

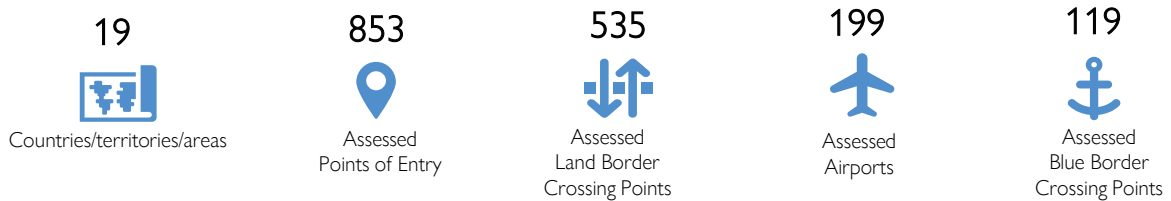
# COVID-19 Mobility Tracking Impact – Points of Entry Analysis

February 28, 2021 – IOM Regional Office for South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia

The total number of COVID-19 cases reached 11,591,674 in the South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia region (SEEECA) as of 28 February 2021 according to the World Health Organization (WHO). To better understand how the pandemic affects the mobility at the Points of Entry (PoEs), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has developed an online tool and database which tracks changes in mobility at PoEs (airports, land and blue border crossing points). This includes preparedness and response measures to prevent, protect against, control and assist in line with the International Health Regulations (IHR). Among the mobility changes tracked by IOM are: 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 in place such as Health Staffing/Medical Personnel, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE), Infection prevention and control (IPC) and Surveillance and Referral.

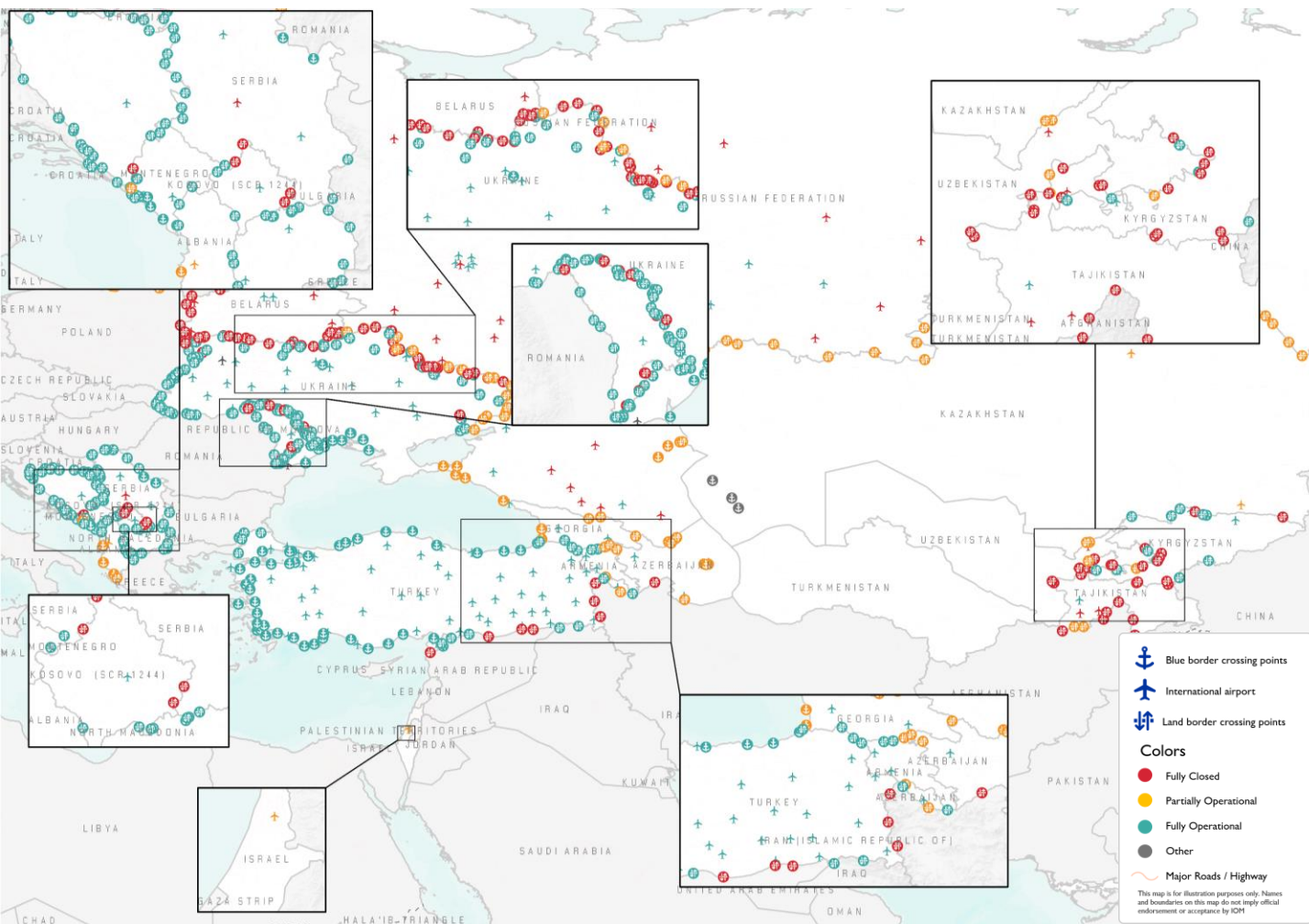
As of 28 February 2021, data was collected on 853 PoEs in 19 countries/territories/areas across the SEEECA region. These locations include: 535 land border crossings points, 199 airports, and 119 blue border crossing points (including sea, river and lake ports). This PoEs brief is based on the information collected by or available to IOM Country Offices in the region. This analysis provides an overview of the changes of the operational status and mobility restrictions over the past year, between April 2020 and February 2021.

