

TRAVELLERS' PROFILE AND POPULATION FLOW OVERVIEW

DATA COLLECTION PERIOD: JUNE 2020

AUGUST 2020

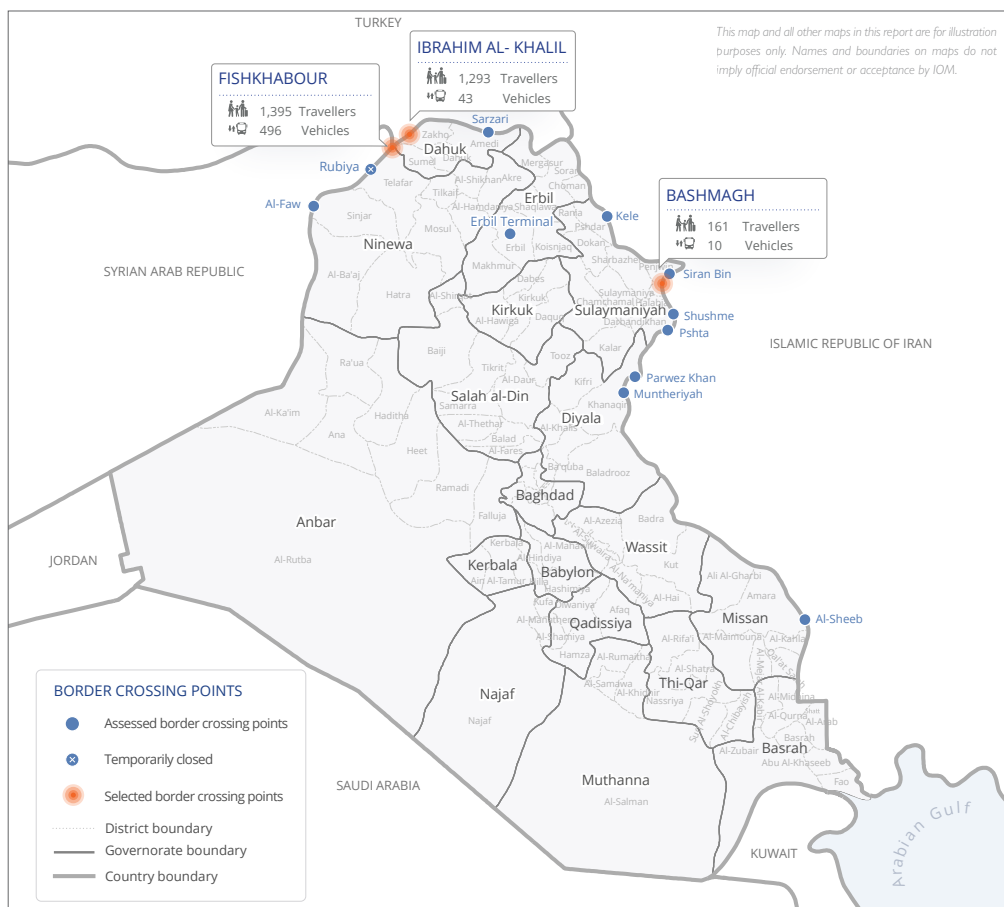
DTM Iraq collects data at border crossing points with neighboring countries – the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey – to better understand migration movements in the Middle East. Cross-border monitoring is drawn from IOM's DTM standard methodology, designed to capture and describe migration flows and is part of the Regional Evidence for Migration Analysis and Policy (REMAP) project, targeting Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Iran, Iraq and Pakistan.

The data for this report was gathered through two separate approaches – a headcount of all travellers entering or leaving Iraq and a sample survey of travellers, which took place at three border crossing points during June 2020. Border crossing points were selected based on observations conducted in May 2019 by IOM's Rapid Assessment and Response Teams (RARTs). Out of 16 locations assessed, five border crossing points were selected for data collection: Ibrahim Al-Khalil, bordering Turkey,

Fishkhabour, bordering the Syrian Arab Republic and Bashmagh, Zurbatiyah (Wassit Terminal) and Al-Shalamcha, bordering the Islamic Republic of Iran.¹ Due to mobility restrictions imposed by Iraqi authorities since March 2020 aimed at curbing the spread of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), data collection was able to take place only at three out of five selected border points.²

