

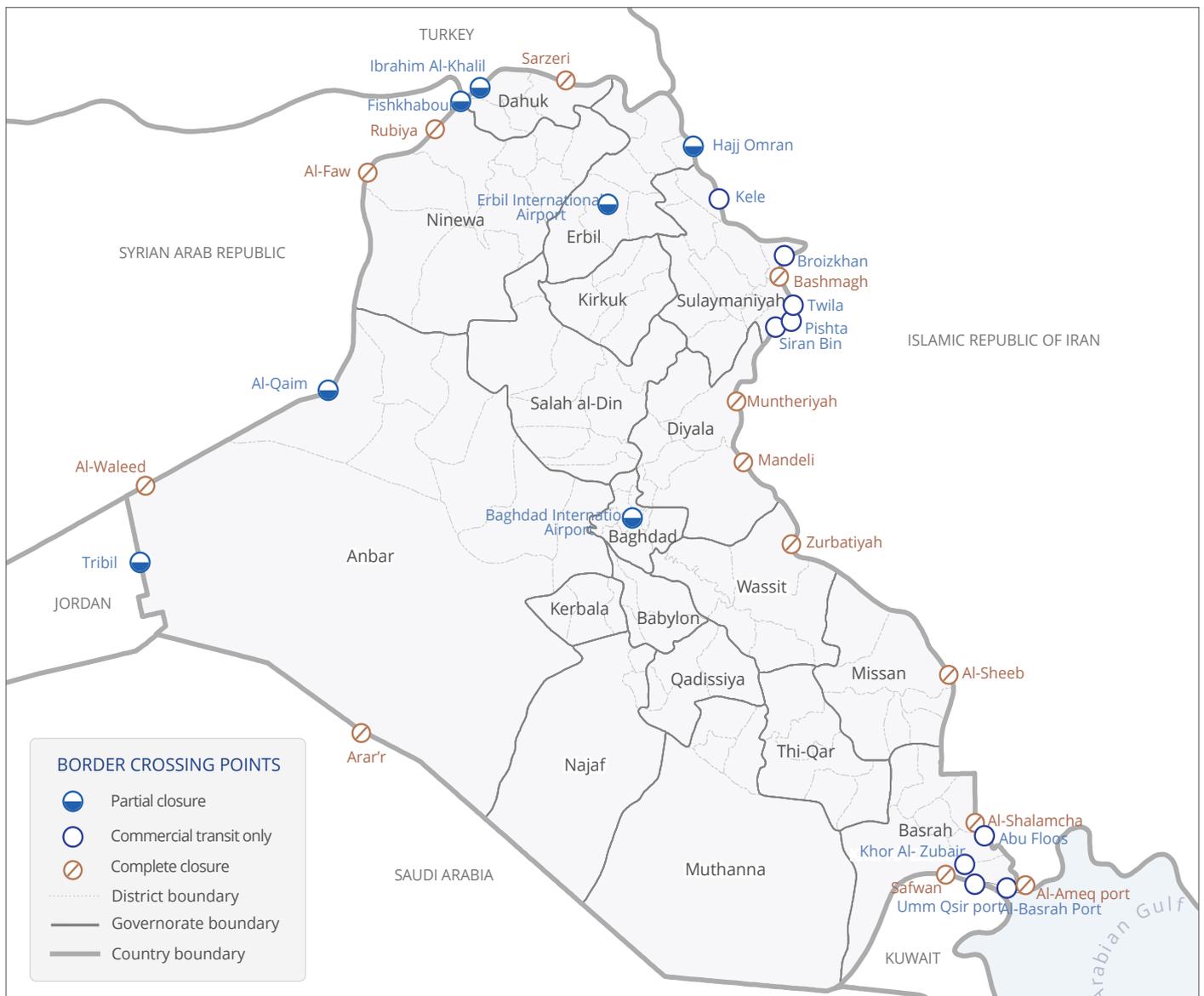
IRAQ MOBILITY RESTRICTIONS DUE TO COVID-19