It is important to note that not all data on PoEs have been updated every month, meaning that the trend displayed does not necessarily represent the current situation of all PoEs. Since April last year, when the global data collection exercise was rolled out, a total of 853 PoEs have been assessed so far as of February 2021, which is 251 more than the 602 PoEs assessed in April.<sup>1</sup>



1. The change in the number of assessed PoEs can be due to limited information at any given month, or by adding/removing a PoE from the assessment given its relative role with regards to international mobility.

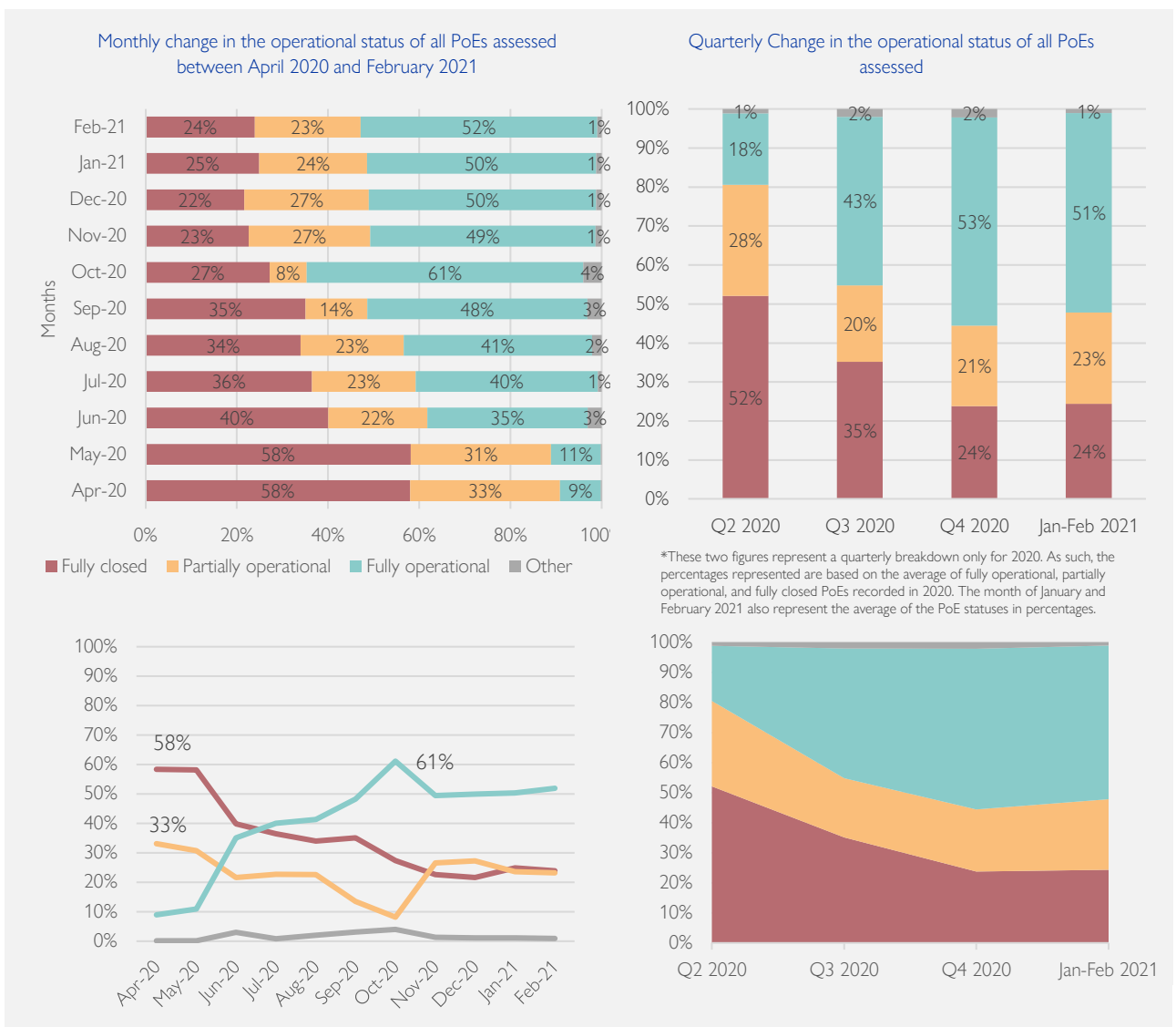
## Overview of assessed international airports, land border and blue border crossing points in the SEEECA region



## Changes in operational status over time: April 2020 – February 2021

While many travel restrictions remain in place to date, between April 2020 and February 2021 there have been changes in the number of travel restrictions imposed globally and at the regional level, being reflected in the operational status of the PoEs and restriction measures in place at each assessed locations. The information on the operational status of each PoE is collected according to the following classification: (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 types of measures were considered for airports, 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. In the following analysis, most trends over time are presented comparing the average results in terms of operational status of PoEs and of mobility restrictions imposed for Q2 2020 (April – June), Q3 2020 (July – September), Q4 2020 (October – December) and the period January – February 2021.<sup>2</sup>

On average, the number of **fully closed PoEs** among those assessed in the SEECA region decreased significantly (-28%) during the fourth quarter of 2020, reaching only 24 per cent of the assessed PoEs compared to the peak of 54 per cent recorded in Q2 of 2020. The downward trend of fully closed PoEs between April and December 2020 remained steady in January and February 2021 (25%, 24% each month). Furthermore, the number of **partially operational PoEs** among those assessed decreased by only 8 per cent in Q3 of 2020 (20%), since it peaked in April (28%). The number of partially operational PoEs increased slightly again in Q4, and January and February 2021, representing 21, 24, and 23 per cent respectively of all PoEs. Finally, a noticeable increase of fully operational PoEs among those assessed was observed since April to date. The largest share of **fully operational PoEs** was recorded in Q4 of 2020 (53%), and the smallest share was recorded in Q2 (18%), representing a significant increase of 35 per cent when comparing the two quarters. A new drop in the number of fully operational PoEs has been observed (50% in January and February 2021). This is in line with an increasing number of partially operational PoEs observed during Q4 of 2020, and of fully closed PoEs observed in January and February.