In this report, the term 'travellers' refers to all individuals who are crossing the international border with Iraq for a variety of reasons and thus includes several categories of people. Most travellers are entering or exiting Iraq on a temporary basis to visit family, do trade or business or receive medical treatment. Fewer are planning to stay or leave the country for a longer period – or even indefinitely – for work, family, education purposes or humanitarian reasons. Some of them are planning to change or have already changed their place of usual residence.³

Map 1: Assessed and monitored border crossing points



1 Further details on the selection of respondents, survey methodology and how the border crossing points were selected are available in the Methodological Overview on the last page or at the Iraq DTM portal. Available at http://iraqdtm.iom.int/files/Remap/iom_dtm_CROSS_BORDER_MOVEMENT_MONITORING_METHODODOLOGICAL_OVERVIEW.pdf

2 All data collection activities were stopped on 24 February due to heightened restrictions during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak. Please refer to the report "Iraq Mobility Restrictions due to COVID-19" for more details on the mobility restrictions imposed since March 2020 aimed to curb the spread of the virus. Available at <http://iraqdtm.iom.int/COVID19/MovementRestrictions>

3 According to the IOM definition, "migrant – is an umbrella term, not defined under international law, reflecting the common lay understanding of a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons" (IOM (2019), Glossary on Migration – Switzerland). For the purpose of collecting data on migration, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) defines "international migrant" as "any person who changes his or her country of usual residence" and "usual residence" as "the place at which the person has lived continuously for most of the past 12 months (that is, for at least six months and one day) or for at least the past 12 months, not including temporary absences for holidays or work assignments, or intends to live for at least six months" (UN DESA (1998), Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, Revision 1 – USA).



BORDER POINT PROFILE

IBRAHIM AL-KHALIL

BORDERING COUNTRY: **TURKEY**



1,293

Total number of travellers



81

Average number of travellers per day



43

Total number of vehicles

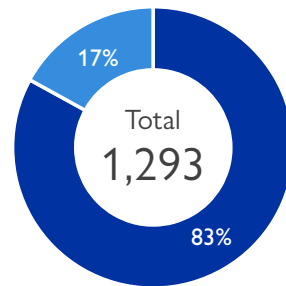


3

Average number of vehicles per day

At the Ibrahim Al-Khalil point, data collection took place from 8 June to 30 June 2020, weekdays only from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. During this period, incoming flow at the Ibraheem Al-Khaleel was allowed only on Monday and Thursday for returning Iraqis and foreigners with permission from the Ministry of Interior; and outgoing flow was allowed every day for returning foreigners and Iraqis with permission from the Ministry of Interior.

Number and percentage of travellers by type of flow



INCOMING
1,074

OUTGOING
219

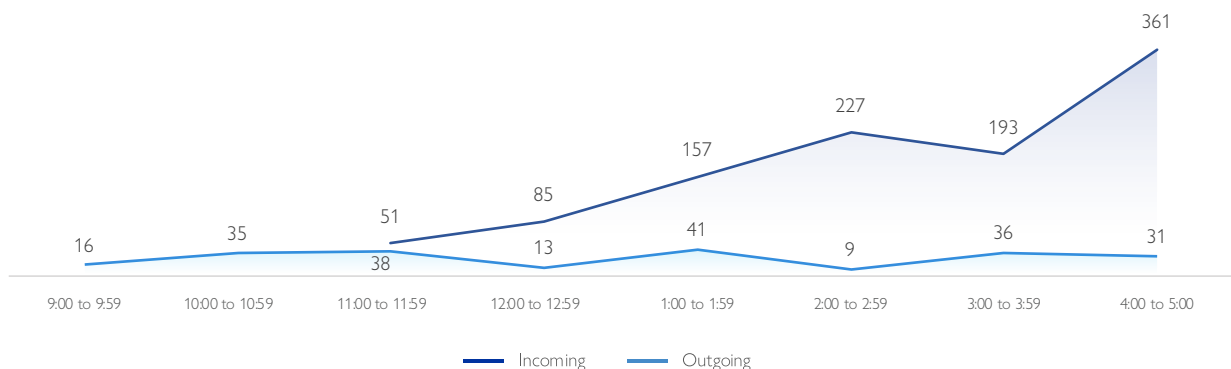
During this period, the Ibrahim Al-Khalil border crossing point witnessed a substantial flow of travellers as compared to other points assessed. DTM identified 1,293 individuals crossing the Ibrahim Al-Khalil border point between 8 to 30 June, with 1,074 of them entering Iraq after being abroad (incoming flow) and 219 individuals exiting Iraq to another country (outgoing flow). On average, the border was crossed by 81 travellers per day (combining incoming and outgoing flows) and three vehicles (including private cars, taxis, buses and minibuses). These numbers are significantly lower compared to the period before the COVID-19 outbreak. Most travellers crossed this border point on foot, with only a few crossings by private car or minibus.

