

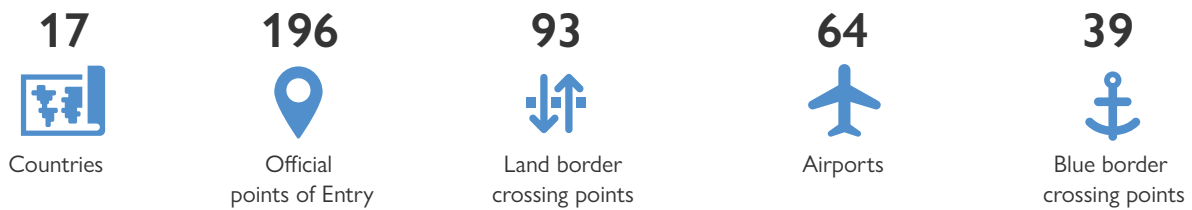
Tracking Mobility Impact - Points of Entry Analysis

May 7, 2020 IOM Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa

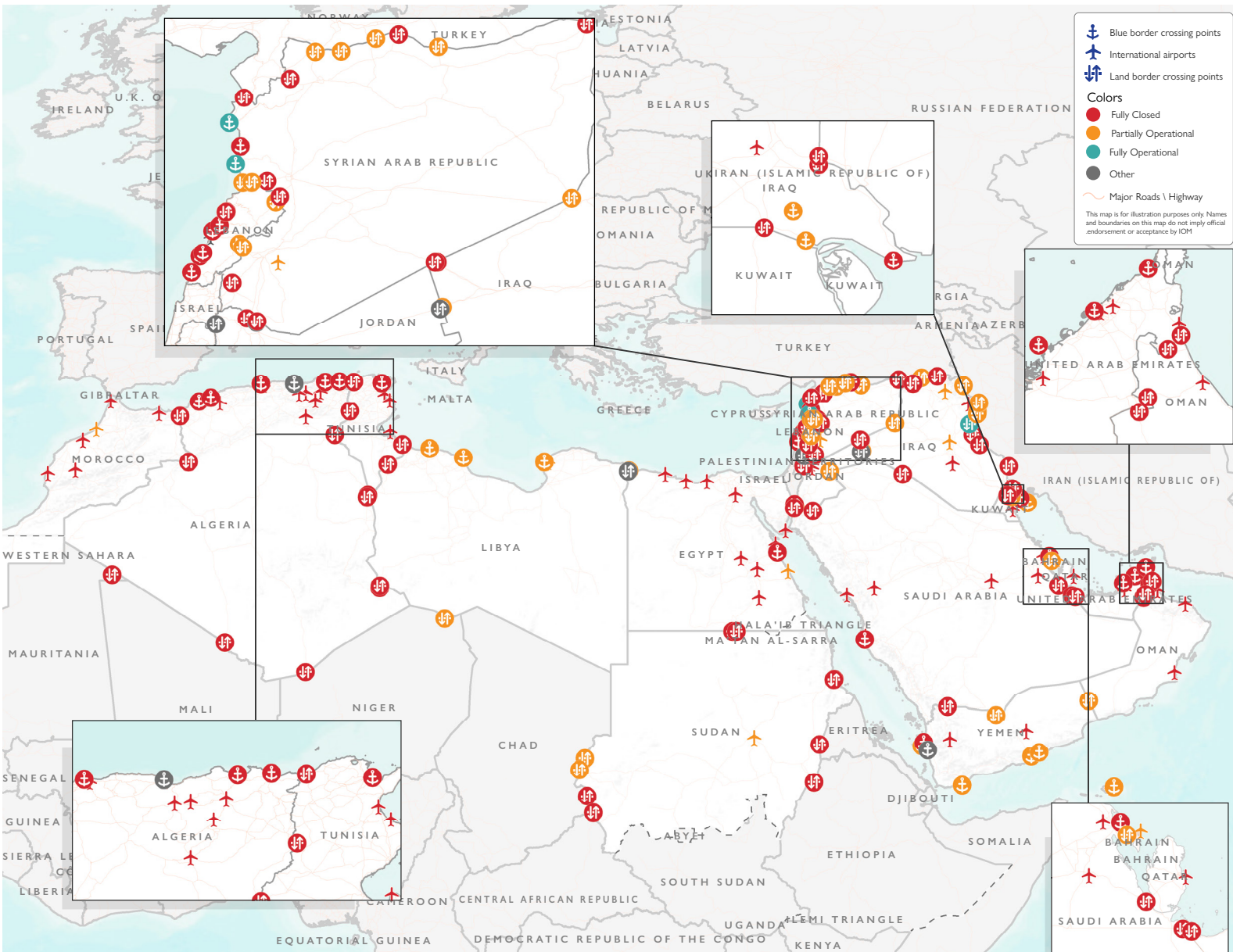
According to the World Health Organization (WHO) the total cases confirmed reached 130,492 as of 11 May 2020. A total of 2,067 have succumbed to the disease, while 38,452 have recovered as of 11 May. The outbreak of the virus has affected global and regional mobility in the form of various travel disruptions and restrictions.

