

Dutch extend virus measures to end of April

March 31 2020



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The Netherlands extended restrictions to curb the spread of COVID-19 on Tuesday, saying schools, restaurants and bars will remain closed at least until April 28.

The new [coronavirus](#) has now claimed 1,039 lives in the Netherlands with 845 new infections reported overnight, bringing the total to 12,959.

"It will not surprise you that we indeed decided on an extension until Tuesday 28 April," Prime Minister Mark Rutte said.

"The progress of the number of infections on the capacity of intensive care units leaves us with no other decision."

More than 4,700 of those infected were or still are in hospital, [health officials](#) said on Tuesday.

Public places have already been closed—including the infamous cannabis cafes, sex clubs and brothels—to curb the coronavirus from spreading.

However, it quickly made a U-turn on the "[coffee shops](#)" where cannabis is sold, saying over-the-counter soft drug sales would continue, in an effort to curb illegal street sales.

Last week, the government also extended a ban on all social gatherings until June 1, including football matches in the top division.

However, there is no lockdown like those in Italy, Spain, France or Belgium.

Rutte reiterated his appeal to Dutch people to voluntarily work at home and warned them not to congregate in groups.

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