

Hungary 'indefinitely' extends lockdown measures

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Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban announced Thursday an indefinite extension of lockdown measures announced last month to stem the spread of COVID-19.

Nationwide restrictions on movement allowing only travel to work, trips to shops and pharmacies for necessities, or exercise outings were to expire on April 11.

"We are extending the duration of movement restrictions. We are extending them indefinitely," said Orban in a video posted on his Facebook site.

"We will reconsider the restrictions on a weekly basis," he added.

Orban asked citizens to respect restrictions over the Easter holiday, in particular by avoiding groups and observing social distance guidelines in [public spaces](#).

"We must accept that this Easter will be different from how our Easters usually are," he said.

Orban also granted city mayors the power to make "more severe decisions regarding their respective communities".

Last week Hungary's parliament endorsed a bill giving Orban sweeping new powers he insists are necessary to fight the pandemic but which critics at home and abroad say are simply a power grab.

Hungary, which has a population of almost 10 million, has recorded 980 COVID-19 infections and 66 deaths.

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