



# GMS Flash Alert

Immigration Edition

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## Czech Republic - Emergency Measures Imposed by Government to Confront COVID-19 Crisis

In connection with the announcement of a state of emergency,<sup>1</sup> in this *GMS Flash Alert* we summarise the basic restrictions for Czech citizens and foreign nationals permanently staying or working in the Czech Republic or planning to come to the Czech Republic.

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### WHY THIS MATTERS

In addition to cancelling business trips abroad, it will also be necessary to consider earlier returns of employees from their assignments abroad. Once they return to the Czech Republic they will have to follow the relevant instructions of the authorities and undergo respective quarantine measures that concern all high-risk regions as of now.

Further cancellations and other reductions in services by Czech Republic consular missions are quite possible in the near future. Foreign nationals with upcoming visa appointments should consult with their qualified immigration counsel. Regarding the temporary suspension of new applications for residence permits and the interruption or stoppage of the handling of already-submitted applications, we can expect delays in relocating employees from abroad.

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### Highlights of Emergency Actions

#### Restrictions on Travel, Entry/Exit

Effective from Saturday, 14 March 2020, temporary restrictions have been introduced in the Czech Republic that are

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intended to stop the spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus).

A government decree<sup>2</sup> has introduced the following restrictions:

- All foreign nationals trying to enter the Czech Republic from [high-risk countries](#) are not to be allowed to enter – this restriction does not apply to foreign nationals who hold some type of long-term residence permit issued by the Czech authorities (i.e., a temporary residence permit, a long-term residence permit/visa or a permanent residence permit). Foreign nationals holding one of these permits, however, are subject to quarantine measures upon entering the Czech Republic.
- At the same time, all Czech citizens and foreign nationals holding a residence permit issued by Czech authorities are prohibited from traveling to the high-risk countries.
- Czech “representations” abroad (i.e., embassies and consulates) will neither accept nor handle visa applications and applications for residence permits until further notice.
- Any proceedings handling applications submitted to the Czech representations abroad before the in-force date of this measure have been interrupted; the proceedings that are handling applications for short-term visas are suspended.

Exceptions from the above measures may be made; however, in general, only foreign nationals not holding long-term Czech residence permits or Czech citizens holding a residence permit issued by one of the high-risk countries are allowed to travel to the high-risk regions.

## **Border Closure**

The above measures were further tightened effective from Monday, 16 March 2020, when the Czech borders were closed. Essentially, the borders are closed – with some exceptions for certain cross-border movements – and will remain so until further notice.

Citizens of the Czech Republic and foreign nationals holding residence permits issued by Czech authorities are not allowed to leave the territory of the Czech Republic unless an extraordinary situation is concerned. Only Czech citizens and foreign nationals holding a permanent residence permit or a temporary residence permit for more than 90 days issued by the Czech authorities who were outside the Czech Republic at the moment the state of emergency was announced should be allowed to return to the Czech Republic. Exceptions from this measure are allowed (e.g., some cases of cross-border employment).

## **Restrictions on Permits and Applications**

For foreign nationals living in the Czech Republic based on a valid residence permit, certain restrictions have been introduced. The Ministry of the Interior will only accept mailed applications for example, for residence permit extensions. The deadlines are automatically extended for submissions requiring personal participation/attendance by law. All existing reservations have been cancelled and a personal visit will only be allowed if it concerns registration upon arrival, acquisition of biometric data, issuance of residence permits, and issuance of a bridging label, where supported by the proof of travel.

## FOOTNOTES:

1 For information (in English) on measures being taken by the Czech government, see the webpage "[New obligations and information for foreign nationals - prevention against spread of COVID-19](#)" of the Czech Republic's Ministerstvo vnitra.

In addition, for the various efforts/activities by the Czech government to control and prevent the spread of COVID-19, in chronological order (including the declaration of the state of emergency), see the [webpage](#) provided by the U.S. Embassy in the Czech Republic.

Also, for a "FAQs" on the impact of the Czech State of Emergency on U.S. citizens, see the [webpage](#) provided by the U.S. Embassy in the Czech Republic.

2 See (in Czech) "[Decree of the Government of the Czech Republic of 12 March 2020 No. 198 on the adoption of crisis measures.](#)"

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## RELATED RESOURCE:

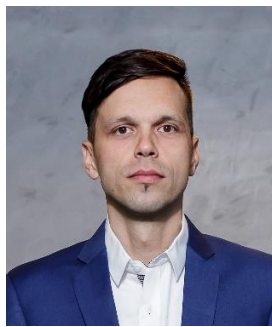
Excerpted, with permission, from "Flash News: Closure of Borders – Overview of Adopted Measures," (March 2020), a publication of the KPMG International member firm in the Czech Republic.

## Contact us

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**The information contained in this newsletter was submitted by the KPMG International member firm in the Czech Republic.**

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