

Portugal prepares to lift coronavirus state of emergency

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Portugal's state of emergency which has been in force since March 19 to curb the coronavirus pandemic will end next weekend, President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa announced on Tuesday.

The head of state warned, though, that a return to normal activity would proceed "in stages".

The third 15-day period of the [state of emergency](#) will end at midnight on Saturday and "we hope it will not be necessary to use it again in the future," the [president](#) told the media.

Sunday will also be a lockdown day meaning that only essential workers will be able to leave their residence during the coming long weekend which begins on May 1.

Prime Minister Antonio Costa is due to unveil on Thursday the areas of activity that can resume from Monday.

Next Tuesday, Costa is due to meet the president of the Portuguese Football Federation and the leaders of the country's three biggest clubs—Benfica, Porto and Sporting Lisbon—to discuss a possible resumption of the league from the start of June at the earliest.

Portugal had recorded over 24,000 cases of COVID-19 on Tuesday, with nearly 1,000 deaths.

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