

15th March 1700 Hrs

PRIME MINISTER'S DECLARATION OF PORTUGAL - SPAIN BORDER CLOSURE

Prime Minister announced this Sunday, in relation to the closure of the borders with Spain, that after having been in contact with his Spanish counterpart and with Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, it was decided that as of tomorrow, after the Union meeting European Union with the ministers of Internal Affairs and Health of the European Union (EU), measures will be taken to have a restriction in the cases of entries related to tourism and leisure, which should extend until Easter.

"Tomorrow [Monday] the rules will be defined that must go through to maintain the free movement of goods and guarantee the workers' rights, but there must be a restriction for the purposes of tourism or leisure, which is important considering that we know that , on Easter holidays, there is traditionally an increase in tourists ", said António Costa.

"We will not disturb the circulation of goods, but there will be Portuguese, Spanish or both controls. Border posts will remain and controls will be established. Tourism will not be in the near future between Portuguese and Spanish," said the Prime Minister, who spoke this afternoon, by videoconference, with the Spanish counterpart, Pedro Sánchez.

The prime minister was also questioned about a possible declaration of a state of emergency in Portugal, but recalled that this decision is up to the President of the Republic, guaranteeing, however, that the Government will not oppose. "Whenever the President deems it so, the Government will be here to execute that order", he affirmed, clarifying, however, that one cannot "exhaust all the ammunition", as it verifies that "fatigue" is already noticed in other countries. António Costa also revealed that Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa will convene a Council of State in order to have a broader opinion on the fight against the new coronavirus in Portugal.

Regarding the intention declared by the President of the Regional Government of Madeira, of the "immediate closure" of airports in the Autonomous Region of Madeira due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Costa was categorical: "You can only travel to the region by air or by sea Any measure that closes the airport will harm those who will be in the autonomous region. I understand everyone's concern about this situation, but we must maintain some serenity and a cool head to avoid any type of excess that may have a harmful effect. of the Regional Government of Madeira to formalize this proposal, we will soon see how to act. "

Moreover, António Costa considered that "the population have been respecting the Government's measures", remembering that no one contested the closure of educational establishments and others. "And he made another appeal to the population:" Avoid at all costs unnecessary contacts, because the country cannot stop. Farmers need to plant for food, factories cannot stop for toilet paper. What we are looking for is a reduction in the risks of transmission and it is not because young people are in a lower risk group that they cannot transmit the virus to their parents or grandparents. They have a responsibility to prevent this from happening. We will take action when necessary. We must try to preserve freedom, up to the limits. "

15th March 1400 hrs

There are 245 confirmed cases and 2271 suspected covid-19 infections in Portugal, with Lisbon and Vale do Tejo overtaking the North region with the highest number of cases. There are 76 more people whose infection has been confirmed in the last 24 hours, 43 of them in the capital region.

There are no deaths to register and there is one more patient recovered. Of the 139 hospitalized there are nine in Intensive Care Units.

According to the daily report of the Directorate-General for Health (DGS), there are 4592 under surveillance by health authorities (less than on Saturday, when it was 5011).

There are now 14 active transmission chains, three more than on Saturday, when the level of was 169 infected cases in Portugal and 1704 suspected cases.

Of the 245 confirmed cases, only 139 are hospitalised, which means that more than a hundred patients are recovering at home. The Minister of Health, Marta Temido, had already said that the cases in which the covid-19 manifests itself in a light way will be treated at home.

There are already two recovered patients.

14th March 20.00 hrs

The Government ordered the bars to be closed every day by 2100 hrs.

The Minister of State, Economy and Digital Transition, the Minister of Internal Administration and the Minister of Health, signed this Saturday the joint order that determines the closure of the bars, every day, by 21:00, and until at least 9th April.

The extraordinary and urgent measures to respond to the Covid-19 outbreak approved by the Government and promulgated on Friday by the President were published today in Diário da República.

This is Decree Law No. 10-A, which "establishes exceptional and temporary measures relating to the epidemiological situation of the new Coronavirus" and Resolution of the Council of Ministers No. 10-A which "approves a set of measures relating to epidemiological situation".

The laws come into force as of today, with some exceptions, such as the conditions for the validity of documents or cards and the closure of facilities due to the outbreak, effective March 9, or social protection measures against illness and disease, effective from March 3.

The day after the approval of the measures in the Council of Ministers, the President of the Republic, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, promulgated the diplomas "in view of the national alert situation in which the country lives, and in the expectation of subsequent parliamentary ratification".

On Thursday, the Government announced that schools of all grades of education will suspend all classroom activities starting on Monday due to the Covid-19 outbreak.

Several universities and other schools had already decided to suspend teaching activities.

The Government has also decided to declare a state of alert throughout the country, putting civil protection means and security forces and services on standby.

The Minister of Health and the Director-General of Health this afternoon launched several alerts to the population that the upward curve of the epidemic can be stopped as much as possible. However if we do not change behaviour, health professionals and the NHS will not be able to cope.

At the daily press conference with journalists, Marta Temido warned that the epidemic has entered the exponential phase. Portugal registered 59 more cases in the last 24 hours, registering a total of 169 positive cases. There are 19 patients in intensive care and some already being treated at home.

