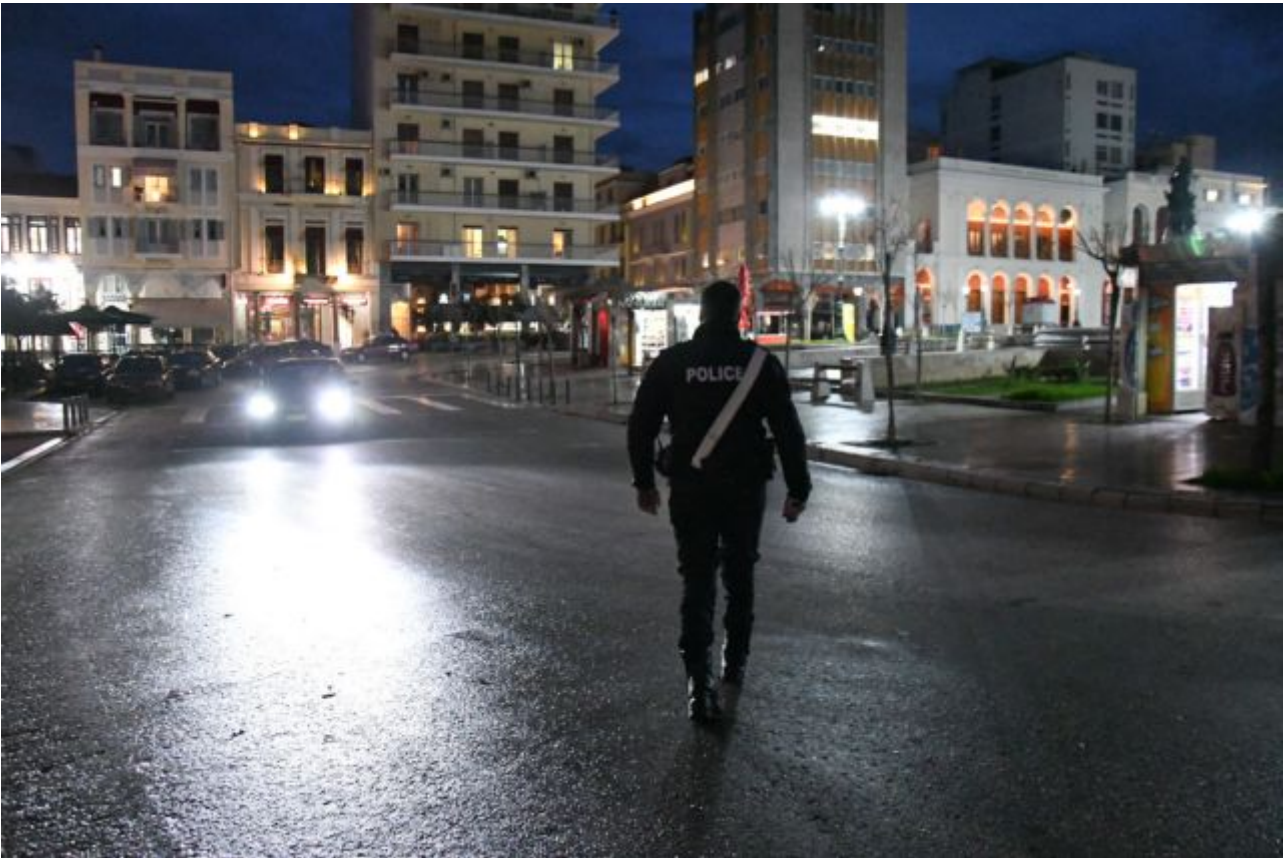


Covid-19 surge fueling speculation of stricter lockdown across Greece



Concerns increased in Greece towards the end of the week amid a recent surge in the number of confirmed single-day instances of the Covid-19 virus, as well as the appearance of other, more menacing, strains of the coronavirus in the country.

Several proposals are on the table for the imposition – as of Monday – of even stricter curbs on outdoor movement and public assembly, while in some regions, the government and public health authorities may move towards a so-called hard lockdown. Another proposal calls for a curfew on non-essential movement outdoors from 6 p.m. to 5 a.m. on the weekends.

On Thursday, 1,070 new confirmed instances were reported, with nearly half in the greater Athens area.

On its part, the Church of Greece is also awaiting word of new or stricter measures.

In a related development, debate was held today at the Council of State, Greece's highest administrative court, over appeals filed by the Church of Greece and individual Metropolises in the country against state-imposed and pandemic-related restrictions on Church-going, as well as the holding of sacraments, such as marriage and baptism.