19 MAY – 1 JUNE 2020

In response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Iraqi authorities have imposed mobility restrictions since March 2020 aimed at curbing the spread of the virus. These measures include restrictions on travel and limitations on freedom of movement, such as the closure of airports and points of entry (PoEs) along land borders and maritime boundaries, as well as domestic movement restrictions. IOM Iraq's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), with funding from the European Union and the

US Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, assessed 29 locations between 19 May and 1 June 2020, of which 13 were reported as closed, 7 partially closed, and 9 open only for commercial traffic. This report presents an overview of mobility restrictions for the 16 monitored PoEs which have remained partially open, as well as for Iraq in general. More details can be found in Table 1.

Map 1: Status of border crossing points as of 1 June 2020



THIS MAP IS FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY
 Update Date: 1 June 2020
 Datasource: Cross border points collected through DTM teams using government, local council representative and residents of the region. Administrative Boundaries: OCHA (Modified)
 Disclaimer: This map is for illustration purpose only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration

Data has been collected on the following geographic units:

- **2 airports** (currently or recently functioning airports with designated International Air Transport Association codes): Baghdad and Erbil International Airports.
- **23 land border** crossing points (international border crossing points on land): Trebil, Al-Waleed, Al-Qa'em, Al-Faw, Rubiya, Fishkhabour, Ibrahim Khalil, Sarzeri, Haji Omran, Kele, Broizkhan, Bashmagh, Twila, Siran Bin, Pshta, Muntheriyah, Mandeli, Zurbatiyah, Al-Sheeb, Al-Shalamcha, Abu Floos, Safwan and Arar'r.
- **4 sea border** crossing points (international border crossing points on the sea, rivers or lakes): Umm Qasr, Al-Basra, Khor Al Zubair and Al-Ameq.

MOBILITY RESTRICTIONS

On 17 May 2020, the Government of Iraq (GOI) announced a comprehensive movement ban across Federal Iraq over eight days, between 22 and 30 May, as a measure to limit the spread of COVID-19. Moreover, six areas in Baghdad were put under a complete movement ban for two weeks starting Wednesday, 20 May. This decision came after some neighbourhoods recorded high numbers of COVID-19 cases. During the ban, epidemiological monitoring and sterilization campaigns were implemented in the neighbourhoods.

Moreover, on 30 May 2020, the Iraqi health authorities declared a total curfew in Federal Iraq for a week, starting from 31 May, in response to a nationwide surge in COVID-19 cases, with 416 new cases confirmed on 29 May.

On 18 May, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) also announced a full lockdown on civilian movement for 72 hours (24–26 May) during the Eid holidays to limit the spread of COVID-19. Civilian travel between governorates in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) and from other parts of Iraq were banned from 20 May until 1 June and the website for applying for permits to travel between governorates within the KRG was temporarily closed between 22 and 27 May.

On 27 May, the KRG announced the extension of the movement ban between the governorates of the KRI until 15 June 2020, except for those who obtain permission through an electronic system administered by the KRG, which was reactivated on 28 May. Movements between Federal Iraq and the KRI remain banned from both sides. However, KRI residents who have been stranded in other governorates of Iraq are allowed to return to KRI as long as they are tested for COVID-19 beforehand. All individuals entering KRI will be quarantined for 48 hours at their own expenses until the result of the test is announced out and then they will have to self-quarantine at home. Foreigners

working as teachers in KRI schools, institutions and universities are also allowed to return to KRI if they have valid KRG residency cards and support letters from the relevant ministries. Movement is permitted for United Nations agencies, international organizations, coalition forces, and diplomatic missions across the KRI.

The ban on commercial passenger flights has been extended until 7 June and will affect flights across Iraq, including the KRG.