The minister explained that at this moment, the cases that are arriving are no longer all referred by the SNS24 Line, with some already entering the emergency room. Therefore, at this time, cases will begin to be evaluated, with hospital care in situations that require it. Those with slight symptoms.

Marta Temido also mentioned that they are studying how to be able to have tests that can also be done at home, to prevent more people from visiting health services. One of the concerns now is how the NHS will, or will not, be able to respond to the peak of the epidemic.

The minister mentioned it is necessary to safeguard health professionals. For this reason, a series of measures will be implemented as of Monday, such as extending the use of personal protective material to more professionals, so that "whoever is at the forefront of care in hospitals and other health professionals feel protected in their performance".

The general director of Health, Graça Freitas, at the same press conference also launched three appeals, addressing them to the relatives of the elderly, especially those who are living in homes, to respect the indications of each of the institutions. "Of course, those people are not going to be abandoned, but we need to protect them." And a way to do this "is restricted to visits", preventing someone from carrying the virus.

The second appeal was also for parents with children who usually stay with their grandparents. Recalling that at this stage it is absolutely necessary for parents to stay at home with their children, not resorting to grandparents as they are the real risk group.

The third appeal goes to young people and adults of working age. As for young people Graça Freitas was clear in explaining that the country did not adopt "mandatory isolation. Young people can leave home, but it is necessary to know that if they are infected they may have a slight reaction to the virus, but they may be the cause of death of a grandfather, a great uncle or another older relative. Therefore, she stressed, we need to think about this situation.

Working adults need to realize that if they have symptoms, they should immediately inform the employer and refrain from going to work.

This Saturday, Portugal registered 1704 suspected cases with 169 positives, with 126 people awaiting laboratory results. 5011 people are under surveillance.

14th March 0800 hrs

ALGARVE HEALTH AUTHORITY ADVISES TOURISTS TO FOLLOW ADVICE TO REDUCE IMPACT OF COVID-19

Algarve is one of the regions with the least cases of covid-19 in the country (six, according to the epidemiological bulletin of DGS March 12,

While many Easter holidays in the south have already been cleared, not all guests have cancelled their trip to the region between late March and April 13th.

The president of the Regional Health Administration (ARS) of the Algarve, Paulo Morgado, says that the Algarve has "at the moment, the capacity to respond to cases, and we are adapting to epidemiological circumstances".

Regarding the suspicious cases, Paulo Morgado states that "everyone is being tracked and followed up. The two schools where two cases were discovered are closed and all students are being contacted.

For those arriving in the country at this time for the first time, they may not yet be aware of the recommendations of health authorities. Therefore, a large part of the effort has to be to inform tourists stated Paulo Morgado.

ARS do Algarve and the Directorate-General for Health (DGS) have already met with associations in the hotel sector to think about ways to raise awareness among tourists. DGS informational posters are being distributed in hotels and training actions are planned at ARS with those responsible for tourist activities.

According to the estimates of the Association of Hospitality of Portugal (AHP), quoted by Dinheiro Vivo, stays in the order of 50% were cancelled between March and June.

LISBON

Covid-19: Centro Hospitalar Lisboa Central suspends visits to patients and non emergency surgeries

The Centro Hospitalar Universitário de Lisboa Central (CHULC) will suspend visits to hospitalized and emergency patients starting on Sunday, and will only carry out in-person consultations and surgeries considered priority and urgent, it was announced today .

"All scheduled consultations and technical procedures are subject to prior analysis by the corresponding health professionals. At the same time, it was determined to suspend visits to patients in the hospital and in the emergency room [as of Sunday, March 15] ", says the CHULC," except in the situation of terminally ill patients ".

In a statement, this hospital adds that direct telephone contacts will be made available for each service so that family members or reference persons can obtain information.

CHULC, which groups the hospitals in São José, Santo António dos Capuchos, Santa Marta, Dona Estefânia, Curry Cabral and Maternidade Alfredo da Costa, explains that, in relation to face-to-face consultations, "they should only be maintained in situations where that clinical criteria require it, namely priority, very priority and urgent ".

As for non-face-to-face consultations, such as the prescription of medication in the context of chronic illness, the prescription of complementary means of diagnosis and therapy (MCDT) for chronically ill patients and subsequent consultations to evaluate test results and analysis will be carried out using teleconsultation (video) or telephone consultation.

Users will be notified by CHULC for non-face-to-face consultations.

13th March 1400 hrs

GOVERNMENT ALERT STATE ACTIVATED

Crime of disobedience for those who do not follow instructions from the authorities

Minister Eduardo Cabrita has already signed the declaration of alert status valid until April 9, but it can be extended.

In addition to the measures already determined, they can, "at any time", take other actions.

Failure to comply with the security forces' instructions in the context of the state of alert will be considered a "crime of disobedience" subject to "aggravated sanction measures", said Eduardo Cabrita.

"Security forces will ensure compliance with the state of alert, which has an immediate effect," said the Minister of Internal Affairs.

13th March 0800 hrs

ADDRESS TO THE NATIONAL BY THE PRIME MINISTER

António Costa appealed this Thursday to the "sense of community" to face Covid-19 and confirmed several preventive measures.