Percentage of travellers by means of transportation



The number of incoming travellers significantly exceeds the number of outgoing travellers for this border crossing point with movement starts around noon and increases till the evening.

Number of travellers by type of flow during the day (9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.)





TRAVELLERS' PROFILE

IBRAHIM AL-KHALIL

BORDERING COUNTRY: TURKEY

Most incoming and outgoing travellers were men. Women represented around a quarter of all travellers (combining incoming and outgoing flows). The portion of travellers aged over 60 years is 7 per cent of incoming flow and 2 per cent of outgoing flow. Most outgoing travelers were Iraqis either residing in Iraq (63%) or abroad (37%) and around one-fifth were Turkish nationals residing in their home country (80%) or in Iraq (20%). Outgoing travellers are primarily either Iraqis (39%) or Turkish (38%) and around one-fifth are Syrians or nationals of other countries (23%). Outgoing foreigners usually reside abroad. Regardless the type of flow, most travellers exit or enter Iraq for a period of three months or more, around one-third travel temporarily for a duration of up to three months, and the remaining third were undecided as to the duration of their travel. The main reasons for travel for incoming travellers were for family visit/reunion, followed by returning home and employment. For outgoing travellers, the main reasons for travel were for family visit/reunion, returning home and health care.

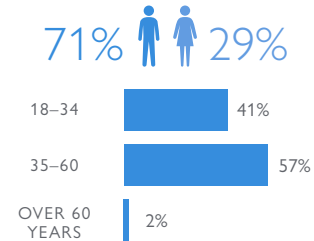
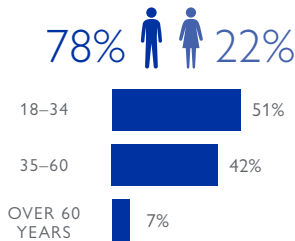


INCOMING

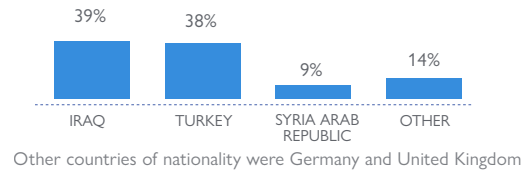
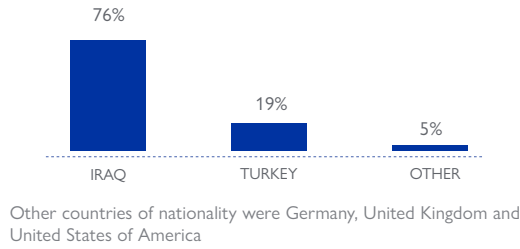


OUTGOING

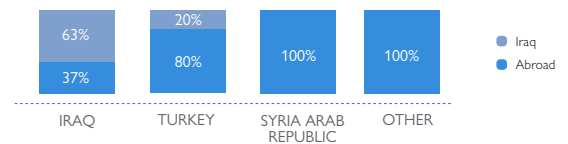
AGE AND GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF TRAVELLERS



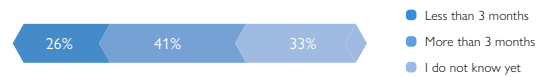
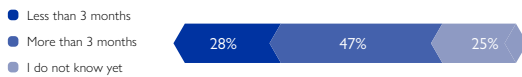
MAIN NATIONALITIES OF TRAVELLERS



