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Stiffer restrictions in Greece due to resurgent coronavirus outbreak



Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis on Thursday said his government wants to avoid a nationwide “lockdown”, amid a resurgent coronavirus pandemic in the country, with single-day confirmed instances now exceeding 1,000 — at the same time when they only reached into the low single-digit numbers last spring.

Another three regions in the country, the greater Thessaloniki area, central Larissa prefecture and more rural Rhodopi prefecture, in the northeast, were declared in the “red zone” on Thursday, meaning much stricter measures due to increased cases of Covid-19 infections. The highest emergency level means that all activity except in the retail sector and schools will be suspended, while masks are mandatory in public places, whether inside or outdoors.

A day earlier, confirmed instances reached 1,547, the highest single-day number ever recorded in Greece since the outbreak. Another 10 related fatalities were also reported, bringing the Covid-19 related death toll in the country to 608.

The negative development also has repercussions on places of worship.

According to an encyclical issued on Thursday by the Holy Synod of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Greece, the number of worshipers inside churches located in “level 4” areas cannot exceed nine, and with a minimum distance between them of one and a half meters.