The Prime Minister made a communication to the country this Thursday to announce not only the closing of schools, but also several preventive measures, among them, the temporary closing of nightclubs and similar establishments and the **conditioning of the capacity of restaurants and shopping centres** in Portugal.

In the package of measures he announced, Costa highlighted the elderly, a "vulnerable population". It is therefore necessary to **have "a concern for our parents and grandparents"**.

Addressing the country, António Costa said that this is one of those moments in which we live and we have to feel what a life in community is, sharing life in common. "**The biggest responsibility of each one of us is to take care of the other**", he underlined.

The Council of Ministers will meet this evening to decide on further measures to contain and prevent the new coronavirus in Portugal.

MEASURES AS FOLLOWS

1 Schools, day care centres and universities will suspend all classroom teaching and non-teaching activities in schools at all levels of education as of Monday to at least until April 9, as the measure covers all levels of education, said the prime minister. On that day, the Government reevaluates whether it reopens educational establishments. However, it should be noted that António Costa said that they would be "face-to-face activities", which may indicate that schools have the possibility to continue with their teaching activities in another way.

2 Regarding the elderly, the prime minister announced that the limitations on visits to nursing homes are extended to the entire country.

3. Ban on disembarkation of cruises. Except for residents those who arrive from cruises cannot disembark in Portugal, they are only allowed to refuel.

4 Closure of night clubs. For now, and with no date scheduled for reopening, "discos and similar establishments" are closed.

5 The capacity of catering establishments is reduced by one third (in order to have more space between tables, thus reducing the risk of contagion).

6 The capacity of shopping centres and public services is limited - numbers restricted.

1. Restrictions can also be created for access to public services, namely by requiring queues to be formed outside and not inside waiting areas.

Compensation measures

1 Income support for workers who have to stay at home to care for children under the age of 12. There is partial "compensation support" for those who have to stay in isolation, including green receipts. "There will be a special mechanism that ensures partial remuneration in conjunction with employers, in order to mitigate the negative impact of household income," said the prime minister.

2 Special measures for health professionals, security forces and emergency services. António Costa reminded that as these professionals are essential at this moment, there will be special measures for those who have children. Details are not yet known.

He added "we have to assume that this pandemic on the European continent, and in Portugal, has not yet reached its peak, is in the evolution stage. It is very likely that in the coming weeks more patients will be contaminated, perhaps with more consequences for your health, and that this outbreak may be more lasting than we initially estimated ", acknowledged António Costa.

AZORES will quarantine all people who enter the region, due to the coronavirus pandemic. In a statement, the regional government explains that it will place in "prophylactic isolation (...) with active surveillance, for 14 days those landing in the Autonomous Region of the Azores".

MADEIRA

The Regional Government decided to close day and social centres.

The restriction on visits to homes and other institutions for the care of the elderly to a family member, between 2 pm and 5 pm, was another of the measures stipulated.

Employment protection will be one of the points on the table in Thursday's Council of Ministers. António Costa said that support will be created for companies, whose operation and production may suffer from the Covid-19 outbreak. "It is a threat that we can only face together," he concluded. Green receipt workers who have to interrupt their work activity will also be helped.

Further explanations and clarifications will be given at the end of this evening by the Prime Minister and after the meeting of the Council of Ministers.

78 infected and nearly 5,000 under surveillance

The bulletin released today also points out that there are 133 cases awaiting laboratory results and more than 4900 contacts under surveillance. In total, since the beginning of the epidemic, DGS has registered 637 suspected cases and 78 confirmed of whom 69 are hospitalised. The North region continues to be the one with the largest number of confirmed cases (44), followed by Greater Lisbon (23) and the Central and Algarve regions, both with five cases.

12th March 1300 hrs

The number of confirmed cases of infection with the new coronavirus, which causes Covid-19 disease, has risen to 78 in Portugal, 19 more than those recorded on Wednesday, the Directorate-General for Health (DGS) announced today.

According to the bulletin on the epidemiological situation in Portugal, there are 637 suspected cases, of which 133 are awaiting laboratory results.

According to DGS, there are still 4,923 contacts under surveillance by health authorities.

There are two more confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Portimão. There are now five in total in this Algarve city, confirmed by the mayor of the municipality, Isilda Gomes.

Measures are currently being considered in Portimão to help reduce the potential for the spread of the virus.

This morning the Minister of Health Marta Temido asked journalists not to encourage excessive social alarm, adding: "We cannot disperse after rumours. Believe us, we have no reason not to speak the truth."

In the same vein, the Director General of Health, Graça Freitas, warned of the "discomfort and anxiety" that can cause measures that are taken without justification, and said that the country "cannot have an even greater epidemic caused by panic".

Regarding schools Graça Freitas later criticized the closure of schools without prior consultation with the health authorities, and said that schools should warn of social isolation, so that students do not leave school, "cross the street and go to the shopping centre".

11th March 1400 hrs

The Directorate-General for Health (DGS) announced this Wednesday that the number of cases of patients infected with the new coronavirus has risen to 59 an increase of 18 since yesterday.

