

Italy imposes nationwide restrictions to contain new virus

March 9 2020, by Colleen Barry and Antonio Calanni



Police officers and soldiers check passengers leaving from Milan main train station, Italy, Monday, March 9, 2020. Italy took a page from China's playbook Sunday, attempting to lock down 16 million people—more than a quarter of its population—for nearly a month to halt the relentless march of the new coronavirus across Europe. Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte signed a quarantine decree early Sunday for the country's prosperous north. Areas under lockdown include Milan, Italy's financial hub and the main city in Lombardy, and Venice,

the main city in the neighboring Veneto region. (AP Photo/Antonio Calanni)

Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte says travel restrictions and other strict public health measures will be imposed nationwide starting Tuesday to try to stop the spread of the new coronavirus.

Conte said Monday night that a new government decree will require people throughout the country of 60 million people to demonstrate a need to work, health conditions or other limited reasons to travel outside the areas where they live.

The restrictions will take effect on Tuesday and, like those already in place in northern Italy, will last until April 3., he said.

"There won't be just a red zone," Conte told reporters referring to the quarantine order he signed for a vast swath of northern Italy with a population of 16 million over the weekend.

"There will be Italy" as a protected area, he said.

The nationwide decree also extends [school closures](#) in Italy until April 3. Schools in the center and south of Italy that were closed because of the virus had been slated to reopen on March 16.

Italy registered 1,807 more [confirmed cases](#) as of Monday evening, for a national total of 9,172. With those numbers, Italy again overtook South Korea as the country with the most cases outside China. The number of people with the virus who died increased to 463.



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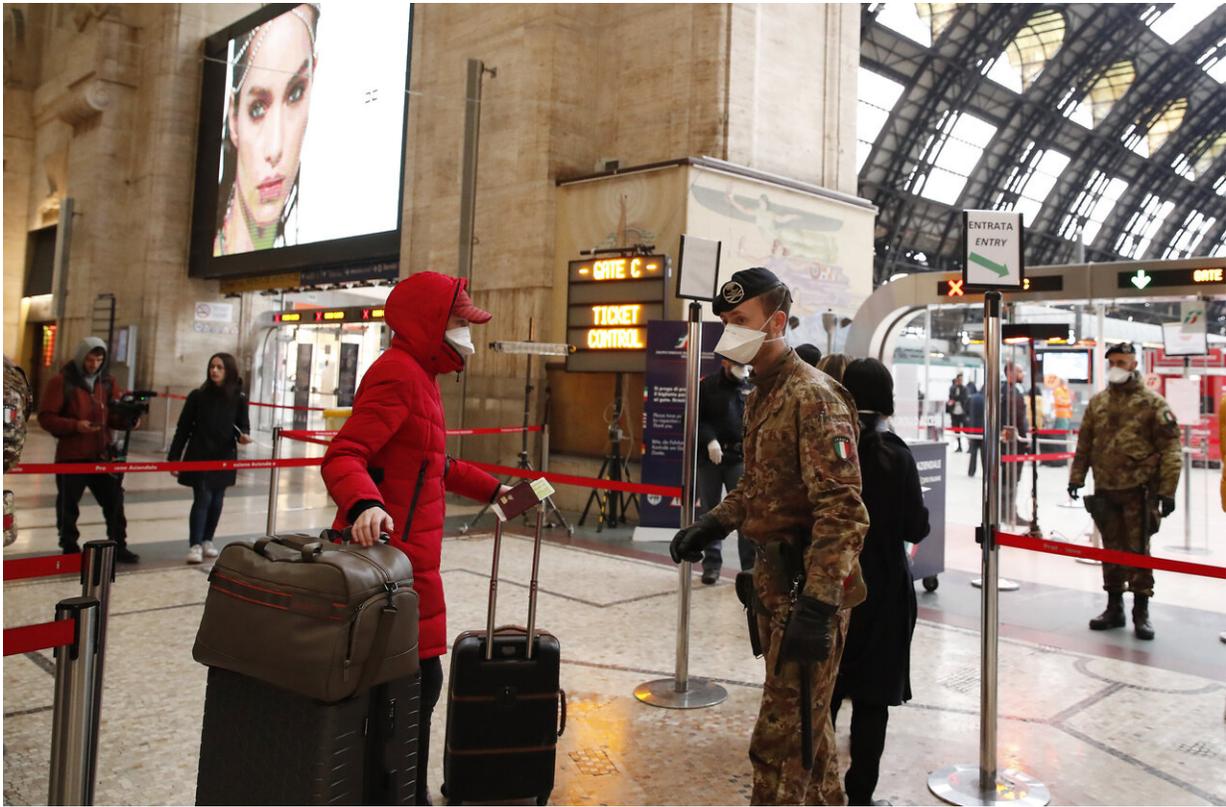
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The premier also took to task the [young people](#) in much of Italy who have been gathering at night to drink and have a good time during the public health emergency that started on Feb. 21.

"This night life...we can't allow this anymore," Conte said.

Under the weekend decree that applied to regions in the north, pubs, restaurants and cafes are required to close at dusk. Now the mandatory early hours will affect all of a locked-down Italy.

On Saturday night, alarmed at rumors over a quarantine in the north, many Italians fled the targeted regions in the northern "red zone." was put under lockdown on Sunday. Some 16 million residents live in that first lockdown, in the north, in populous Lombardy, which includes Milan, and 14 provinces in the north, including that of Venice. Monday's extension now c

Tuesday's restrictions also extend closure of schools until April 3. Until Tuesday, schools in the center and south of Italy were slated to reopen on March 16.

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