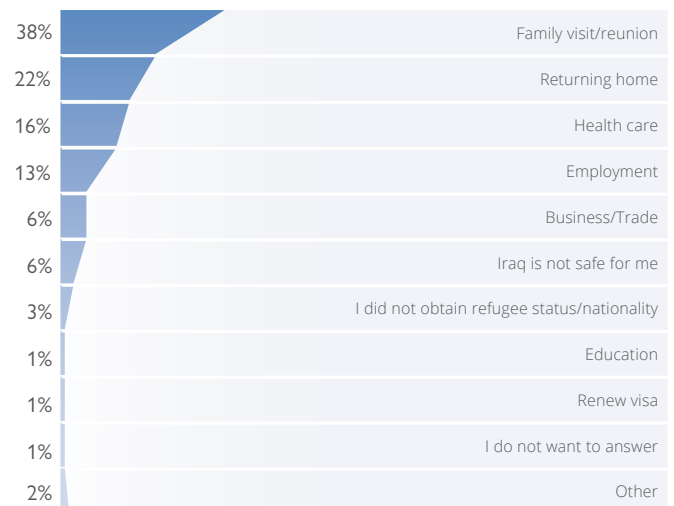
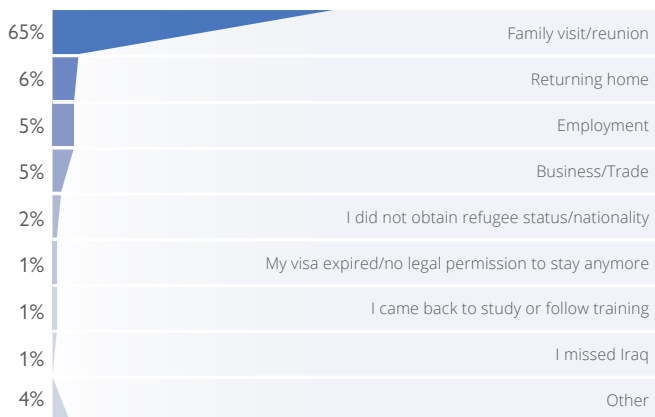
COUNTRY OF USUAL RESIDENCE BY NATIONALITIES



INTENDED LENGTH OF JOURNEY



REASONS FOR TRAVEL





COVID-19 AWARENESS OF TRAVELLERS

IBRAHIM AL-KHALIL

BORDERING COUNTRY: **TURKEY**

Travellers were asked about their awareness of COVID-19 symptoms, prevention measures and risk factors. The majority of outgoing travellers were aware that fever, dry cough and difficulty breathing/shortness of breath are the disease’s main symptoms. For incoming travellers, the majority were also aware of fever and dry cough as the main symptoms, but fewer reported knowing that difficulty breathing/shortness of breath is a common symptom.

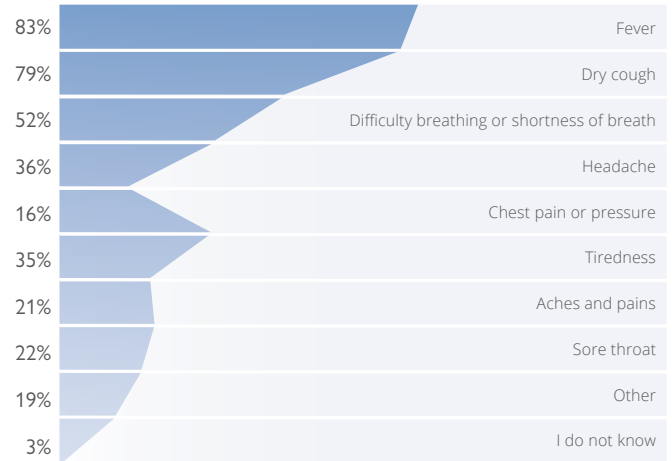
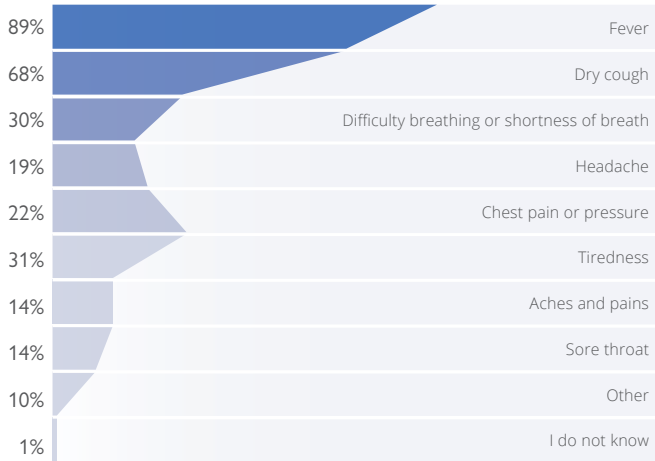