According to the bulletin on the epidemiological situation, there are 471 suspected cases, of which 83 are awaiting laboratory results. In addition there are 3,066 contacts under surveillance by health authorities.

The SNS 24 line (national health line) will be reinforced on Friday with 81 nurses to respond to the increase in calls due to the Covid-19 outbreak, the Minister of Health announced today. The line is 808 24 24 24 Option 9 in English.

The National Scouts Corps has suspended all national activities until March 25, due to the Covid-19 outbreak, according to a circular sent to the groupings and regional leaders.

The Minister of Health told parliament this morning that the possibility of collecting biological material at home (for analysis of Covid-19) is being studied and that the expansion of home hospitalization to keep patients at home is also being considered.

The Minister recognizes that it will not be possible to contain the contagion of infections by Covid-19 for much longer, stating in Parliament that in the last 24 hours there are more confirmed cases in Portugal, which will be revealed in the next bulletin.

The Ministry of Health has authorized all hospitals of the National Health Service (SNS) to reinforce their stock of masks, medicines and protective equipment, including integral suits and eye protection. The order was published this Wednesday in Diário da República.

The order, signed by the Minister of Health Marta Temido on March 3, was published this Wednesday and determines the immediate increase in stocks by 20% (in relation to the annual consumption registered in 2019) of hospitals and other health units in the country. SNS. It is a measure that is part of the contingency plan to combat Covid-19.

Marta Temido stated that "it is inevitable that we will enter the mitigation phase within hours or days" because "the evolution of the situation is being very fast".

A decision on whether to bring forward the closure of schools for the Easter holidays currently scheduled for 27th March is expected later today.

11th March 0800 hrs

The European Union will provide € 25 billion to support companies and avoid the risk of an economic crisis due to the coronavirus.

PORTUGAL – Currently there are 41 confirmed cases and 375 suspected.

The National Council for Public Health (CNSP) meets today to discuss measures to contain the Covid-19 outbreak, a disease that has 41 confirmed cases in Portugal.

Prime Minister António Costa said on Tuesday that whatever position the CNSP takes, "generalize the closure of schools" or maintain the option of only closing those where "there are pockets of infection and risks of contamination" the executive will take this action "immediately".

The operation of the main museums, and their possible closure, is also on the agenda of the Council meeting.

"We will adopt the measures that the technicians consider to be justified to adopt. We cannot each have your opinion. We are talking about a matter that is not a political option. It is an issue where politicians must act in the light of the best technical information available," said Antonio Costa on Tuesday.

The National Council for Public Health will decide if all Portuguese schools will close immediately, thus anticipating Easter holidays.

A group of health professionals at Vila Nova de Famalicão Hospital is in isolation after contact with two suspected cases in Covid-19. The information was confirmed to the agency Lusa.

Metropolitano de Lisboa informed that it will reinforce the cleaning and disinfection of the spaces most frequented by passengers due to the new coronavirus.

According to the president of the Chinese League in Portugal, some shops and restaurants owned by the Chinese community living in Portugal will close for a vacation. In statements by Y Ping Chow to the Lusa agency, it is mainly family businesses that are, at this point, feeling "a big break in business, adding it is a temporary thing, they should open next month."

European Council met Tuesday by video conferencing. Four priorities were established: a) the exchange of information between the various countries to prevent the spread of the virus, b) the adoption of EU measures to ensure the supply of protective equipment individual and medical supplies, c) coordinated action to invest in research to find a coronavirus vaccine and, finally, and d) to ensure a clear response to prevent the epidemic from affecting family employment and income.

UK - British Health Minister Nadine Dorries was diagnosed with Covid-19. She has been in isolation since the test was positive and confirmed in a statement that he is following all the procedures. British health officials are trying to find people who may have been in contact with the minister in recent days. Last week she was with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson at a reception at Downing Street.

SPAIN - Spain has enacted exceptional measures especially in the Madrid region. All educational establishments are closed for 15 days and all sporting events take place behind closed doors.

ITALY- 168 people died with Covid-19 in Italy in the last 24 hours. The record number of fatalities in the past 24 hours brings the total number of fatalities in that country to 631. In total, Italy now has 10,149 confirmed cases of infection.

FRANCE - Air France suspends all flights to Italy between March 14 and April 3

SLOVENIA - announces closure of border with Italy

GREECE - closes all schools, including day care centre and universities, for two weeks to contain the spread of the new coronavirus.

10th March 0800 hrs

According to Director General of Health Portugal has 39 confirmed cases and 339 suspected.

National Plan for Preparing and Responding to Disease due to the new coronavirus, released on Monday states that the response to the virus is designed at three levels (each with two sub-levels): containment, extended containment and mitigation.

Portugal is currently in the second phase (orange), that is, Portugal has a moderate risk assessment. That means, that the country has imported cases but there is no direct transmission in the population.

Government also announced the suspension of all flights to or from the Italian airports of Milan-Malpensa, International Il Caravaggio (Bergamo) and International Marco Polo, which

serves the city of Venice This applies to the airports of Francisco Sá Carneiro, in Porto, Humberto Delgado, in Lisbon, and Internacional de Faro.

