

Beat: Politics

Spain closes its land borders

To contain the expansion of the COVID-19

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USPA NEWS - Spanish Government has decreed the re-establishment of land border controls within the framework of the measures to contain COVID-19. This measure came into force at midnight on Monday and continue while the state of emergency remains in effect.

The aim of the measures, like the rest of the resolutions adopted within the scope of the Royal Decree declaring the state of emergency, is to protect the health and safety of citizens and contain coronavirus, says Moncloa Palace in a press release. Specifically, as from midnight on Monday, only Spanish citizens, residents in Spain, cross-border workers and those that can provide documentary evidence, causes of force majeure or an imperative need will be allowed into Spain by land borders.

The ruling states that this restriction will not apply to the transport of goods "in order to ensure the continuity of economic activity and to maintain the supply chain," added Spanish Government. Nor does the measure affect foreigners accredited as members of diplomatic missions, consular offices and international bodies located in Spain, provided that their movements are related to the performance of their official duties. Accordingly, Article 28 of the Schengen Borders Code is activated, which allows the temporary re-establishment of internal border controls in situations such as the current one.

Protection of health

The ruling explains that the measures adopted under the Royal Decree on the state of emergency to tackle COVID-19 as well as those decreed to the same end by other Member States of the European Union and by third countries, "will directly or indirectly entail serious restrictions on mobility within the country, and on arrivals and departures." The re-establishment of land borders is adopted in light of the need to "enable the possibility to restrict the movements of people that will not have continuity until the point of scheduled departure, either because this is incompatible with the measures adopted within Spanish territory or because this is not possible within or towards other countries." The need to "prioritise more urgent movements of people and goods" was also taken into account within the framework of the tasks to contain the virus.

The decision was notified to the relevant bodies of the European Commission, to the rest of the Member States of the European Union and to States associated with Schengen. On Monday morning, the minister took part in a meeting by video-conference with the Ministers for Home Affairs and for Health of the rest of the EU countries, where he announced Spain's intention to re-establish land border controls.

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