

Czechs extend anti-virus measures till April

March 23 2020

The Czech government said Monday it had extended measures taken to combat the spread of the coronavirus, including restricted freedom of movement and closed shops and pubs, until April.

The EU member of 10.7 million people has 1,236 declared cases of the virus including six cured patients and one death.

"All steps taken with the [state of emergency](#) are extended until April 1," Interior Minister Jan Hamacek told reporters.

The government also raised this year's state budget deficit projection from 40 billion crowns to 200 billion (7.2 billion euros, \$7.7 billion).

It reckons with a 5.1-percent drop in [gross domestic product](#) for 2020 if the epidemic is brought under control in the [second quarter](#), following six years of steady growth.

The government also changed the rules for Czechs crossing the border every day thanks to an exception for those working in neighbouring countries. Now, if they want to work abroad, they have to find accommodation there for the next three weeks.

"This is the last channel through which the epidemic can get to the Czech Republic," said Hamacek.

The Central European country closed its borders as well as most shops, all pubs, cinemas, theatres and other facilities as the virus began to

spread across Europe earlier this month.

Last week, it ordered everyone to cover their mouths and noses when leaving the house.

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