INCOMING



OUTGOING

COVID-19 SYMPTOMS AWARENESS



ACTIONS IN CASE OF TRAVELLERS OR SOMEONE FROM THEIR FAMILY HAVE COUGH, FEVER OR DIFFICULTY BREATHING

53% would call the hotline and follow instructions

43% would go to public primary health care center or hospital

52% would go to public primary health care center or hospital

43% would call the hotline and follow instructions

VULNERABLE GROUPS

7% with diabetes

9% with cancer or weakened immune system

5% with diabetes

4% with serious heart conditions

COVID-19 PREVENTION MEASURES AWARENESS





BORDER POINT PROFILE

FISHKHABOUR

BORDERING COUNTRY: SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC



1,395

Total number of travellers



155

Average number of travellers per day



496

Total number of vehicles

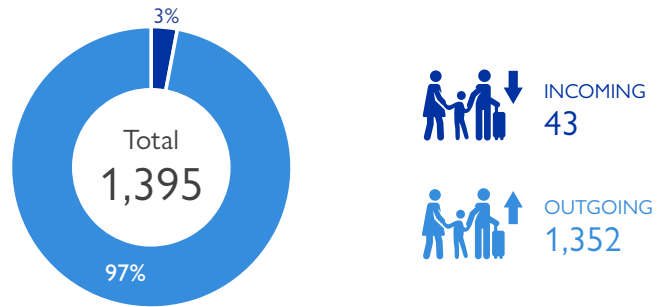


55

Average number of vehicles per day

At the Fishkhabour point, data collection took place from 8 June to 30 June 2020 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The exception was 8, 9 and 10 June 2020 when data collection took place till 11:00 p.m. due to the large volume of Syrians from camps returning to the home country. In June, Fishkhabour was open Sunday and Wednesday, only Syrians could return to Syria and Syrians with dual nationality were allowed to enter through Fishkhabour for transiting and then exit through Ibrahim Al-Khalil to reach their countries of usual residence.

Number and percentage of travellers by type of flow



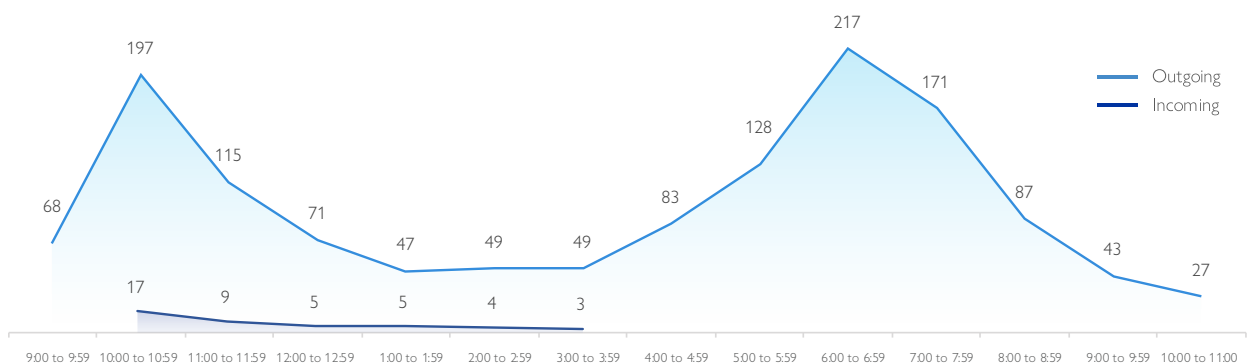
During this period, the Fishkhabour border crossing point witnessed a higher volume of traffic compared to the other points assessed, although almost all travellers were outgoing due to movement restrictions in place limiting incoming travellers to transit only. During the reporting period, DTM identified 1,395 individuals crossing the Fishkhabour border point between 8 to 30 June, with 43 individuals entering Iraq after being abroad (incoming flow) and 1,352 individuals exiting Iraq to another country (outgoing flow). On average, the border point was crossed by 155 travellers per day (combining incoming and outgoing flows) and 55 vehicles (all busses). These numbers are significantly lower compared to the period before the COVID-19 outbreak.