To better understand how the pandemic affects global mobility, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has developed an online tool and database to register points of entry, exit and transit – such as airports, land and blue border crossing points where mobility restrictions and preparedness and response measures are in place to prevent, protect against, control and provide a public health response that is in line with International Health Regulations (IHR). These include: (1) Movement restrictions on entry and/or exit, (2) Changes in visa requirements, (3) Restrictions applied to certain nationalities to disembark at this location, (4) Changes in identification documents needed to disembark, (5) Medical measures applied such as Health Staffing/Medical Personnel, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE), Infection prevention and control (IPC) and Surveillance and Referral.

Between 8 March and 7 May 2020, data was collected on 196 official locations across 17 countries across the region. These locations include: 93 land border crossings points, 64 airports, 39 blue border crossing points (including sea, river and lake ports). This work is based on the information collected by IOM Country offices in the Middle East and North Africa.



Overview of monitored International Airports, Land border crossing points and Blue border crossing points in MENA



Country Level Restriction Measures

In the region, only 3 countries, Kuwait, Qatar and Yemen are applying total restrictions and closures and 14 are applying partial restrictions. Of the countries that applied complete or partial measures, 9 have declared a national emergency. However, the national emergency measure does not necessarily coincide with the outbreak of the pandemic and may be an extension of previous security measures, as in the case of Tunisia. Implementation of complete restrictions means no movement is permitted within the country, while implementation of partial restrictions means some movement is permitted.

