

# Greece re-enters partial novel coronavirus lockdown

November 3 2020

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Athens and northern Greece on Tuesday entered lockdown for at least a month to fight a resurgent coronavirus, causing small businesses to worry anew for their future.

Cafes, restaurants, bars, gyms, cinemas and theatres and most non-

essential businesses shut down in Athens, which accounts for half of the country's 11 million people, and in the northern cities of Thessaloniki and Serres, which went under even harsher lockdowns.

But a full lockdown in Athens, the second this year, is still possible, if the new restrictions fail to flatten a spike in infections, government spokesman Stelios Petsas said as other European countries also reimpose lockdowns or strict measures.

"We are preparing for the worst-case scenario," Petsas told Skai TV. "The measures will toughen if we do not adhere to them. Unfortunately, fear seems to mobilise societies."

Novel [coronavirus](#) cases have been soaring during the last few weeks in Greece, which has recorded more than 42,000 infections and 642 deaths.

Employees at taverns and cafes around the popular Monastiraki area in central Athens were busy on Tuesday morning stacking away chairs in the mostly empty streets .

Employers and employees voiced fears that many of them will not be able to survive financially and will have to shut down for good. The country only recently emerged from a crippling [financial crisis](#) that began in 2010.

## 'New, grey reality'

"These (measures) do not mean that the virus spread will be contained," said Maria Maniaki who works as an employee at a tavern and who insists that restaurants take more safety steps than churches and [public transport](#).

Schools and nurseries remained open in Athens, as well as retail shops

and hairdressers. A nighttime curfew was extended to apply nationwide from midnight to 5:00 am and mask-wearing is mandatory across the country both indoors and outdoors.

The judges' union has appealed to the government to restrict the number of trials to the very minimum until the second phase of the pandemic has been eased and make sure that judges, court staff, legal workers and the public are not unnecessarily exposed.

According to health ministry officials, there are 312 intensive care unit beds for coronavirus nationwide, of which 188 are occupied, 123 free, an occupancy rate of 60 percent.

"The health system will come under pressure, with mathematical certainty," infectious diseases expert and the health ministry's spokesman on the virus, Sotiris Tsiodras, said Friday.

In the meantime, a full strict [lockdown](#) also came into effect in the regions of Thessaloniki and Serres, where the number of infections is particularly alarming.

Citizens in these regions are required to send an SMS, citing the reason for leaving their house and a public curfew will apply from 9:00 pm to 5:00 am.

All non-essential flights to and from Thessaloniki international airport have been suspended.

In a statement, the mayor of Serres, Alexandros Chrysafis said this is the "new, grey reality" for the region and called on residents to remain calm and follow the instructions of the scientific community.

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