

Methodology for Monitoring Global Mobility Restrictions and Exceptions to Mobility Restrictions

IOM COVID-19 Mobility Tracking Database

Phase 4

November 2021

<p>Description and Objective</p>	<p>The IOM COVID-19 Mobility Tracking Database captures various air travel restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. It focuses on the changes to pre-existing immigration and border management measures affecting migrants and travellers who are travelling on specific routes or with specific travel documentation. More specifically, the database and ensuing analysis of collected data highlights emerging changes to post COVID-19 mobility restrictions and requirements. This analysis does not aim to provide exact information on travel requirements. For specific and updated travel information, kindly refer to respective consular authorities of the destination country. International Air Transport Association (IATA) and relevant airline companies may be a valid alternative to explore.</p> <p>The current outbreak of COVID-19 has affected global mobility in various ways. To better understand measures implemented, IOM has developed a COVID-19 global mobility database to monitor the different types of restrictions and provide a global overview of how they evolved over time. As the situation continues to evolve, the database and ensuing data analysis have been updated and modified to explain and capture the changes in the applied measures. As a result, IOM has designed and entered the fourth phase of methodology for data collection and analysis. The changes and modifications to the database are done while maintaining the baseline categories to allow comparability over time.</p> <p>The IOM COVID-19 Mobility Tracking Database provides valuable information to the civil society, including media, and the general population to disseminate up-to-date information about COVID-19 related mobility restrictions, exceptions to restrictions and conditions for authorized entry. Regular updates on the global changes in mobility restrictions are also intended to support IOM missions, partners and member states in targeted response planning and advocacy for vulnerable populations who may be affected by changes in global mobility.</p>
<p>Phase 1 (March to April 2020)</p>	<p>From 10 March 2020 onwards, as COVID-19 travel restrictions began to be imposed by countries, territories or areas (C/T/As), IOM started tracking the various travel restrictions based on information from IATA Timatic service to understand the new, unprecedented and differing impacts of COVID-19 on human mobility. The analysis sought to understand the scope and different types of restrictive measures issued by governments and authorities to limit or halt mobility. In this period, multiple and different restrictive measures such as visa invalidations and partial travel bans were commonly applied to restrict mobility.</p>
<p>Phase 2 (April to October 2020)</p>	<p>After borders started to close and air traffic was suspended, some groups and individuals were exempt from the restrictions and were still able to travel, despite the continued rise of COVID-19 cases and general travel restrictions. Such exceptions to the travel restrictions were increasingly issued by governments and authorities to facilitate the essential movement of certain groups, return flights of nationals, humanitarian travel and medical aid. Resultantly, from 1st April 2020 onwards, IOM began tracking exceptions to mobility restrictions in addition to the restrictions tracked in Phase 1. This data has been incorporated to highlight the</p>