Percentage of travellers by means of transportation



The number of outgoing travellers significantly exceeded the number of incoming travellers for this border crossing point due to movement restrictions, with peak crossings between 10:00 am and 12:00 pm and after 5:00 pm. On 8, 9 and 10 June 2020, data collection took place till 11:00 pm as an exception due to the large volume of Syrians from camps returning to the home country..

Number of travellers by type of flow during the day (9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., and 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m. on 8, 9 and 10 June)



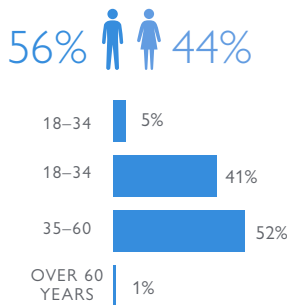


TRAVELLERS' PROFILE
FISHKHABOR
 BORDERING COUNTRY: **TURKEY**

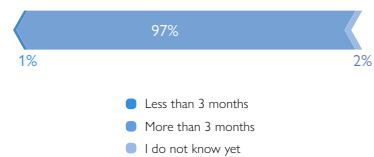
Further analysis was conducted for outgoing travellers only due to a small number of incoming travellers during this reporting period and as a result insufficient sample size for analysis. All outgoing travellers were Syrians. A slightly greater proportion were men (56%), compared to women (44%). Around half of the travellers were aged between 35 and 60 years (52%) and just less than half were aged 18–34 (41%). Very few travellers were children or older than 60 years. The three main reasons for travel were to reunite with family, because they could not find work in Iraq, or did not feel it was safe to remain in Iraq.

