

Tracking Mobility Impact - Points of Entry Analysis

November 26, 2020 IOM Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa

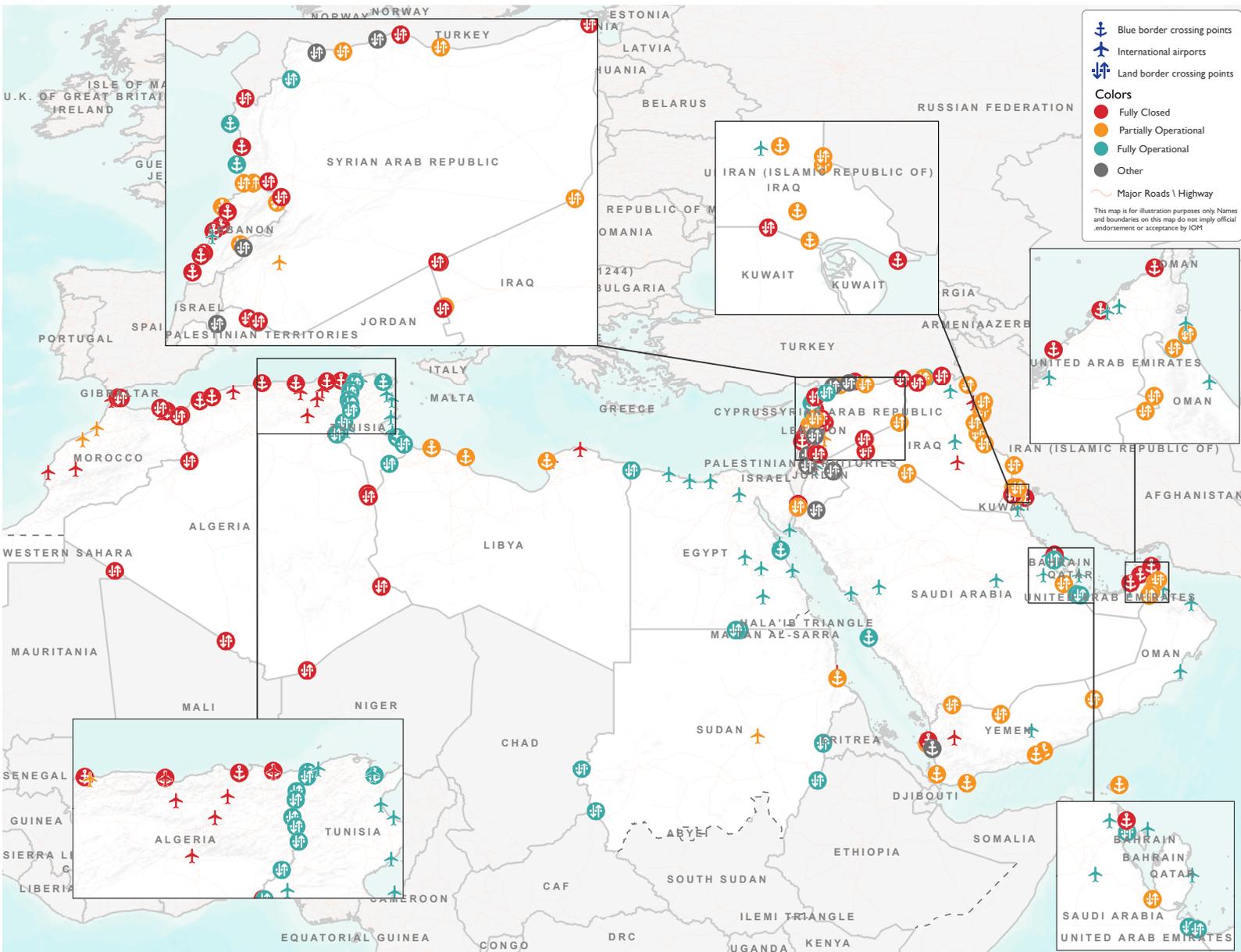
According to the World Health Organization (WHO) the total COVID-19 confirmed cases reached 2,648,132 as of 28 November 2020. A total of 46,418 have succumbed to the disease, while 2,256,124 have recovered as of 28 November 2020. The outbreak of the virus has affected global and regional mobility in the form of various travel disruptions and restrictions.

To better understand how the COVID-19 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), Surveillance and Referral.