	<p>complexity of global mobility restrictions and provide a more nuanced analysis of the changing global mobility context.</p>
<p>Phase 3 (October 2020 to July 2021)</p>	<p>While total restrictions on international travel remain valid in some places, the trend towards facilitating mobility continues to expand. However, this mobility is becoming progressively conditional upon and regulated by stringent measures. ‘Medical measures’, initially implemented as barriers to mobility, are now being used to facilitate mobility. Previously tracked and categorized under forms of restrictions in Phase 1, ‘medical measures’ in Phases 1 and 2 have in fact become ‘conditions for authorized entry’ in Phase 3. This shift from medical restrictions to medical measures as enablers of mobility appears increasingly more common. As a result, in Phase 3, medical measures previously categorised as ‘Restrictions’ in Phase 1 and 2, have been moved and re-categorised as conditions for authorized mobility. To reiterate, in this new phase, ‘Travel Restrictions’ will only cover total restrictions, such as passenger bans, visa suspensions, and suspensions of flights. This permits a distinction to be made between measures which restrict travel versus measures which, compared to current restrictions, enable travel. It facilitates a better analysis of situations where previous restrictions have been lifted, conditions for permitted entry such as quarantine and COVID-19 medical certificates were observed as emerging new trends.</p> <p>Lastly, in Phase 3, a few modifications have also been made to improve and broaden a few data categories to better reflect the changes in the COVID-19-related mobility context. This includes new categories such as ‘no restrictions’, an expanded list of category groups and an expanded list of medical measures.</p>
<p>Phase 4 (July 2021 onwards)</p>	<p>The emergence of new variants, shifting COVID-19 “epicentres” alongside simultaneous vaccination programmes in some parts of the world continue to affect global mobility through the reissuances or extensions of passenger bans, lifting and/or issuance of travel restrictions. New observable trends such as exceptions for passengers with COVID-19 vaccine or recovery certificates have an impact on the next phase of tracking travel restrictions monitoring and global mobility.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the impact of vaccine equity on global mobility, this Phase 4 encapsulates the monitoring of new health related exceptions and conditions for authorized entry. A growing number of exceptions to conditions for authorised entry are calibrated and issued by route. Similarly, new conditions for authorised entry are also being issued in replacement of passenger bans. Resultantly, there is an emerging need to capture this trend.</p> <p>Finally, Phase 4 also includes a methodological note on monitoring travel restrictions issued in relation to identified COVID-19 “Hotspots”.</p>
<p>Data Source</p>	<p>Across all phases, IOM’s data sources are consistent. The IOM COVID-19 Mobility Tracking Database is updated using qualitative data from the IATA Timatic website as the primary source of information reported per country, territory or area; WHO’s daily situation reports, providing regular updates on context developments from national, regional and international perspectives; direct reporting from IOM staff in field missions; internal IOM database and relevant government and trusted media sources.</p> <p>PHASE 1</p> <p>For mobility restrictions data is collected on:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Date of restriction ii. Country, territory or area issuing restrictions iii. Country, territory or area on which restrictions were imposed iv. Type of mobility restriction (i.e., a passenger entry ban and or visa restriction) <p>PHASE 2</p> <p>For exceptions to mobility restrictions data is collected on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Date of exception ii. Country, territory or area issuing exceptions iii. Country, territory or area to which exceptions apply iv. Type of restriction on which the specific exception is issued v. Type of exceptions – this refers to specific categories of groups or individuals that are exempted from mobility restrictions <p>PHASE 3</p> <p>For conditions for authorized entry data is collected on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Date of different types of conditions for authorized entry ii. Country, territory or area issuing new conditions for authorized entry iii. Country, territory or area, or category to which the condition applies* iv. Type of exception for which the specific condition is issued (when applicable) v. Type of conditions for authorized entry, such as Quarantine, Health Declaration Forms, Location and Contact Tracing Apps, and other emerging measures etc. <p>PHASE 4</p> <p>In phase 4, a total of six new exceptions group will be added:</p> <p><u>Phase 4 New Exceptions Groups:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>COVID-19 Vaccine certificates</u> refers to evidence (certificate/QR code, etc.) suggesting that an individual may have had one, two, three/booster doses of the WHO approved COVID-19 vaccines administered in a specific CTA between a period of 7 to 14 days prior to travel 2. <u>COVID-19 Negative Test Prior to or Upon Arrival: refers to individuals who have a negative COVID-19 test result prior to or upon arrival.</u> 3. <u>COVID-19 Recovery Certificates:</u> refers to individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 to 180 days period. 4. <u>Children accompanying adult with a COVID-19 Vaccine Certificate:</u> refers to children under the age of 18 whose legal guardian/parent possesses to evidence suggesting that an individual may have had one or two doses of the WHO approved COVID-19 vaccines in a period of 14 days prior to travel 5. <u>Nationals/residents of specific CTAs with COVID-19 Vaccine certificate</u> <p>In terms of new conditions for authorized entry, one new condition will be added:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. COVID-19 vaccination certificate showing that they were fully vaccinated at least 14 days before arrival
Key Definitions	<p>Air Travel Restriction due to COVID-19: International air travel restrictions issued by the authorities of any country, territory or area (CTA) in response to COVID-19.</p>

