Restrictions

On 24 June, the Bulgarian authorities extended the emergency epidemic situation until 15 July.

In a new order issued on 4 June, 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 the prohibitions above:

- Bulgarian citizens, citizens of Member States of the European Union, UK, Schengen States (including San Marino, Andorra, Monaco and the Vatican), Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro, 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 and social workers, if the purpose of their journey is linked to their professional work;

- Transport personnel engaged in the carriage of goods, aircraft crews engaged in commercial air transport and other transport personnel, as appropriate;

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

- Persons travelling for humanitarian reasons;

- Nationals of Member States of the European Union and Schengen States (including San Marino, Andorra, Monaco and the Vatican) and third-country
nationals directly involved in the construction, maintenance, operation and security of strategic and critical infrastructure of the Republic of Bulgaria; and

- Seasonal farm workers and workers in tourism sector
- Cross-border workers

Provided that immediate leaving from the country can be guaranteed, transit through Bulgaria is allowed for:

- Nationals of Member States of the European Union 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 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, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro and Turkey in order to return to their country.

Quarantine rules have been set out as follows: people entering the territory of Republic of Bulgaria from Sweden, UK and Portugal, as well as from third countries, except Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, Lichtenstein, San Marino, Andorra, Monaco and the Vatican, 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 authorised by him.

Exemption to the quarantine provisions are granted to Bulgarian citizens and citizens of other EU Member States, UK, and Schengen States (including San Marino, Andorra, Monaco and the Vatican) who are:

- 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,
analysis of projects of potential investors and other activities relevant to the country's economy. The journey must be certified by a letter from the Minister of Economy or other ministries responsible for the respective activities. Persons involved in shipbuilding and ship repair, including their family members, are also exempt

- Bus drivers performing international transport of passengers
- Truck drivers performing or completing international transport of goods
- Vessel crew members who are Bulgarian citizen

The following persons, regardless of their nationality, are also exempt:

- 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
- 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, including their family members
- Cross-border workers
- State administration officers on short-term business trips abroad, carrying out their duties.

Since 22 May, International goods transport drivers and anyone not subject to quarantine provision entering Bulgaria are required to fill out the declaration forms (in English, Bulgarian and Romanian, Turkish and Czech) for people entering Bulgaria. Members are reminded that such declaration does not substitute Annex 3. 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 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](http://www.api.bg/index.php/en/green-corridors) or [https://www.bgtoll.bg/en](https://www.bgtoll.bg/en).

The use of face masks is only mandatory on public transport, in pharmacies and medical institutions, and strongly recommended when physical distancing cannot be guaranteed. 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.

**Relieves**

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.

Relaxations of driving and rest time rules have not been renewed after 31 May. Therefore, Regulation (EC) 561/2006 fully applies from 00:00 on 1 June.

**SOURCE:** AEBTRI and EC, DG MOVE