OUTGOING

AGE AND GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF TRAVELLERS



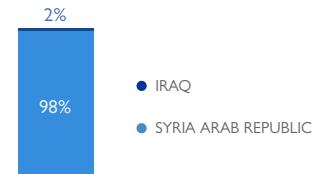
INTENDED LENGTH OF JOURNEY



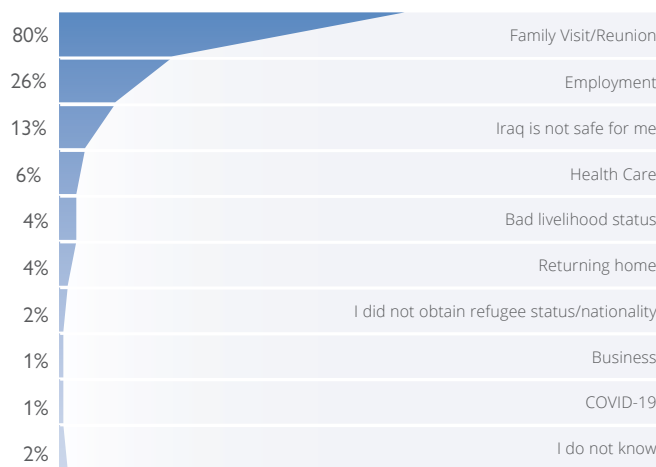
MAIN NATIONALITIES OF TRAVELLERS



COUNTRY OF USUAL RESIDENCE BY NATIONALITIES



REASONS FOR TRAVEL





COVID-19 AWARENESS OF TRAVELLERS

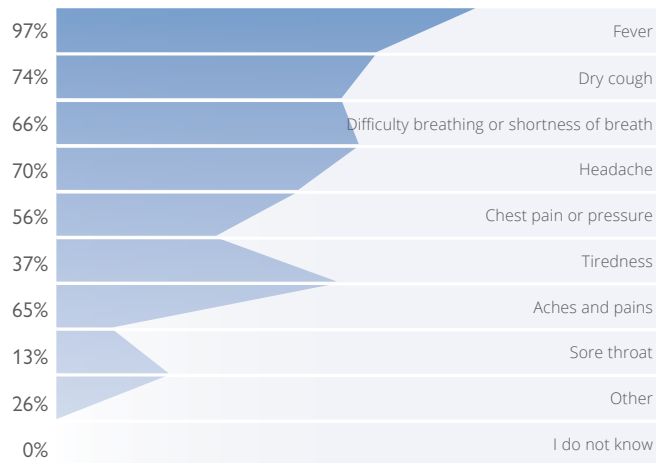
FISHKHABOR

BORDERING COUNTRY: **TURKEY**

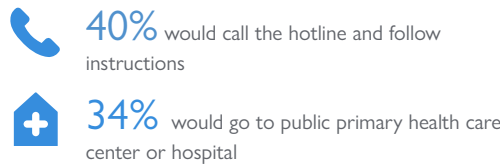
Outgoing travellers passing through Fishkhabour had good knowledge of the main symptoms of COVID-19. The majority reported knowing that a fever, dry cough and difficulty breathing are the main symptoms of the disease. Knowledge of the main prevention mechanisms – regular handwashing (67% of travellers) and maintaining 1-meter distance with others (63%) – was lower than in the other assessed border points.

OUTGOING

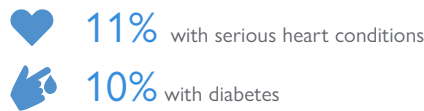
COVID-19 SYMPTOMS AWARENESS



ACTIONS TO TAKE IF TRAVELLERS OR SOMEONE FROM THEIR FAMILY HAVE COUGH, FEVER OR DIFFICULTY BREATHING



VULNERABLE GROUPS



COVID-19 PREVENTION MEASURES AWARENESS





BORDER POINT PROFILE

BASHMAGH

BORDERING COUNTRY: ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN



161

Total number of travellers



12

Average number of travellers per day



10

Total number of vehicles

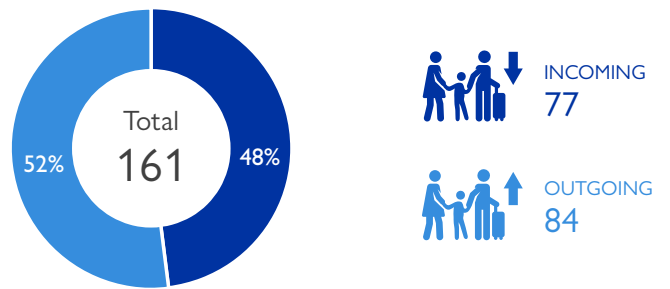


1

Average number of vehicles per day

At the Bashmagh point, data collection took place on weekdays from 8 to 30 June 2020, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. During this period, incoming flow at the Bashmagh was allowed only on Monday and Thursday for returning Iraqis and outgoing flow was allowed every day for returning Iranians.

Number and percentage of travellers by type of flow



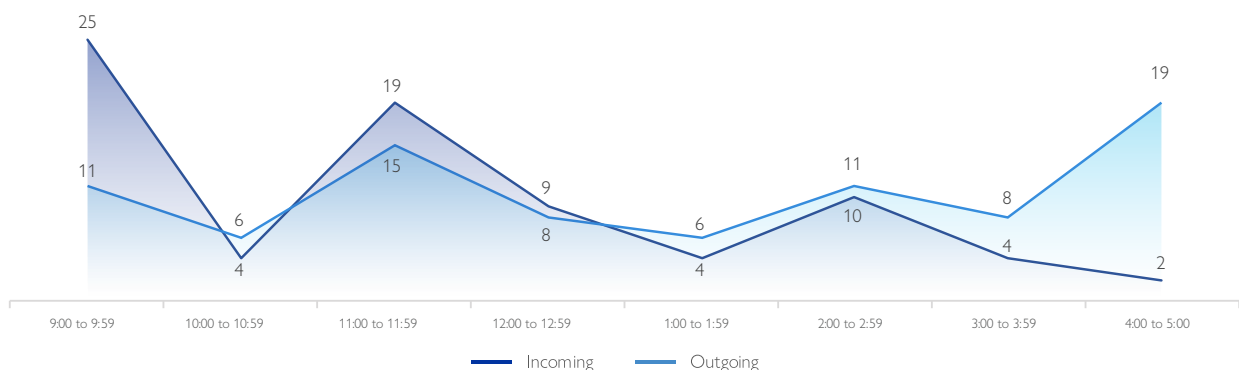
During this reporting period, the Bashmagh border crossing witnessed a minimal flow of travellers as a result of movement restrictions put in place due to COVID-19. DTM identified 161 individuals crossing the Bashmagh border point between 8 and 30 June, with 77 individuals entering Iraq after being abroad (incoming flow) and 84 individuals exiting Iraq to another country (outgoing flow). On average, the border was crossed by 12 travellers per day (combining incoming and outgoing flows) and one vehicle (all cars). Most travellers crossed this border point on foot, with only a few crossings by private car.