	<p>Entry restrictions: International air travel restrictions which do not allow the entry of passengers of a given country, territory or area (CTA). This could include a complete airport closure, nationality ban, suspension of visa issuances, etc.).</p> <p>Exception Groups: Refers to specific population groups (e.g., children, diplomatic passport holders, nationals, residents, persons that travelled from or transited through a specific country) and/or individuals to whom the specific COVID-19 related travel restriction issued by a CTA are not applicable to.</p> <p>Conditions for Authorized Entry: These are partial restrictions in the form of specific requirements upon which entry is incumbent. These conditions include medical measures, new requirements on visa/travel documents or other specific requirements for entry. Conditions for entry may be applicable to all passengers or excepted groups such as specific nationalities, individuals, or groups.</p> <p>No Restriction: Refers to the removal of COVID-19 related international air travel restrictions issued after 10th March 2020.</p> <p>No Restriction Reported: When a CTA has not officially reported restrictions upon any CTA. Note that this does not mean that restrictions do not exist but only those restrictions were not officially reported.</p>
<p>Aggregation</p>	<p>The different types of entry restrictions are aggregated and coded to facilitate a more concise analysis. The various types of restrictions are categorised into six major groupings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Route Restriction (RC)</u>: applies to all travellers arriving from or transiting through a specific country, territory or area, regardless of their nationality 2. <u>Nationality Restriction (RN)</u>: applies to travellers with specific nationalities 3. <u>Visa Change (VC)</u>: applies to changes in visa policy, such as suspension of visa on arrival, visa invalidations and other emerging measures 4. <u>Document Change (DC)</u>: applies to changes in movement agreements with impact on documentation (passport or ID) required for passengers or nationals arriving from a specific country 5. <u>Other Limitations (OL)</u>: applies to limitations that do not fall under previous categories and other emerging measures 6. <u>Condition for Authorized Entry</u>: applies to medical/health related or other measures that are necessary to fulfil to enter a country, territory or area <p>No Restriction (NO): Refers to the removal of COVID-19 related travel restrictions that was issued since or after 10th March 2020</p> <p>The different types of exceptions are aggregated and coded to facilitate a more concise analysis of the type of restrictions and its associated exceptions. For this, the various exceptions are categorised into 19 types:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Exception for Nationals</u> applies to travellers holding specific documentation such as passport, national ID or specific pre-

- authorized travel itinerary (including family members) with the purpose of returning home
2. Exception for Residents applies to travellers holding specific resident permits (including family members) that are leaving or returning
 3. Exceptions for Airline crew applies to airline company's employee on board of the arriving aircraft as crew members
 4. Exceptions for Diplomatic passport/visa applies to travellers holding a service passport; travelling from or returning to the country where they are deployed (including family members)
 5. Exceptions for personnel of international and humanitarian organizations applies to travellers holding a UN passport; or with specific documentation indicating their status as humanitarian workers
 6. Exceptions for Prior Approval applies to travellers with a valid letter of special/prior approval issued by the government or other entity; this also includes travellers entering with documents indicating urgent medical treatment
 7. Exceptions for Military personnel/Military forces of NATO applies to travellers who are travelling for specific military duty
 8. Exceptions for Technical Workers applies to travellers who are working as directive personnel and cargo operators
 9. Exceptions for Healthcare Professionals applies to travellers traveling for healthcare related research, COVID-19 related needs or specific health collaborators
 10. Exceptions for Cross-border workers applies to passengers who are commuting for work
 11. Exceptions for Passengers in transit applies to travellers with specific travel documentation of another country or territory who can transit on their way home
 12. Exceptions for Nationals/Residents from another CTA applies to travellers holding specific national and/or resident documentation of another country, territory, or area travelling for any other purpose, including tourism
 13. Exceptions for Business and Professionals applies to travellers holding specific documentation indicating work, employment or business
 14. Exceptions for Students applies to travellers entering the country for the purpose of education with long-stay visas as pre-conditions
 15. Exceptions for International Protection applies to travellers holding documentation indicating their status as persons in need of international protection or for other humanitarian reasons (e.g., "Exemptions for family reunification or expulsion exemptions for minors)
 16. Exceptions for Flights applies to passengers and crew of 'authorized special flights' such as MEDEVAC flights, technical flights, cargo flights, emergency flights, refuelling flights, humanitarian flights and so on
 17. Exceptions for Others* applies to travellers who are travelling for any other reasons that are not covered above or any emerging trends
 18. No exceptions: applies in situations where no exceptions have been issued
 19. Persons requiring urgent treatment: Applies to travellers who require urgent medical treatment.