In terms of legal regulations, residency offices in the KRI, which had started to reopen since 11 May, were closed during the Eid holidays and reopened again on 31 May. Those with temporary visas, residency cards and work permits that had expired during the lockdown are not incurring any penalties. Given the high level of requests for document renewals, fee waivers have been granted for those who were not able to renew their documents within the first few days since the reopening of the residency offices.

At the federal level, fees are not applied to visas expired after 21 February 2020, and there have been attempts to reduce the fees levied on visas which had expired before that date. Moreover, migrants with expired passports and whose country of origin does not have a diplomatic presence in Iraq can be assisted to travel through the issuance of a letter from the Iraqi Ministry of Interior (MoI). Nationals of countries with an Embassy in Iraq can only travel with a letter issued by their diplomatic mission. In both cases, there has to be an agreement between Iraq and the relevant countries of origin.

Additional permits are required for workers in essential services, such as health care workers, suppliers of essential goods, among others, to prove they have the right to move freely, so they can reach their places of work.

Table 1. Status and restrictions imposed at selected points of entry

GOVERNORATE	NAME OF THE POINTS OF ENTRY	BORDERING COUNTRY	OPERATIONAL STATUS	TYPE OF MOVEMENT ALLOWED
Anbar	Trebil	Jordan	Partial closure	Incoming
Anbar	Al-Qa'em	Syria	Partial closure	Incoming
Baghdad	Baghdad International Airport	Airport	Partial closure	Special incoming and outgoing flights
Basra	Abu Floos	Iran	Commercial transit only	Incoming
Basra	Umm Qasr	Seaport	Commercial transit only	Incoming
Basra	Al-Basra	Seaport	Commercial transit only	Outgoing
Basra	Khor Al Zubair	Seaport	Commercial transit only	Both
Duhok	Ibrahim Khalil	Turkey	Partial closure	Both
Duhok	Fishkhabour	Syria	Partial closure	Both
Erbil	Haji Omran	Iran	Partial closure	Both
Erbil	Erbil International Airport	Airport	Partial closure	Special incoming and outgoing flights
Sulaimaniyah	Broizkhan	Iran	Commercial transit only	Both
Sulaimaniyah	Siran Bin	Iran	Commercial transit only	Incoming
Sulaimaniyah	Kele	Iran	Commercial transit only	Incoming
Sulaimaniyah	Twila	Iran	Commercial transit only	Incoming
Sulaimaniyah	Pshta	Iran	Commercial transit only	Incoming
Sulaimaniyah	Pshta	Iran	Commercial transit only	Incoming

METHODOLOGY

Since March 2020, DTM Iraq has been supporting the DTM Global Team in a new data collection exercise aimed at better understanding how COVID-19 affects global mobility. This assessment has involved 171 IOM Country Missions worldwide with the objective to provide information on the capacity of current PoEs to mitigate and/or respond adequately and in a targeted manner to the current COVID-19 pandemic.

This data collection exercise has been led by DTM HQ and coordinated with other IOM departments, and relevant data has been collected and updated at the country level on an ongoing basis using a web application.

In Iraq, data has been collected through the IOM DTM field team composed of over 100 staff members deployed across Iraq (20% of enumerators are female), and supplemented with preexisting IOM Migration Management Unit data. IOM's field staff has collected data by phone with Key Informants (KIs) using a large, well-established network that includes local authorities, security forces and customs employees. The KIs' responses aim to represent the actual situation at the monitoring points, and are not based on their opinions, unless phrased otherwise. Whenever possible, triangulation of findings was conducted with more than one KI per monitoring point.

To systematically capture the status of each location, the following operational statuses for border crossing points are defined as follows:

- Partial closure (indicating that only a reduced number of individuals can use the border crossing point to exit and enter the country, territory or area, due to limited hours of operation or partial closure for specific nationalities)
- Closed (for both entry and exit)
- Open for entry and exit
- Open for commercial traffic only
- Other
- Unknown

For further information on the methodology, definitions and explanation please refer to the to the [Methodology Framework](#).

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