Slovenia brings in curfew to fight virus surge

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The Slovenian government announced Monday a nationwide curfew and an internal travel ban as the country fights to bring down a surge in coronavirus cases.

Starting Tuesday, Slovenia's roughly two million inhabitants will have to stay at home between 9:00 pm and 6:00 am, under the terms of a new

government decree.

The emergency services and those who have to travel for work will be exempted.

The government also lowered the limit for private gatherings from 10 people to six and banned all but essential travel between the country's 12 regions.

As of Monday only elementary school pupils from the first to fifth grade have been attending classes in person. Older school pupils and university students are receiving classes online.

The new restrictions have been put in place after new infections more than doubled over the last week and those needing hospital treatment exceeded the number of beds set aside for coronavirus patients.

Like several other countries in the region Slovenia successfully contained the first wave of the coronavirus in spring, but has been unable to stop a surge of new cases in recent weeks.

So far Slovenia has registered over 13,500 cases of the novel coronavirus while 190 people have died, according to official data.

On Saturday, health authorities said the volume of new cases meant they would no longer be able to carry out contact tracing of every new case but would instead ask those who test positive to inform close contacts themselves.

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