20. Children below certain age: Applies to passengers who are below the age of 18
21. Seafarers: Applies to passengers who are employed to serve aboard any type of marine vessel
22. New: COVID-19 Vaccine certificates: refers to evidence suggesting that an individual may have had one, two, three/booster doses of the WHO approved COVID-19 vaccines administered which may be administered in a specific CTA between a period of 7 to 14 days prior to travel
23. New: COVID-19 Recovery Certificates: refers to individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 to 180 days period
24. New: Children accompanying adult with a COVID-19 Vaccine Certificate: refers to children under the age of 18 whose legal guardian/parent possesses to evidence suggesting that an individual may have had one or two doses of the WHO approved COVID-19 vaccines in a period of 14 days prior to travel
25. New: Passengers who test negative for a COVID-19 test prior to or upon arrival: refers to passengers with a negative COVID-19 test result for a stipulated time period prior to travel or upon arrival. This covers all stipulated durations and types of COVID-19 tests.
26. New: Exceptions for passengers who are medically exempt from receiving the COVID-19 vaccine

Others is an open category which is subject to change. Previously this included persons in need, medical evacuation flights, emergency flights or refuelling flights. The types of exceptions categorised under 'others' allows us to identify new emerging trends through systematic recording, which can lead to the creation of new categories. For example, in phase 2, 'Others' included individuals in need of humanitarian protection which is now categorised in phase 3.

Conditions for Authorized Entry include

1. Health Declaration Form/Travel History Form: applies to all travellers who must submit this documentation prior to boarding or upon arrival
2. Passenger Locator Form: applies to all travellers who must provide specific non-medical forms/documents such as Passenger Location form; Marriage Certificate as a condition/proof of connection to spouse for exceptional entry.
3. Health Screening upon arrival: applies to all arriving travellers who are subject to health screening such as mandatory COVID-19 test at the airport, or 'multiple testing on specific days after arrival.
4. Quarantine: applies to all arriving travellers who are subject to mandatory quarantine at a designated government facility, hotel, or self-isolate for any period.
5. Medical Certificate with negative COVID-19 result: applies to all travellers who must provide a negative COVID-19 test, valid for a specific period, upon which entry is conditional
6. Health Surveillance: applies to all travellers whose entry is subject to downloading surveillance apps or providing information to local authorities for contact tracing at their destination, for the duration of stay
7. COVID-19 negative test for visa extension: applies to residents who require negative COVID-19 test or other medical documents for visa extensions to remain in their current location

	<p>8. <u>Other conditions</u>: refers to any conditions that are not covered in the aforementioned categories but indicate new and emerging measures which are grouped.</p> <p>9. <u>Change in visa requirements</u>: nationals from country now require visa</p> <p>10. <u>Change in visa requirements</u>: visiting foreigners previously in these countries now require visa</p> <p>11. <u>Change in visa requirements</u>: all passengers arriving from these countries now require visa</p> <p>12. <u>Change in visa requirements</u>: nationals from country have previously issued visas invalidated</p> <p>13. <u>Change in movement agreement</u>: ID card no longer enough, passport now required</p> <p>14. <u>Quarantine of 14 days in country with no confirmed cases required and medical certificate required</u></p> <p>15. <u>Medical measures</u>: other type of medical restrictions and measures that are not currently included</p> <p>16. <u>New</u>: COVID-19 vaccination certificate showing that they were fully vaccinated before arrival</p>
<p>Data Analysis</p>	<p>The aim of the data analysis is to understand the evolving and diverse impacts of COVID-19 on global mobility and to help identify and develop appropriate response. The data analysis seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of the trends emerging as a result of international air travel restrictions that enable, limit or restrict mobility.</p> <p>The global analysis is based on the country, territory or area imposing the restrictions along with the country, territory or area upon which restrictions are being imposed and the aggregation of the type of restrictive measures.</p> <p>Furthermore, the global analysis on the exceptions is based on the country, territory, or area issuing an exception, the associated mobility restriction type and the category group for which the exception is issued.</p> <p>The global analysis on the conditions for permitted entry is based on the country, territory or area issuing new conditions for categories of individuals or groups that are exceptions to blanket mobility restrictions. The aim of the data analysis is to highlight the nuances of the shifts in conditions for permitted entry associated with the different types of exceptions to mobility restrictions.</p> <p>Finally, capturing factors for mobility specifically provides a more detailed overview of which restrictions or conditions for authorized entry are porous and which population groups can benefit from these factors. Further, separate yet conjunct analysis of factors for mobility allows for both a comparison between a C/T/A's factors relative to its restrictions and conditions and an independent analysis of each C/T/A's specific use of these factors.</p>
<p>Limitations</p>	<p>The data is dependent upon travel restrictions on international flights and exceptions to mobility restrictions which are time sensitive. The data categorisations were defined in collaboration with IOM technical experts to align with operational needs. As a result, the categories used may not reflect the full scope of the multiple and simultaneous restrictive measures imposed by a specific country, territory or</p>

area. Data accuracy is ensured through regular assessments and triangulation of information where feasible and possible.

