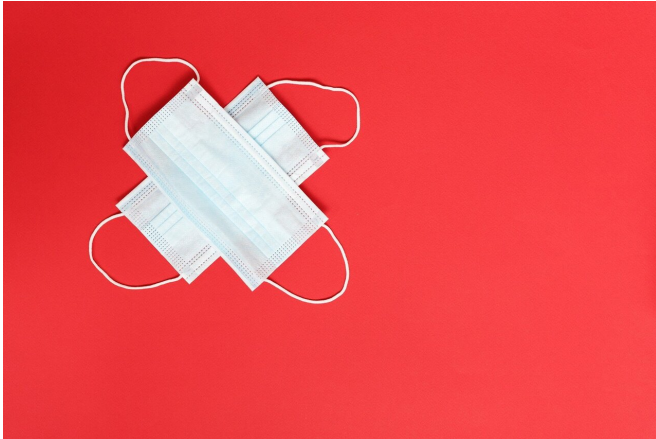


Romania imposes new restrictions after virus surge

29 July 2020



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Romania on Wednesday adopted new measures to curb the spread of the new coronavirus, including shortening working hours for bars and restaurants and mandatory face masks in outdoor crowded spaces, after a surge in cases.

In the past eight days, the number of infections exceeded 1,000 new daily cases in Romania, bringing the total to over 48,000. The country also reported 2,269 deaths so far.

Masks are already mandatory in enclosed [public spaces](#) while restaurants and pubs can serve their clients only outdoors with no more than four people at the same table.

"Terraces will limit the number of clients to the number of chairs," prime minister Ludovic Orban said at the start of the cabinet meeting.

Local authorities will decide exactly where it will be mandatory to wear [masks](#) in the open, Orban explained, mentioning places like markets and train platforms.

All children over five years old will also have to wear a mask, according to the government.

"We are in a critical moment and measures to protect the population are very important right now", President Klaus Iohannis told reporters on Wednesday during a press conference.

Last week, regional authorities also decided to quarantine several villages and one city, barring people from leaving or entering, with very few exceptions

"Things are bad, especially for the [young people](#) who must go to work outside the village", said 70-year-old Elena, from Cartojani in the south, the first village to be quarantined last week.

The spike in numbers coincides with a legislative void, after the Constitutional Court ruled in June that mandatory hospitalisation violates [human rights](#).

That decision has enabled thousands of infected people to discharge themselves from hospital.

Parliament adopted a new text this month that allows hospitals to keep people who test positive for the virus under observation for at least 48 hours, even if they have no symptoms.

"I'm confident that together we will manage to reasonably control this pandemic. I see re-entering the state of emergency as the last option", said Iohannis.

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