Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said on Tuesday that the Italian government had raised the fine for those who violated the lock-in order and hoped that he would lift the restrictions as soon as possible.

Anyone found to have left without cause will face a fine of 400 to 3000 euros (\$430 to \$3227), compared with 206 euros, Conte said in a televised speech.

All non essential businesses were ordered to close until April 3, when people were told to stay at home.

Speculation is that the date will be delayed, with a decree issued on Tuesday giving the government the power to extend the deadline to July 31.

However, Conte denied that he planned to maintain the blockade until then, saying he hoped to ease restrictions "before then.".