At the national level, the Minister of Internal Administration Eduardo Cabrita recommended the suspension of events in open spaces with more than 5000 people, and of events behind closed doors with more than 1000 participants, "in line with guidelines that have been taken in most European Union countries".

The director-general of Health announced that measures to contain the spread of the new coronavirus in Portugal are working, but she stressed that the country must be prepared for "all scenarios".

She added the situation in Portugal "is relatively controlled", since the country "has not had an explosion of positive cases" of infection, so "the containment is working" .

Despite this, the director-general of Health stressed that the country must be prepared to face "all scenarios", pointing out that "the pattern of disease spread" Covid-19, caused by the new coronavirus, "is different in different countries".

Thanks Freitas reiterated, flanked by the Secretary of State for Health, António Lacerda Sales, that measures to contain the spread of the new coronavirus will be adopted in proportion to the risk of infection.

The Director-General of Health exemplified that if there is a worsening of the epidemiological situation in Portugal, it may be necessary to "suspend non-urgent clinical activity" to free more hospital beds and more doctors and nurses to care for patients with Covid-19 .

According to Graça Freitas, the national contingency plan for Covid-19 stipulates that resources, such as hospitals and laboratories, and the "strategic reserves" of medications and personal protective equipment be adapted as "the disease evolves, for example. phases ".

9th March 0800 hrs

PORTUGAL

The Directorate-General for Health (DGS) announced today the closure of all schools and the suspension of activities in all leisure or cultural establishments in the municipalities of Lousada and Felgueiras, in the district of Porto .

The schools in Felgueiras and Lousada will not open this Monday. These municipalities are the main focus of propagation of Covid-19, in 19 of the 23 cases detected in the north. Public activities in spaces such as libraries, gyms, swimming pools and cinemas or venues for events are also suspended, reads the statement issued tonight by DGS.

"This measure is temporary and will last until the closure by the Health Authorities is lifted", he adds

DGS explained today that the chain of transmission of the coronavirus in Portugal is based on three people, three men. And there are two more people infected abroad who, so far, are not responsible for transmitting the virus in Portugal.

There are 412 people under surveillance, some at home and without special care, others being supervised by doctors (active surveillance), that is, they are in prophylactic isolation.

"For different people, different risks, counseling will necessarily have to be different. Nurses on the SNS 24 line have algorithms that run and advise according to the risk they identify for each person. After this counseling, there is a second level of screening, which is done at the residence of these people by health delegates, and there is a reinforcement of measures in relation to some people", explained Graça Freitas.

The age distribution of patients in Portugal is very varied, between 10 and 69 years old in males, with six of those infected between 40 and 49 years old. With regard to females, there are two cases between 40 and 49 years old and one between 70 and 79 years old, as many as in the 10-19, 30-39 and 60-69 age groups.

Meanwhile the president of the Portuguese Medical Association today called on all doctors to reinforce the response of public services to the new coronavirus, asking those outside the National Health Service to help, including pensioners.

In a letter sent to all doctors, the president Miguel Guimarães stresses that the appeal he makes has "a special relevance for doctors who have already left the NHS, namely retired people, but also for doctors who, being working in the NHS, can make an additional contribution, in case it becomes necessary".

In the North region, 646 contacts with the new virus were identified, of whom 296 people are in prophylactic isolation and active surveillance. There are 21 suspected cases awaiting laboratory results.

Doctors ask more hospitals to confirm tests

However, the Independent Doctors' Union (SIM) on Saturday called for more hospitals to have the means to confirm positive cases of infection with the new coronavirus. Currently there are only two cities across the country.

Although six hospitals have means of diagnosing biological samples, the reagents to be subject to confirmation, which allow us to conclude that they are positive cases, only exist at the Hospital de São João, in Porto, and at the Ricardo Jorge Institute, in Lisbon.

"The longer we take to confirm positive cases, the more people who have been in contact with positive ones remain in contact with third parties," said SIM president Jorge Roque da Cunha to Lusa.

If the means of confirmation exist in hospitals such as those in Faro, Aveiro, Coimbra or Portalegre, less time will be wasted before confirmation, he said

President of Republic in voluntary isolation

President of the Republic has suspended his agenda for two weeks due to the new coronavirus and will remain in isolation at home during this period.

In a note published on the Presidency website, it stated that the decision is related to the presence of a group of artists in the Palace of Belém, from a school that was closed following the internment of a student. The student interned with Covid-19 from that school did not participate in the visit.

The President explains that, having listened to the health authorities and despite not having any symptoms, he decided to cancel all public activity, which included several presences with large groups of people, as well as going to Belém during the next two weeks.

8th March

PORTUGAL - Visits to some hospitals, various educational establishments and prisons in the Northern region have been temporarily suspended, where 15 of the 21 patients with the new coronavirus are hospitalized. The goal is to slow the outbreak's progress according to the Minister of Health on 7th March.

Among the preventive measures in the face of the increase in Covid-19 cases in Portugal, announced this Saturday night by the Minister of Health, in a joint press conference with the Director-General of Health, Graça Freitas, is also the **closure** of the School of Idães, in Felgueiras, from the Faculty of Pharmacy of the University of Porto, the Institute of Biomedical Sciences Abel Salazar (ICBAS) of the University of Porto and the building where the History course at the University of Minho is taught.