Between 19 to 26 November 2020, data was collected on 217 official locations across 17 countries in the region. These locations include: 105 land border crossings points, 69 airports, 43 blue border crossing points (including sea, river and lake ports). This work is based on the information collected by IOM Country offices in 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, there is no country that is currently applying complete restrictions and closures while 10 countries are applying partial restrictions and 7 do not implement restriction measures at the country level. Nevertheless, we also acknowledge that complete and partial restriction measures are imposed in areas and cities but not at country level. Moreover, 10 countries have declared a national emergency during last weeks and months that is currently in place as of 26 November 2020. However, the national emergency measure does not necessarily coincide with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and may be an extension of previous security measures. Implementation of complete restrictions means no movement is permitted within the country, while implementation of partial restrictions means some movement is permitted. Furthermore, 10 countries in the region adopted national quarantine for arrivals from other countries to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within the country.

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” and “temporary opening of the borders to allow otherwise stranded migrants to go home” that are both implemented in eight countries.

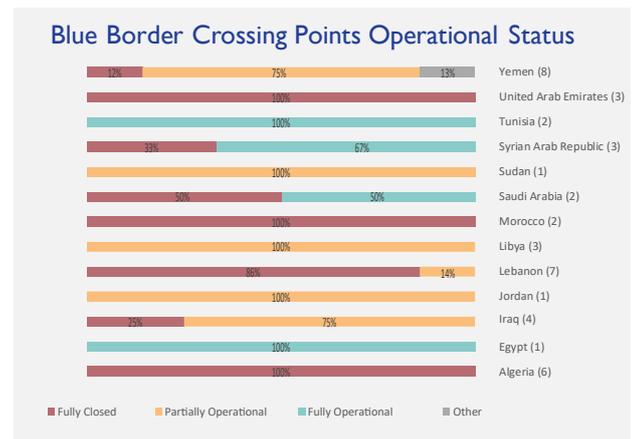
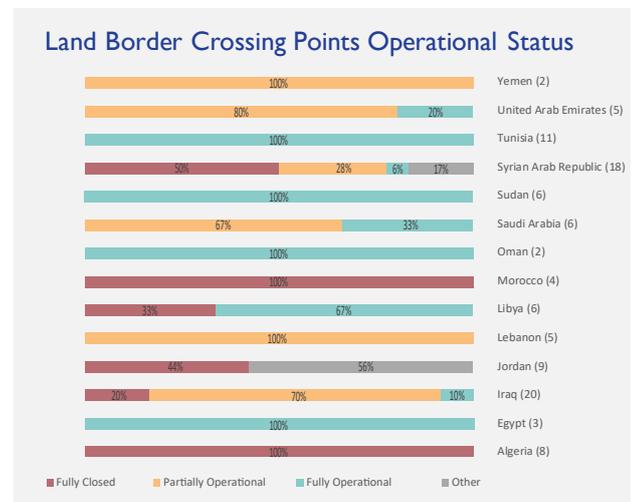
Points of Entry

IOM is currently monitoring 69 airports, 105 land border crossing points and 43 blue border crossing points in the region. This analysis focuses on the official Points of Entry (PoE) in the countries; nevertheless, we acknowledge the presence of at least 27 unofficial Points of Entry in the region, consisting of 22 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) open for commercial traffic only (5) open only to returning nationals and residents (6) open for entry and exit (7) other and (8) unknown.

All eight measures were considered for airport, land and blue border crossing points. In the Region, the operational status of border crossing points is characterized by the implementation of several restriction measures to curb the spread of COVID-19. Slight changes have been recorded during last week on the operational status of land borders while international airports and sea border crossing points in the region did not record any change. Bahrain, Egypt, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Tunisia are the countries in the region that have opened all their monitored Points of Entry as of 26 November 2020.

Around 29 per cent of monitored international airports are fully closed, 10 per cent are partially operational and 59 per cent of these Points of Entry are now fully operational. Around 30 per cent of the 105 land border crossing points remain fully closed and 32 per cent are only partially operational, while there are 32 monitored land border crossing points classified as fully operational. As of 26 November 2020, out of 43 monitored blue border crossing points in the region, around half of them- 21 sea border points- are fully closed and 15 are partially operational in the region while 6 blue border crossing points are fully operational for passengers.



Notes: the totals in the pie charts are relative to the monitored Points of Entry

Notes:

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