**Poland shuts borders as coronavirus spreads**

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Poland on Sunday temporarily closed its borders to non-residents in a move to **curb the spread** of the coronavirus.

Announcing the [move](https://www.polskieradio.pl/395/7784/Artykul/2473216,UPDATE-Poland-closing-borders-as-coronavirus-spreads) on Friday evening, Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki said: “With the security of the Polish people in mind, we will introduce full controls at all our borders … initially for 10 days, with a possible extension to 20 days and then by another month."

Most international flights and train services have been suspended after the country declared a state of "**epidemic emergency.”**

But charter flights will be allowed in so that Poles abroad can return home, officials have said.

Morawiecki told reporters on Saturday that the government would charter [special flights](https://www.polskieradio.pl/395/7989/Artykul/2473828,Gov%E2%80%99t-to-help-fly-Poles-home-as-borders-close-PM) to help Poles come home as borders close **amid fears** of the coronavirus.

Polish citizens returning from abroad will have to **undergo a 14-day quarantine** after crossing the border.

Those heading home from abroad by car will be **subjected to strict checks.**

The country’s borders will stay open to the movement of goods.

Foreigners with **residence and work permits** will be allowed to enter, as will spouses and children of Polish citizens, officials have said.

Denmark, Poland and Czechs **seal borders** over coronavirus EU states risk economic damage and shrug off Brussels warning against bans The **sweeping moves** by the three countries escalate an EU member state revolt against Brussels warnings to avoid blanket travel bans © Denmark, Poland and the Czech Republic are to **shut their borders** in response to the coronavirus threat, as nations risk economic damage and political tensions in their battle to stop the pandemic’s spread across Europe. The sweeping moves by the three countries escalate an EU member state revolt against Brussels warnings to avoid blanket travel bans and co-ordinate emergency action.  The bans, with only very **limited exemptions**, amount to **a repudiation** of Ursula von der Leyen, European Commission president, who on Friday urged member states to take a **proportionate and co-operative approach.**  “Certain controls may be justified, but general travel bans are not seen as being the most effective by the World Health Organization,” Ms von der Leyen told reporters. “Moreover, they have a strong social and economic impact, they disrupt people’s lives and business across the borders.”  I know that the series of actions [we are taking] looks very severe and it will be experienced as severe, but I am convinced that it is worth it. Mette Frederiksen, Denmark's prime minister Mette Frederiksen, Denmark's centre-left prime minister, said her country was in “unknown territory” and would close its borders to almost all foreigners on Saturday for at least a month. The army will be **deployed to patrol the frontier**.  The border controls will apply to land, air and sea traffic from midday on Saturday and will last until April 13, with entry allowed for Danes, food, medicine and components needed for manufacturers.  “We are in the middle of something none of us has ever tried before,” Ms Frederiksen said at a press conference on Friday night. “Right now, I know that the series of actions [we are taking] looks very severe and it will be experienced as severe, but I am convinced that it is worth it.”  Denmark has by far both the most confirmed novel coronavirus cases and the highest infection rate of the four countries who have sealed their borders, with a tally of more than 780 late on Friday. Neighbouring Germany had more than 3,100 cases, but its population is almost 15 times larger. Sweden’s state epidemiologist criticised Denmark’s move as “completely meaningless”. Anders Tegnell added Sweden was highly unlikely to follow suit: “I have a very hard time seeing how it could help us. There is no research that shows that. On contrary, it would hurt us economically.” The quartet who have closed their frontiers are all members of the 26-country Schengen passport-free travel zone, which is the subject of a US travel ban due to come into force in the early hours of the European morning on Saturday. Poland's premier Mateusz Morawiecki announced a ban on foreigners entering the state and a suspension of international air and rail connections as his country strove to meet the “social challenge” of the virus’s proliferation in Europe.  While the number of confirmed cases of infection in Poland (68) remained relatively low, he said that the country needed to act fast to prevent a repeat of the **tightening of the virus’ grip** seen elsewhere in Europe. Recommended Coronavirus Italy wonders where Europe’s solidarity is as coronavirus strains show The measures — which include a **mandatory two-week quarantine** for Poles returning from abroad — will initially apply for 10 days, but can be extended by a further 20 and then another month if necessary.  “Our biggest asset will be calmness, calmness which leads to Poland getting through this epidemic in a safer manner than most European countries,” he said.  Andrej Babis, prime minister of the Czech Republic, said his country would all but close its borders from Monday, **barring all foreigners except for** those with Czech residence permits. Citizens will also be banned from travelling abroad, except for those in border areas who work in neighbouring countries.  The republic’s neighbour Slovakia on Thursday limited entries to the country to people with residence permits. It also imposed a mandatory 14-day quarantine for everyone returning from abroad.