Proactive closure of some institutions should be implemented at an early stage when the number of cases is still low," explained Marta Temido, detailing that the closure of educational establishments and the period during which they will be closed must be assessed "on a case-by-case basis" ", taking into account the epidemiological situation at regional and national levels.

The risk of the Covid-19 epidemic in Portugal will be reassessed in the coming hours and the measures announced could be extended in the coming days, admitted the Minister of Health.

The minister also said that, of the contacts of the 412 cases that are currently under surveillance by the health authorities in the country, there are more than 200 that have "connection to one of these cases".

"If the outbreak evolves, all NHS hospitals will be activated"

Ensuring that health authorities have already identified "the capacity of a set of hospitals" and pointing out the existence of first, second and third line units to respond to the outbreak, the minister stressed that "if the outbreak evolves, all hospitals in the National Health System will be activated "to respond to the epidemic," as is happening in other European countries ".

The Prime Minister, António Costa, guaranteed that Portugal is prepared for the coronavirus outbreak and reiterated his confidence in the National Health Service (SNS) and its professionals.

"We are able to deal with this outbreak and we will continue to respond, and I think we have every reason to have confidence in our National Health Service and, above all, in our health professionals", said António Costa, this Saturday, in Porto.

ITALY - he Italian government will ban entry and exit from Lombardy and 11 other nearby provinces as one of the new measures to limit the spread of the coronavirus, which has already caused 233 deaths and 5,061 infected across the country.

The measure, which may affect 16 million people, is contemplated in a decree that is being discussed in the Council of Ministers, whose content the Italian media has advanced.

The other provinces that have become "red zone" are Modena, Parma, Piacenza, Reggio Emilia, Rimini, Pesaro, Urbino, Venice, Padua, Treviso, Asti and Alessandria.

The decree also establishes the closure of all gyms, swimming pools and thermal centres in the mentioned areas, in addition to museums, cultural centres and ski resorts. Shopping

Shopping centers must be closed on weekends and school closures are extended until April 3.

Cultural, recreational, sporting and religious events are also suspended, both in public and private places, thus marriages and civil or religious funerals are canceled.

The restaurants and bars remain open, but with the obligation to keep a distance of one meter between customers.

7th March 0800 hrs

Portugal has resisted 13 confirmed infections of Covid-19 and 30 new suspected cases still under evaluation, reported today the Directorate-General for Health (DGS)

According to the bulletin on the epidemiological situation in Portugal, released by the DGS, the total number of suspected cases has been 181 since the beginning of the year, including the 30 who were waiting for results of laboratory tests today at the end of the day.

In the bulletin, DGS explains that of the 13 cases infected with the new coronavirus, which causes the disease called Covid-19, eight are in Porto, one in Coimbra and four in Lisbon.

Of the total cases, five are imported: one from Spain and four from Italy. Nine are men.

Also according to the bulletin, there were still 354 contacts under surveillance by health authorities.

GLOBALLY - More than 100,000 people have been diagnosed with the Covid-19 disease globally, with at least 3,070 deaths in China and 421 fatalities in other parts of the globe, most of them in Italy and Iran.

At least 1,200 of the new infections are in Iran in just the past 24 hours, the country's biggest jump since the outbreak began. Iran's health ministry on Friday noted that 124 people have died.

Twenty one people mostly crew members on Board the cruise vessel Grand Princess off the coast of California have been confirmed as Covid-19 cases. All 3,500 passengers and crew on board, which includes more than 140 Britons, will now be tested for Covid-19

Across EUROPE over the last 24 hrs there were significant rises in death tolls and infections. In France, where cases rose by 190 to 613, and deaths by two to nine, President Emmanuel Macron urged people to limit visits to elderly people, even though this could prove "heart breaking" at times. The UK, meanwhile, reported what is believed to be its second death, and the Netherlands its first.

Elsewhere, the first confirmed cases were reported in Costa Rica, Colombia, Cameroon, Togo, Serbia, Bhutan and Vatican City.

6th March 1000 Hrs

More than 3,500 passengers stranded on a cruise docked in California

The Grand Princess cruise ship, which was due to dock this weekend in San Francisco, is anchored off the California coast, with more than 3,500 passengers on board, after a 71-year-old man who had been on the vessel during a recent cruise to Mexico, died due to Covid-19.

On Thursday, US health officials conducted tests on board to determine whether the 2383 passengers and 1100 crew members had contracted the new coronavirus.

The ship's voyage was shortened after some of the passengers and crew showed symptoms of the infection.

PORTUGAL

Portugal has nine confirmed cases of Covid-19 and the suspected cases have increased by 30 from Wednesday to today.

According to a bulletin on the epidemiological situation in Portugal, released today by the Directorate-General for Health (DGS), the number of suspected cases is today 147, a figure since January this year. In Wednesday's bulletin, the suspected cases were 117 [an increase of 16 cases compared to Tuesday].

In the bulletin, DGS says that of the nine cases five are imported (Italy and Spain) and that the remaining four are cases linked to imported cases.

Five of the patients are hospitalized in Porto, one in Coimbra and three in Lisbon. Of the total there are eight men and one woman, all between 30 and 69 years old.