Percentage of travellers by means of transportation



For this reporting period, the number of outgoing travellers crossing this border was higher than the number of incoming travellers. The peak hours of travel were early in the morning between 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m., for incoming travellers, and late in the day between 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. for outgoing travellers. Due to a small number of incoming travellers during this reporting period and as a result insufficient sample size, the analysis on socio-demographic characteristics, reasons for travel and COVID-19 awareness was not conducted.

Number of travellers by type of flow during the day (9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.)



METHODOLOGY

The data for this report was gathered through two separate approaches, that is, headcount of all travellers entering or leaving Iraq and surveys of travellers that took place at five border crossing points during the months of June 2020 on weekdays only, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with a lunch break of 30 minutes between 12:30 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. Data was collected through IOM's enumerators, composed of 14 staff members deployed across Iraq (35% of enumerators are women).

The border crossing points were selected based on observations conducted in May 2019 by IOM's Rapid Assessment and Response Teams (RARTs).⁴ Specific criteria were used to select the border crossing points: 1) high volume of daily crossings leading to border countries; 2) diversity, both in geography and type of border point (official/unofficial border points, bus stations, etc.); and 3) ability of staff to reach and operate from the location for daily data collection and fund optimization.

Out of 16 locations assessed, five border crossing points were selected for data collection:

- Ibrahim Al-Khalil in Dahuk Governorate, bordering Turkey;
- Fishkhabour in Dahuk Governorate, bordering the Syrian Arab Republic;
- Bashmagh in Sulaymaniyah Governorate, bordering the Islamic Republic of Iran;
- Zurbatiyah (Wassit Terminal) in Wassit Governorate, bordering the Islamic Republic of Iran;
- Al-Shalamcha in Basrah Governorate, bordering the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The counting exercise aims to enumerate all individuals crossing national borders and to identify the total volume of travellers who enter Iraq after being abroad (incoming flow) and travellers who exit Iraq to another country (outgoing flow). Counting was conducted by observation, using tablets to record the type of flow (incoming/outgoing), the time of crossing (day, hour, minutes) and the number of travellers by means of transport (whether by private car, taxi, bus or minibus – up to 15 seats).

The survey aims to collect information about travellers and was conducted through face-to-face interviews, using tablets to record socio-demographic characteristics and reasons for travel. Respondents were selected randomly through the adoption of a 'systematic step/interval' – that is, travellers are systematically selected at fixed intervals from the start of the workday. The interval was fixed at 1:5 (one in every five individuals will be selected for an interview). All travellers aged 18 years and older who were crossing borders were eligible for an interview, regardless of their nationality. Sampling weight was applied to generalize the characteristics of travellers.

Data presented in this report is representative of individuals crossing at each of the selected border points separately between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm during weekdays only. Data should not be generalized and does not represent a full picture of inter and intra-regional migration, but rather of migration flows at the specific border points monitored. Data collected in assessed border points should not lead to assumptions about flows in non-assessed border points or areas without monitoring points.

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout the report do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IOM concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning its frontiers or boundaries. IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental organization, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to: assist in the meeting of operational challenges of migration; advance understanding of migration issues; encourage social and economic development through migration; and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

⁴ Please refer to the methodological note for more details. Available online at: <http://iraqdtm.iom.int/>



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