

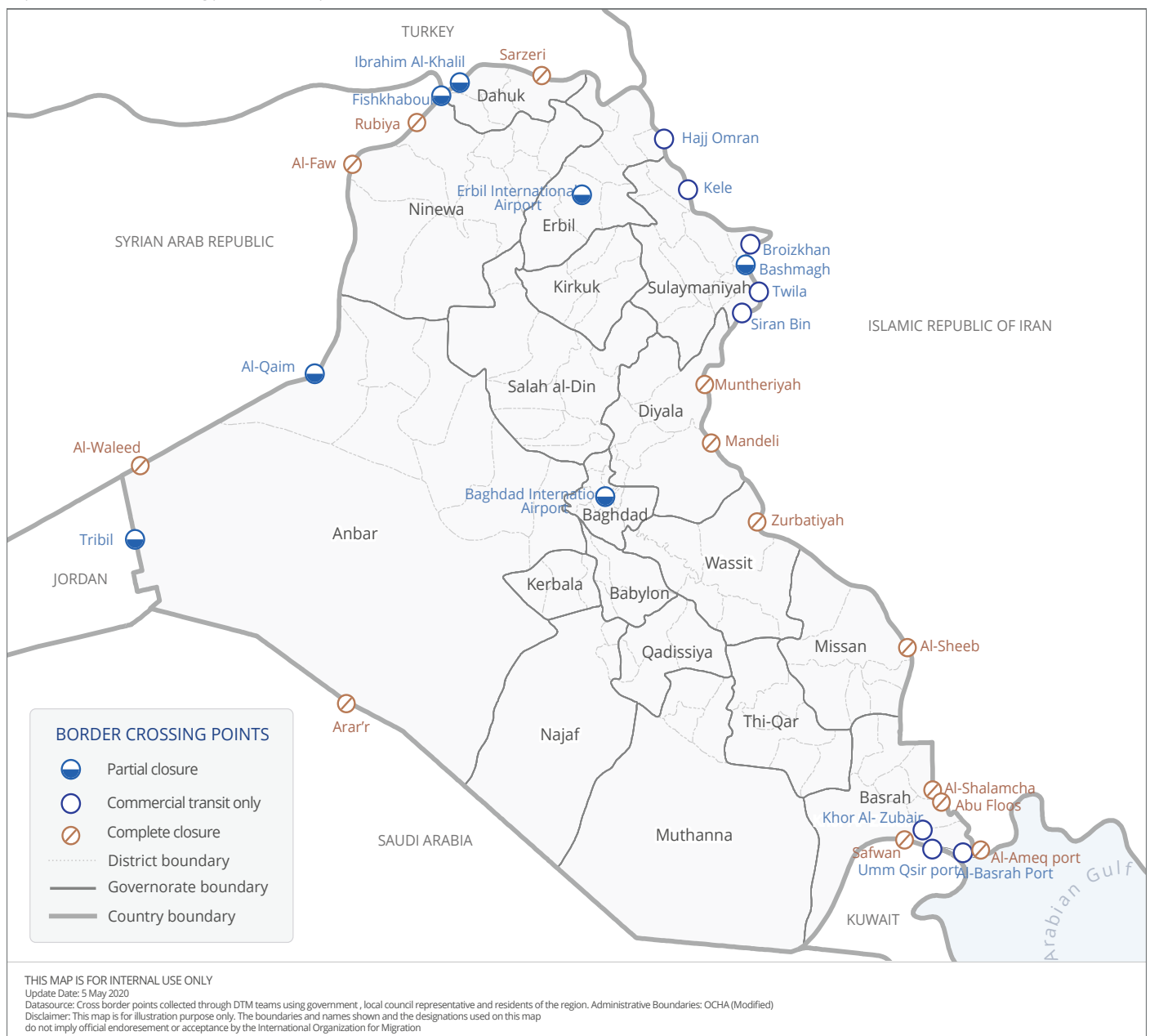
# IRAQ MOBILITY RESTRICTIONS DUE TO COVID-19

20 APRIL – 4 MAY 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 28 locations between 20 April and 4 May 2020, of which 13 were reported as closed, 7 partially closed, and 8 open only for commercial traffic. This report presents an overview of mobility restrictions for the 13 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 5 May 2020



### 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.
- **22 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, 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 20 April 2020, the Government of Iraq (GOI) announced the partial lifting of the curfews and movement restrictions. The Government imposed a total curfew until 22 May between 7 pm and 6 am each day of the work week, and all day on Fridays and Saturdays, with limited movements permitted at other times. Restaurants can now provide delivery services, shops and factories can operate again if they implement preventive measures, and government offices have re-opened at reduced capacity. The Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has extended curfews and movement restrictions until 10 May, with a total curfew between midnight and 6 am, and some limited movements permitted at other times. The KRG has also eased the total prohibition on movements between governorates in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI); citizens can now submit an online application to petition for permission to carry out critical travel. Airports throughout Iraq will remain closed to commercial travel until 22 May.

Entry into the country have been suspended for all residency permit holders and valid visa holders (e.g. workers, humanitarian

workers, students, etc.). In the KRI, there have been some exceptions in order to repatriate or relocate citizens and national students.

In terms of documentation and legal measures, new regulations have been implemented since the beginning of the curfew. Fines for visa overstays or expired residency or work permits have been temporarily suspended. Those with expired residencies have been allowed to stay, although they are required to submit their paperwork to the relevant governmental body as soon as the restriction measures are lifted. Similar exceptions do not apply to those cases in which visas have expired before the implementation of the curfew, movement restrictions, and closure of airports.

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 are able to 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	Umm Qasr	Seaport	Commercial transit only	Incoming
Basra	Al-Basra	Seaport	Commercial transit only	Outgoing
Basra	Khor Al Zubair	Seaport	Commercial transit only	Outgoing
Duhok	Ibrahim Khalil	Turkey	Partial closure	Both
Duhok	Fishkhabour	Syria	Partial closure	Both
Erbil	Haji Omran	Iran	Commercial transit only	Both
Erbil	Erbil International Airport	Airport	Partial closure	Special incoming and outgoing flights
Sulaimaniyah	Broizkhan	Iran	Commercial transit only	Both
Sulaimaniyah	Bashmagh	Iran	Partial closure	Both
Sulaimaniyah	Siran Bin	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 [Methodology Framework](#).

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Co-funded by  
the European Union

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