According to DGS, there are 213 contacts under surveillance by health authorities.

The Grão Vasco boarding school in Lisbon will be closed on Friday as a preventive measure after the mother of a student has been hospitalized with coronavirus, the director of the establishment told Lusa news agency. .

VATICAN - The Vatican confirmed the first case of infection with the new coronavirus, AFP said.

"This morning, all the services of the Vatican City State Health and Hygiene Directorate were temporarily suspended to sanitize the environments after a positive case for Covid-19 detected yesterday in a patient," said Matteo Bruni, quoted by the newspaper La Repubblica. He also said that the planned health protocols were activated.

The European Commission guaranteed this Friday "to do everything it can" to overcome the outbreak of the new coronavirus "as soon as possible", stressing that this is a "fundamental moment" for the countries of the European Union (EU) to adopt measures.

"I want to take this opportunity to send my condolences to all those affected by this recent outbreak and to ensure that we are doing everything possible, as the European Commission and with the Member States, to overcome it as soon as possible. ", declared the European Commissioner of Health, Stella Kyriakides.

5th March 0800 hrs No.39

The number of confirmed cases in Portugal has increased to six.

Three are imported from citizens arriving from Italy and one from Spain and the other two contracted from a confirmed case locally.

Of the six confirmed cases, five are men. The new confirmed case in the Lisbon region is a woman.

There are 16 more suspected cases, in a total of 117 suspected cases since January this year.

The Prime Minister announced, on Wednesday afternoon, the launch of a credit line to support treasury to companies affected by the economic impact of the outbreak of the new coronavirus, if necessary, in the initial amount of 100 million euros.

In the biweekly debate in Parliament, António Costa dedicated his initial intervention to the Covid-19 epidemic, noting that "the economic impact for Portuguese companies has been moderate or reduced".

The Ministry of Defence issued a statement indicating the availability of the military to support the prevention and fight against the new coronavirus.

If necessary, and if there is a request from the Directorate-General for Health, the military is ready to help with the necessary means to intervene, namely: isolation facilities, personnel with specific training and material for the individual protection of military personnel that may be identified as suspected cases of Covid-19 infection.

SPAIN announces second death from covid-19 infection. More than 200 cases confirmed

An 82-year-old man, infected with the new coronavirus, died this Wednesday in Spain, bringing the number of covid-19 victims in the country to two.

The announcement was made by the Ministry of Health, which confirmed the existence of more than 200 cases of the disease. Of the cases announced, 13 were registered in Andalusia, two in Asturias, five in the Balearics, seven in the Canary Islands, 10 in Cantabria, 12 in Castilla-La Mancha, 11 in Castile and Leon, 15 in Catalonia, 19 in the Valencian Community, six in Extremadura, 70 in Madrid, three in Navarra, 17 in the Basque Country and three in La Rioja.

ITALY - In Italy, in the last 24 hours, 587 new cases of Covid-19 infection emerged and the death toll reached 107. The country currently records 3089 cases of coronavirus. The country will close all schools and universities until March 15, announced the Italian Minister of Education, Lucia Azzolina.

TRAVEL A telephone line to clarify travellers concerned about the Covid-19 epidemic has been launched by consumer protection association Deco, which received 50 requests for information last week.

The line "Doubts about COVID-19 travel", available by phone number 21 371 02 82, aims to offer consumers legal (and not health) clarification to travelers who, in the current outbreak

caused by the new coronavirus, want to clarify doubts about scheduled trips and any cancellations.

EU - A second case of coronavirus has been identified, among officials at Brussels institutions. This is a European Council official who is infected with the coronavirus.

4th March 0800 hrs No.38

The global death toll is 3,190 while more than 93,000 people have been infected in more than 80 countries. In China there have been 38 new deaths bringing the total to 2,981 and there are 80,270 cases in all.

South Korea, the nation worst hit by the outbreak outside China, reported 516 new cases on Wednesday, bringing its total to 5,328. In India, 15 Italian citizens have tested positive. There have been more infections recorded in Australia, Japan and New Zealand.

The World Health Organization chief, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, has warned that masks, goggles and other protective equipment used by health workers are running out amid panic buying. "We can't stop Covid-19 without protecting our health workers," he said. The prices of surgical masks had increased six fold while the cost of ventilators had tripled, he said.

PORTUGAL The number of confirmed cases in Portugal has increased to five all males, two of whom contracted the virus in Italy and Spain

Prime Minister António Costa opens today the biweekly debate in parliament with an intervention on "the prevention and containment of the Covid-19 epidemic", in the week in which four cases of infection were confirmed in Portugal.

The topic will be debated in parliament in the week in which the first four cases of infected with the new coronavirus in Portugal were confirmed, three admitted to hospitals in Porto and one at Hospital Curry Cabral.

The "In the whole country, we have 2,000 beds referred to as being reserved for people who have the coronavirus. Of these 2,000, we have 300 for intensive care. The National Health Service itself, in its hospital sphere, has the capacity to expand through the reorganization of its patients. services," said António Costa, who visited the Centro Hospitalar Universitário de São João (CHUSJ), in Porto.

