



GMS Flash Alert

Immigration Edition

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Czech Republic - COVID-19: Extended State of Emergency and Related Measures

The Czech Parliament has approved an extension of the state of emergency through 30 April 2020.¹

Previously, on 12 March 2020, the Czech government had originally announced the state of emergency valid for 30 days, i.e., until 11 April 2020.¹ (For prior coverage, see GMS [Flash Alert 2020-072](#), 19 March 2020.)

Along with the extension of the state of emergency, the government presented new and/or updated measures and restrictions. Even though certain restrictions remain unchanged to mitigate the risk of further spread of the virus, a new approach for foreigners and Czech citizens allowing them to enter or leave the Czech Republic is also being put in place.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The extension of the lockdown and the associated travel restrictions will continue to impact on employers and their globally-mobile employees between the Czech Republic and countries around the world.

Until the government decides it is safe to rescind or roll-back current restrictions, extensive remote working is a “best practice” for globally-mobile employees, to the extent possible, and is a way for employers to foster the safety of their employees and help ensure business continuity.

However, the loosening of the rules around cross-border commuters and business travelers where travel to neighbouring countries is concerned, should help ease the pressures and strains on cross-border business operations and activities. Companies should make sure their workers who are cross-border commuters are indeed eligible to cross the border for work and adhere to border crossing rules and requirements.

Summary of Existing Restrictions

- **Closure of Borders** – The borders remain closed until further notice and individuals can enter/leave the Czech Republic only on an exceptional basis.
- **Restrictions on Permits and Applications** – Czech embassies are not accepting visa applications. The approval process in respect of ongoing applications has been suspended or revoked depending on the application type.

Entering and Leaving the Czech Republic

The government permits Czech citizens to return to the Czech Republic. Repatriation flights have been organised. The holders of Czech residence permits can enter the Czech Republic if they left the country before the state of emergency was announced. Moreover, family members of Czech or EU citizens can enter the Czech Republic if they have proof of their relationship to a Czech citizen or EU citizen staying in the Czech Republic legally, e.g., a birth certificate, marriage certificate.

Partial Relief of Lockdown and Quarantine

All individuals entering the Czech Republic are subject to a mandatory 14-day quarantine. There are exceptions.

As of 14 April 2020, the country lockdown was partially relieved. Czech citizens can travel abroad in justified cases which includes necessary employment-related travel or an emergency situation involving their families residing abroad. Due to numerous requests from families divided by the lockdown, the authorities are easing the rules on trips outside of the Czech Republic for family members who need to meet with their family members abroad in exceptional situations such as a funeral or due to serious health concerns. Czech citizens can travel abroad for 24 hours without having to observe a quarantine after their return.

The government also presented new plans for lockdown relief with plans for opening the country's borders in June. It is anticipated that further details will be presented in the upcoming weeks depending on the evolution of statistics related to COVID-19 in the country.

Cross-Border Commuters

Based on a definition by the Czech Ministry of Interior, a commuter is a person who crosses borders with the Czech Republic's neighbouring countries (Poland, Slovakia, Germany, and Austria) regularly, but he/she does not have a permanent residence in the country where he/she works. These commuters can enter and leave the Czech Republic under specific conditions. They are allowed to work in a neighbouring country for two weeks or for longer. After their return to the Czech Republic, they are subject to a mandatory two-week quarantine. Subsequent to the completion of that quarantine, they are permitted to work abroad again.

There are exceptions for workers in critical infrastructure such as medical staff and social workers who can cross borders regularly without being subject to mandatory quarantine. Such an approach was adopted following negotiations between the governments of the Czech Republic, Austria, and Germany.

Adoption of EU Measures

The Czech Republic is also following the guidelines published by the European Commission³. Border patrol is monitoring the database of commuters to facilitate their trips outside of the country and back. Moreover, transport workers can cross the borders as a means of ensuring the free movement of goods.⁴

FOOTNOTES:

- 1 See the following article, “Czech lawmakers extend state of emergency until April 30,” in *Reuters* (7 April 2020) at: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-czech-emergency/czech-lawmakers-extend-state-of-emergency-until-april-30-idUSKBN21P2N0> . (Note that this is a 3rd party (non-governmental, non-KPMG) website. Providing this link does not represent an endorsement of this website by KPMG.)
- 2 See o přijetí krizového opatření at: https://www.vlada.cz/assets/media-centrum/aktualne/Opatreni-o-zakazu-vstupu-do-CR-a-cestovani-do-rizikovych-zemi_1.pdf .
- 3 See “Communication from the Commission Guidelines concerning the exercise of the free movement of workers during COVID-19 out” at: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52020XC0330\(03\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52020XC0330(03)) .
- 4 See the European Commission 16 March 2020 press release at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_468 .

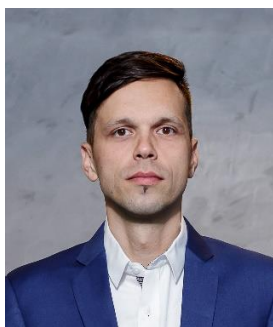
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Contact us

For additional information or assistance, please contact your local GMS or People Services professional* or one of the following professionals with the KPMG International member firm in the Czech Republic:



Barbora Cvinerová
Tel. + 420 222 123 867
bcvinerova@kpmg.cz



Pavel Gorel
Tel. + 420 222 123 523
pgorel@kpmg.cz



Tereza Chovanec Kralova
Tel. + 420 222 124 272
tchovanec@kpmg.cz

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