

Bulgaria

Updated on 30/05/20

Restrictions on movements

○ On 13 May, Bulgarian Authorities lifted the state of emergency and introduced an "emergency epidemic situation", which will be in place from 14 May until 14 June.

○ In a new order issued on 29 May, the Minister of Health has confirmed the temporary entry ban for all foreign nationals through all border crossing points by all means of transport.

The following categories are excluded from this prohibition:

- Bulgarian citizens, citizens of Member States of the European Union, UK, Schengen States (including San Marino, Andorra, Monaco and the Vatican), Serbia and Republic of North Macedonia, family members of Bulgarian citizens, persons who are in actual cohabitation with a Bulgarian citizen, persons with permanent and long-term residence status in the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria and members of their families;
- Medical professionals, medical scientists, social workers and their managers if the purpose of their journey is linked to their professional work;
- Workers involved in the delivery of medicinal products, medical devices and personal protective equipment, medical equipment, including its installation and maintenance;
- Transport personnel engaged in the carriage of passengers and goods, aircraft crews engaged in commercial air transport and other transport personnel, as appropriate, including vessels crews and persons involved in vessels maintenance;
- Foreign officials (Heads of State, Government, etc.) and members of their delegations, as well as diplomats, officials of international organisations, military personnel, personnel of security and public order services and humanitarian workers carrying out their duties;
- Persons travelling for humanitarian reasons;
- Representatives of trade, economic and investment activities and persons directly involved in the construction, maintenance, operation and security of strategic and critical infrastructure of the Republic of Bulgaria, in the implementation of projects certified under the Investment Promotion Act, analyzes of projects of potential investors and other activities relevant to the country's economy, including shipbuilding and ship repair, certified by a letter from the Minister of Economy or another minister responsible for the respective activity;
- Seasonal farm workers and workers in tourism sector; and
- Cross-border workers.

○ Transit through the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria is additionally allowed for:

- Nationals of Member States of the European Union, UK and Schengen States (including San Marino, Andorra, Monaco and the Vatican) and their family members in order to return to their country of residence;

–Third-country nationals who hold a long-term residence permit in another Member State of the European Union, UK or in a Schengen country (including San Marino, Andorra, Monaco and the Vatican) and their family members in order to return to their country of residence;

–Citizens of Serbia, the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Turkey in order to return to their country;

Transit is allowed only where immediate leaving the territory of Republic of Bulgaria can be guaranteed.

o All persons entering the territory of Republic of Bulgaria from Sweden, UK, Belgium, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Malta and Italy, as well as from third countries except Serbia and Republic of North Macedonia, shall be quarantined for a period of 14 days at home or other accommodation where the person has indicated that he/she will reside, with a prescription issued by the director of the relevant regional health inspectorate or a person authorized by him. Exception to the quarantine requirement is allowed for:

a) Bulgarian citizens and citizens of other EU Member States, UK, and Schengen States (including San Marino, Andorra, Monaco and the Vatican) who are:

–Persons travelling for humanitarian reasons;

– Representatives of trade, economic and investment activities and persons directly involved in the construction, maintenance, operation and security of strategic and critical infrastructure of the Republic of Bulgaria, in the implementation of projects certified under the Investment Promotion Act, analyzes of projects of potential investors and other activities relevant to the country's economy, shipbuilding and ship repair, certified by a letter from the Minister of Economy or another minister responsible for the respective activity;

–Family members of Bulgarian citizens, persons who are in actual cohabitation with a Bulgarian citizen in case their stay in the country is up to 7 days;

b) Bus drivers performing international transport of passengers;

c) Truck drivers performing or completing international transport of goods.

d) Vessels crew members who are Bulgarian citizens

e) The following persons, regardless of their nationality:

– Medical professionals, medical scientists, social workers, and their managers if the purpose of their journey is linked to their professional work;

– Workers involved in the delivery of medicinal products, medical devices and personal protective equipment, medical equipment, including its installation and maintenance;

–Foreign officials (Heads of State, Government, etc.) and members of their delegations, as well as diplomats, officials of international organisations, military personnel, personnel of the security and public order services and humanitarian workers carrying out their duties;

–Cross-border workers.

o From 22 May, anyone permitted to enter the territory of Bulgaria without quarantine (ie. truck and bus drivers entering and transiting Bulgaria) is required to present a

new declaration to the border health control authorities. This declaration is available in Bulgarian, English, Romanian and Turkish.

In order to minimize waiting times, drivers are advised to fill in the declaration prior to their arrival at the border crossing points.

- In cases where drivers of goods vehicles which are allowed to transit Bulgaria, but due to a ban by a neighbouring state cannot leave Bulgaria, a place will be determined by the Road Infrastructure Agency where the truck and the driver must stay until the ban is abolished.

- On 30 March 2020 and until further notice, the border crossing point between Bulgaria and Greece “Zlatograd-Thermes” has been closed due to the spread of Covid-19 and a quarantine has been announced in the respective Greek border region.

- On 14 April, the Bulgarian Road Infrastructure Agency has published an interactive map of the green corridors for road transport of goods transiting the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria. The map contains useful information on rest areas and the respective number of parking slots, sanitary facilities, possibility to buy food, availability of internet connection, lighting, video surveillance, fuel station, nearest emergency services, number of slots for refuelling refrigerated trucks, etc.: <http://www.api.bg/index.php/en/green-corridors> or <https://www.bgtoll.bg/en>

Measures applying to drivers:

Health equipment

- The use of a facial mask is already mandatory in closed public spaces. Nevertheless, people and drivers who are in open public places are required to comply with the requirement of social distancing and all anti-epidemic measures, and wear a protective mask in case there is a need to be in contact with others.

Facilitation measures

- On 14 April, the Bulgarian Road Infrastructure Agency has issued an order temporarily suspending the official holidays driving ban and the summer weekly traffic ban for trucks over 12 tonnes until further notice.

- In addition, the Bulgarian Government has granted further temporary tolerance concerning the enforcement of driving and rest time rules for drivers under Reg. (EC) 561/2006 regarding the national and international transport of goods. This exception applies until 31 May 2020. Measures lifted are the following:

- Art. 6.1: replacement of the maximum daily driving limit of 9 hours with one of 11 hours;

- Art. 7: replacement of the minimum daily break requirements by imposing a break of 45 minutes after 5 and a half hours;

- Art. 8(6): possibility to take two consecutive reduced weekly rest periods of minimum 24 hours, provided that the drivers take at least 4 weekly rests within these 4 consecutive weeks and at least two of them should be regular weekly rests the two reduced weekly rests should be compensated before the next rest period

–Art. 8.8: possibility for the driver to take the regular weekly rest in the vehicle, as long as it has suitable sleeping facilities for each driver and the vehicle is stationary.