3rd March 0800 hrs No.37

The level of risk of contracting coronavirus within Europe has been raised to moderate to high, as the global death toll swept past 3,000 and continued to rise.

"The virus is spreading very fast," the European commission president, Ursula von der Leyen, said after the latest assessment by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. Hours later Italy, which has the third highest number of cases worldwide, announced its deaths from the virus had jumped 18 to 52.

Indonesia, Russia, Ireland, Portugal, Jordan, Iceland, Tunisia, Senegal, Saudi Arabia and Andorra all confirmed their first cases.

Official statistics indicate that within the EU, the European economic area and the UK, 2,199 people have so far contracted the Covid-19 virus

PORTUGAL – There are now two confirmed cases of the virus in Portugal. The Covid-19 outbreak led to the cancellation, in the last hours, of 11 pilgrimages already scheduled by groups organized at the Pilgrim Reception Department at the Sanctuary of Fátima, the institution said.

According to Carmo Rodeia, director of the Communication Office of the Sanctuary of Fátima, the cancellation of these 11 pilgrimages was justified “by the epidemic” “and with the mobility difficulties from the countries of origin”.

Five pilgrimages were cancelled in March (three from South Korea and two from Italy) three in April (two groups from South Korea and one from Brazil) and three pilgrimages in May (two groups from Korea and one from Guatemala).

IRAN - The UN World Health Organization sent its first planeload of assistance as the official death toll in Iran was raised to 66 – the highest outside China – with 1,501 confirmed cases.

SPAIN - It was reported that the number of cases had doubled from Saturday to 120 on Monday,

FRANCE - The number of confirmed cases in France jumped from 100 to 130 in 24 hours, with a woman in her eighties who lived in Crepy-en-Valois, north-east of Paris, where a 60-year-old teacher died last week, becoming the third fatality.

USA - Six people have died from coronavirus in the US state of Washington, according to health officials, bringing the total to eight. The total number of infections in the state was now 18, according to officials.

WTO - The coronavirus outbreak will have a "substantial" impact on the global economy, according to the head of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

"The effects on the global economy are ... likely to be substantial and will start to show up in the trade data in the weeks to come," Roberto Azevedo said on Monday.

2nd March 0800 hrs No 36

To date there have been 88,362 confirmed cases worldwide, including 3,000 fatalities. Of these 79,824 and 2870 respectively are in China. A total of 41,825 have recovered.

PORTUGAL registered in the last 24 hours 15 new SUSPECTED cases of infection with the new coronavirus, raising the total to 85, of whom 73 were negative and the remaining 12 are awaiting results, announced today by the Directorate-General of the (DGS). Of all those tested so far there are NO confirmed cases in Portugal.

The Directorate-General for Health (DGS) is in contact with the Spanish Health Authorities, after the writer Luís Sepúlveda, who was present at the festival Correntes de Escrita, in Póvoa de Varzim, have been infected by the new coronavirus.

ITALY - In a statement released today, DGS states that the Health Authority of the Northern Region has already started an “epidemiological investigation”, that is, it is identifying the close contacts of Luís Sepúlveda and his wife, who were in Portugal from 18 to 23 February.

The number of people infected in Italy with the new coronavirus rose by 50 percent to 1,694 in just 24 hours, the head of the Civil Protection Agency said.

GERMANY The number of people in Germany infected rose to 129 on Sunday, up from 66 on Saturday,

Five more people died, bringing the total number of deaths to 34, according to Italian authorities.

The Scottish government reported its first case of coronavirus. The patient, who is a resident of the Tayside area, had recently travelled from northern Italy, the government said.

France has 130 confirmed cases of coronavirus, the head of the public health service, Jerome Salomon, said, raising the toll from 100 a day earlier.

1st March 0800 hrs No 35

The Madeira health authorities validated the first suspected case of infection with the new coronavirus, indicating that it is a patient from Milan, Italy.

"The patient will remain in hospital isolation and biological samples will be collected for analysis", says the Madeira Health Administration Institute (IASAÚDE), in a press release.

So far, 70 suspected cases have been registered, 67 of which have been negative after laboratory tests, pending results from the rest. Eleven new cases were registered in the last 24 hours.

The DGS maintained on Friday the risk of the epidemic for public health at "moderate to high".

FRANCE has 100 confirmed cases of coronavirus, the head of the public health service, Jerome Salomon, said, raising the tally from 73.

Of those cases, two people have died, 12 have recovered and 86 are in hospital, nine of them in a serious condition, Salomon told journalists in a daily news briefing about the outbreak.

ITALY - The number of cases of the new coronavirus in Italy has exceeded 1,000, the health ministry said, with the death toll rising by eight to 29 in the past 24 hours.

The number of cases reached 1,128 since the start of the epidemic, up from 888 on Friday, although 52 percent of those tested show few to no symptoms, the Italian health authorities said.

FRANCE - The French government banned public gatherings with more than 5,000 people on Saturday due to the coronavirus outbreak as France reported 16 new cases.

"All public gatherings of more than 5,000 people in a confined space are temporarily banned across France," Health Minister Olivier Veran told journalists. He also that the number of confirmed cases had risen to 73 and that there had been no new deaths.