distance learning are developed (for all school or class/flow). Recommendations: to ensure proper respiratory hygiene, hand hygiene, cleaning and disinfection of classes, proper ventilation	No	Yes
Poland	<p>In Poland the school year has started on September 1st . There were no extraordinary Covid-19 measures introduced. The classes are conducted in school buildings. All the previous restrictions have been lifted and now function as recommendations. So far, there are no specific plans for any mandatory measures.</p> <p>However, the Ministry of Education and Science, has created a special project of a regulation of the principles of transitioning schools to distance learning. It has expanded the list of situations that may bring back remote learning. The Regulation of the Minister of Education and Science on organizing and conducting classes with the use of distance learning methods and techniques assumes that remote learning could be introduced in the event of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> organization and conduct of national or international events; threats related to the epidemiological situation; inadequate temperature outdoors or indoors (in rooms where classes are conducted with students) other extraordinary event. <p>A novelty is the possibility of closing schools and introducing distance learning due to the cold - outside and in the classrooms. If the school is closed due to the building cooling down for more than two days, the headmaster has the right to introduce remote teaching.</p>	No	Yes



	<p>This provision is a response to the new situation that we can face in the upcoming heating season, caused by rising fuel prices, as well as the risk that there may be a shortage of raw materials used for heating.</p> <p>The headmaster, in consultation with the teachers' council, will be able to temporarily modify the timetable, using the methods and techniques of distance learning.</p>		
Portugal	There exist no mandatory rules at the moment, but boosting the elderly population as well as children above 12 years has started.	No	No
Romania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Romania, schools started without any mandatory or voluntary measures. Use of face masks/testing/vaccination is not mandatory. Life is the same as before the pandemic. For upcoming winter season, there is no specific plans for any mandatory measures. 	No	No
Serbia	<p>In short, all schools in Serbia (primary, secondary, music, ballet, etc.) work according to the direct model, without restrictions on the number of students in the classrooms, with the full duration of the lessons.</p> <p>People who have symptoms of the disease do not come to school (the prescribed duration of isolation for sick/infected people is seven days), and if symptoms appear during their stay at school, it is prescribed how to act when it comes to students, i.e. school employees.</p> <p>People who have special risks of severe form of covid-19 are recommended to wear masks in order to protect against infection.</p> <p>In the event of the appearance of patients among students, based on the assessment of the epidemiological situation, the size of the class and other factors, the territorially competent public health institute may recommend that students in that class wear protective masks during their stay at school for up to five days from the last day of exposure.</p> <p>General measures of prevention and suppression are given in recommendations that are binding for all schools, and refer to cleaning, disinfection, ventilation, provision of other hygienic conditions, health education...</p> <p>The epidemiological situation of covid19 is monitored at the level of schools, local authorities and at the level of the entire Republic of Serbia. Decisions on the teaching model for individual departments and schools, if necessary, are made locally in consultation with territorially competent public health institutes/institutes, while decisions on the teaching model for local authorities and the entire Republic are made weekly by a multi-sector team based on consideration of the epidemiological situation and data obtained from the schools themselves and from the health system.</p>	No	Yes
Slovenia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All measures in schools and kindergartens are based on a voluntary basis and are publicly accepted. <p>In Slovenia the schools started on September 1th with general recommendations on hygiene and ventilation. In addition, 10 tests (RAT) per month are available free of charge to each student for self-testing in case of symptoms of COVID-19 or high-risk contact with an infected person.</p> <p>Only hygienic measures, such as ventilation and general hygiene recommendation, are foreseen in kindergartens. We encourage awareness that only healthy children without signs of an acute respiratory infection should come to kindergarten or school.</p> <p>In schools and kindergartens, the use of masks is not foreseen, except for persons with a higher risk of the more severe course of covid-19, or those who live with such persons. The use of masks is voluntary.</p> <p>Quarantine of high-risk contacts is not foreseen, self-observation and self-testing are recommended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the case of a severe epidemiological situation and a greater burden on the health system, an increase in self-testing is planned in schools - periodic self-testing for all students. In this case, various measures are also planned in schools that reduce the number of contacts, e.g. delays in arrivals, as much outdoor lessons as possible, etc. 	No	Yes
Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The document Prevention measures, hygiene and health promotion against Covid-19 in school centers elaborated by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education published their last version the 3rd May, 2022. It made flexible the 	No	Yes



	<p>recommendations related to COVID-19, according to the epidemiological situation, the progress of vaccination, adapting to the response at the community level, and transitioning from surveillance and control strategy to focus actions on the protection of people and areas of greatest vulnerability.</p> <p>https://www.educacionyfp.gob.es/dam/jcr:210cdc4-7e6c-4a93-96c1-e0f90a498c21/2022-05-03-medidas-c-educ-covid.pdf</p> <p>Currently, the epidemiological situation continues to be favourable, with a decrease in transmission and with very high levels of vaccination and protection in children and adults, which that enables the review of certain recommendations, and their flexibility. No mandatory measures are in place for the moment.</p> <p>The measures that are updated for the 22/23 academic year (It began last week) are the followings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is allowed that the Stable Cohabitation Groups from Pre-primary school (0-6 years old), Primary school (6-12 years old) and Special Education interact in any situation and physical space. • Secondary school and vocational training groups/classrooms are allowed to interact at any location and physical space. • The need to maintain interpersonal distance for dining rooms was eliminated. • The recommendation to maintain interpersonal distance and to organize by Stable Cohabitation Groups breakfast or snack in morning or extracurricular activities was eliminated. • Ventilation is still an effective measure, natural cross ventilation is the preferred option. As long as the epidemiological situation allows it, the need to be permanent, and it is recommended to ventilate several times a day, between classes, adapting the time to the characteristics of the classroom. • The need to intensify the cleaning was eliminated, passing to carry out this in the common terms for the educational field. • Vaccination recommendations will be followed. <p>Further information here:</p> <p>https://www.sanidad.gob.es/profesionales/saludPublica/ccayes/alertasActual/nCov/documentos/2022_09_05_Nota_actualizacion_Medidas_C_educ_covid.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The experience accumulated during the pandemic in educational centers will allow a rapid modification if changes in the epidemiological situation occur, thus adopting and adapting the measures that are necessary. Currently, no mandatory measures are planned. 		
UK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No mandatory measures are in place • I am not aware of any plans for the reintroduction of NPIs in schools and kindergartens 	No	No