The data does not reflect sub-national restrictive measures from a specific part of the C/T/As, and it does not reflect restrictive measures imposed by C/T/As on their own nationals. Additionally, secondary measure which 'could' apply are not coded.

In terms of the relationship between granularity and categories, it is important to note that some categories like quarantine, which is coded as 20, is an overarching category which encapsulates the variations in location and duration of quarantine. For example, it includes self-isolation or quarantine at hotel/designated facility and for varying durations such as 10 or 14 days. Likewise, for medical screenings or certificates the codes help quantify and standardize the measure in principle, and the qualitative narrative explicate the granularity. In this way, the specificities and changing nature of measures is maintained in the codes and the changes are reflected in the narrative updates.

The categories are the following:

#	Restriction Type	Restriction Type	Type	Code
1	Travellers arriving from or having been to the country, territory or area are not allowed to enter, without time parameter	Mobility Restriction	Total	RC
3	Travellers arriving from or having been to the country, territory or area in the last 14 days are not allowed to enter	Mobility Restriction	Total	RC
5	Travellers arriving from or having been to the country, territory or area in any period more than 14 days are not allowed to enter	Mobility Restriction	Total	RC
7	All flights are suspended	Mobility Restriction	Total	RC
33	All (international) airports are closed	Mobility Restriction	Total	RC
8	Request of COVID-19 test or health certificate for visa application	Visa Change	Partial	VC
9	Suspension of issuance of new visa and/or permit to all foreigners or some nationalities	Visa Change	Partial / Total	VC
10	Change in visa requirements, nationals from country now require visa	Visa Change	Partial	VC
11	Change in visa requirements, visiting foreigners previously in these countries now require visa	Visa Change	Partial	VC
12	Change in visa requirements, all passengers arriving from these countries now require visa	Visa Change	Partial	VC
13	Change in visa requirements, nationals from country, territory or area have previously issued visas invalidated	Visa Change	Total	VC
15	Nationals from these countries, territories or areas not allowed to enter, without time parameter	Nationality Restriction	Total	RN
16	Change in movement agreement, ID card no longer enough, passport now required	Document Change	Partial	DC
30	Other type of limitations but not total restriction (e.g., new categories or trends not included in existing categories)	Other Limitation	Partial	OL
99	Lifted all COVID-19 Related Restrictions and Conditions	No Restrictions		NR

The categories for exceptions are as follows:

#	
1	Airline crew
2	Individuals travelling for business purposes
3	Technical, directive personnel and cargo operators
4	Cross-border workers
5	Children below a certain age
6	Passengers with a diplomatic passport/visa; diplomats on duty station in the country (including family members)
7	Exceptions for flights (e.g., humanitarian flights, flights in emergency, repatriation flights)
8	Healthcare professionals, healthcare researchers and collaborators
9	Military personnel/Military forces of NATO
10	Nationals (including family members)
11	Exceptions for Nationals/Residents of another CTA
12	No exceptions
13	Others
14	Exceptions for International Protection (e.g., Refugees, etc.)
15	Residents (including family members)
16	Seamen
17	Exceptions for Students
18	Passengers in transit
19	Passengers with a UN passport; personnel of international and humanitarian organizations
20	Persons requiring urgent medical treatment
21	Passengers with a special approval/valid letter of prior approval issued by the government or other entity
22	New: Passengers with COVID-19 Vaccine certificates
23	New: Passengers with COVID-19 Recovery Certificates
24	New: Children accompanying adult with a COVID-19 Vaccine Certificate
25	New: Passengers with COVID-19 Negative Test Prior to or Upon Arrival
26	New: passengers with a letter issued by a doctor proving that the passenger is medically unable to receive the vaccine

Codes	Conditions for Authorized Entry
26	Health Declaration Form /Travel History Form
40	Passenger Location form
20	Medical measures, quarantine prior or after entering the country
22	Medical measures, medical certificate required (e.g., COVID test, etc.)
21	Health Screening upon arrival (blood sample, temperature checks, swab, thermal screening)
23	Quarantine of 14 days in country with no confirmed cases required and medical certificate required
27	Health Surveillance (app/informing local authorities)
25	Medical measures, other type of medical restrictions and measures
28	COVID-19 vaccination certificate showing that they were fully vaccinated