

Turkey orders four-day curfew in major cities

April 20 2020



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Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced a four-day lockdown from Thursday in Istanbul and 30 other major cities as part of measures to stop the spread of the novel coronavirus.

"We are planning to implement confinement between April 23-26 in 31 cities," Erdogan said Monday in a televised address to the nation.

Turkey has so far applied a 48-hour lockdown in 31 cities over the last two weekends but the country of 83 million has stopped short of declaring a long-term nationwide [lockdown](#).

April 23 is already a public holiday in Turkey as it marks the 100th anniversary of the foundation of the Turkish parliament.

Turkey on Monday announced 123 new coronavirus deaths, pushing the official death toll to 2,140. The number of cases has reached nearly 91,000.

Turkey has already shut schools, banned [mass gatherings](#) and ordered confinement for people aged over 65 or under 20.

Erdogan sounded upbeat, saying Turks had largely followed the rules and "we averted the pandemic from reaching a catastrophic level."

However, there have been violations—especially in several Istanbul neighbourhoods—where locals were filmed ignoring social distancing in [public spaces](#), including open bazaars.

"Our goal is to implement the measures in the most rigorous way and reduce them to a normal level at the end of the Eid al-Fitr," the Turkish leader said, referring to the Muslim feast marking the end of the fasting month of Ramadan.

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Citation: Turkey orders four-day curfew in major cities (2020, April 20) retrieved 5 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-04-turkey-four-day-curfew-major-cities.html>

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