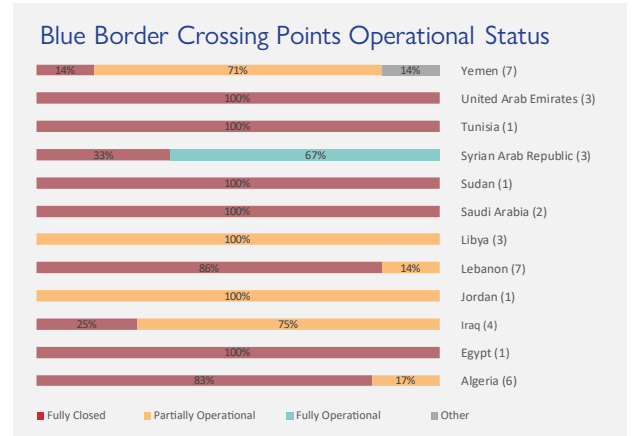
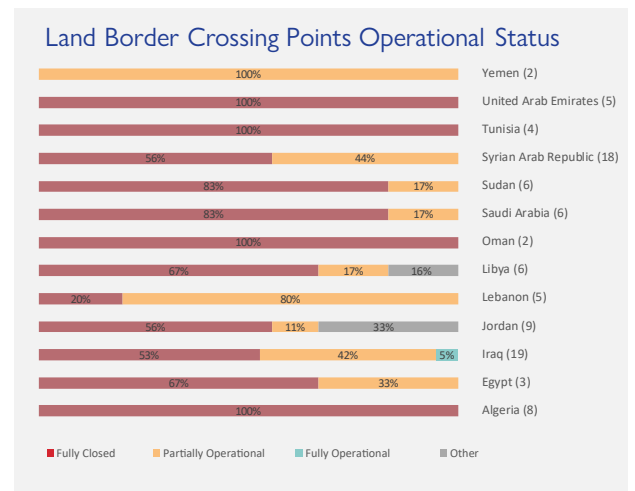
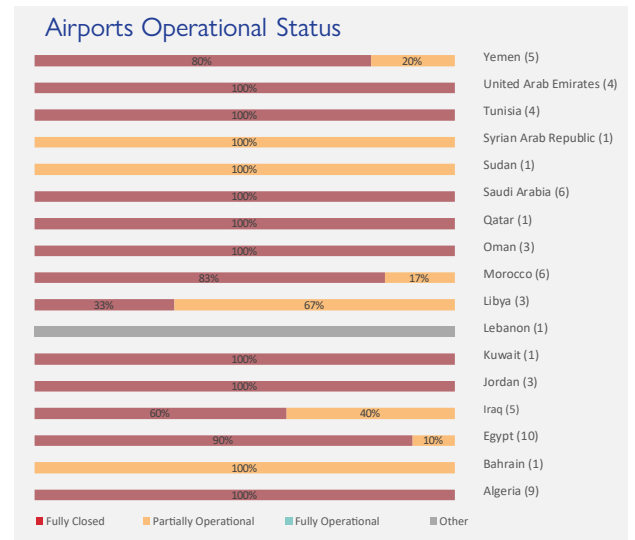
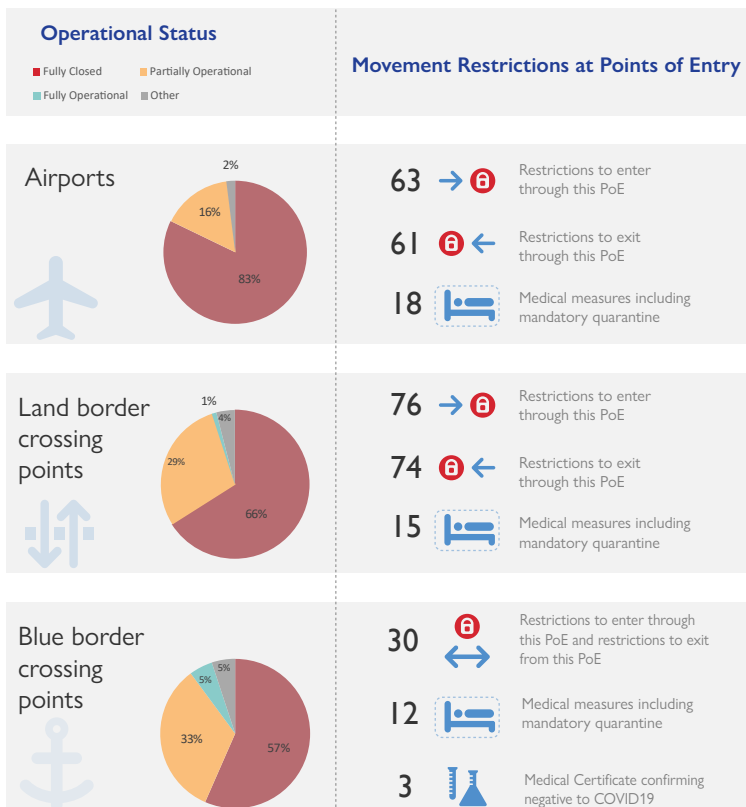
The most common measures implemented are with respect to visa changes/restrictions. These include “leniency towards or removal of fines for visa overstay, expiration of residency or work permit” applied by eight countries, “temporary opening of the borders to allow otherwise stranded migrants to go home” in seven countries and “automatic visa extension” applied by four countries, and reflects the willingness of states to protect and respect the rights of people affected by the restrictions.

Points of Entry

IOM is currently monitoring 64 airports in the region, 93 land border crossing points and 39 blue border crossing points. This analysis focuses on the official Points of Entry (PoE) in the countries; nevertheless, we acknowledge the presence of at least 28 unofficial Points of Entry in the region, consisting of 23 land border crossing points and 5 blue border crossing points.

The following information on PoE such as their operational status, restriction measures and medical measures is collected on the statuses of: (1) closed for entry and exit, (2) closed for entry (3) closed for exit (4) partially closed (5) open for commercial traffic only (6) open only to returning nationals and residents (7) open for entry and exit (8) other and (9) unknown. All nine measures were considered for airport, land and blue border crossing points.

In the Region, the operational status of international border crossing points is characterized by the implementation of several restriction measures to curb the spread of COVID-19. Around 83 per cent of monitored international airports are fully closed and 16 per cent are partially operational. Almost 66 per cent of monitored land border crossing points are affected by total closures and 29 per cent are only partially operational. On the other hand, two blue border crossing points in the Syrian Arab Republic out of 39 monitored in the region are fully operational for passengers with no restrictions.



Notes:

- Under the category “Partially Operational” we include “closed for entry”, “closed for exit”, “partial closure”, “open only to returning nationals and residents” and “open only for commercial traffic only”.
- The totals are relative to the monitored Points of Entry.