The accelerating increase of COVID-19 cases continues to impact mobility globally and in the region. However, an increasing number of the assessed PoEs in the SEECA region is reported to have changed status since April 2020, from being fully closed to being partially or fully operational.

By February 2021, a new slight increase in the share of fully closed PoEs among those assessed is registered compared to December 2020.

2. The months from April to December always refer 2020 while January and February refer to 2021 within the scope of this report.

**Airports:**<sup>3</sup> The highest share of **fully closed international airports** of those assessed was recorded in the fourth quarter of 2020 (37%), although it remained relatively stable compared to Q2 (35%), and in the first two months of 2021 (January – February), representing 36 per cent on average. A significant drop in the share of fully closed airports was reported (-22%) between Q2 and Q3 of 2020, where only 14 per cent of PoEs was reported as fully closed. However, the share of fully closed airports among those assessed increased again from 14 to 37 per cent between the third and fourth quarter of 2020 to then remaining relatively stable until February 2021. Furthermore, almost half (45%) of assessed airports was partially operational in Q2, while the share of **partially operational airports** dropped significantly by 43 per cent in Q4 of 2020, and in January and February 2021 (2%), which represents the smallest share of partially operational airports recorded during the entire period. The largest share of **fully operational airports** among those assessed was recorded in Q3 (64%), marking a significant increase of 45 per cent when compared with Q2 (19%). Overall, the number of fully operational airports among those assessed remained relatively steady in Q4 (60%), and in January and February (61%).

**Land border crossing points:**<sup>4</sup> The largest share of **fully closed land border crossing points (LBCPs)** of those assessed was recorded in the second quarter of 2020 (64%), while the smallest share was recorded in Q4 (24%), representing a significant decrease of 40 per cent when comparing the two quarters. Although the share of fully closed LBCPs remained small during the fourth quarter of 2020, there has been a slight increase up to 25 per cent of the total in February 2021. Alongside the closure of slightly more LBCPs, the largest share of **partially operational LBCPs** was recorded in January (28%), while the smallest share was recorded in Q2 of 2020 (14%). Between the fourth quarter of 2020 and February 2021, the number of partially operational LBCPs increased slightly by 2 per cent, which is in line with an increasing number of fully closed LBCPs observed in January and February this year. Finally, the largest share of **fully operational LBCPs** was observed in Q4 of 2020 (49%), and the lowest recorded in Q2 (21%), representing an increase of 28 per cent when comparing the two quarters. During Q2 of 2020 only 21 per cent of all assessed LBCPs were fully operational. This changed during Q3, and onwards, where an increasing number of LBCPs started to operate more regularly. In February 2021, 48 per cent of the all assessed LBCPs were fully operational, which is a 3 per cent increase when compared with January (45%).

**Blue border crossing points:**<sup>5</sup> The largest share of **fully closed blue border crossing points (BBCPs)** of those assessed was recorded in the second quarter of 2020 (18%) and remained relatively stable in the third quarter (17%). However, this changed significantly in Q4 of 2020, and in January and February 2021, when none of the assessed BBCPs was fully closed. The share of **partially operational BBCPs** among those assessed decreased significantly by 45 per cent in Q4 (31%) from the peak reached in Q2 (76%). Furthermore, at the beginning of the pandemic, only 4 per cent of the BBCPs were recorded as fully operational. This changed significantly in Q3 (31%), Q4 (65%), and in January and February (56%), when the assessed BBCPs started to operate more regularly. The share of **fully operational BBCPs** peaked in the fourth quarter (65%), marking a significant increase of 61 per cent when compared with the second quarter of 2020 (4%). However, the number of fully operational BBCPs dropped by 9 per cent between Q4 of 2020 and January and February 2021, thus representing a downward trend according to most recent trends (see page 4, for further information).

Quarterly change in the operational status by type of location (PoE) assessed between April 2020 and February 2021\*



Note: "Type of location" refers to the type of PoEs assessed, which are airports, land and blue border crossing points.

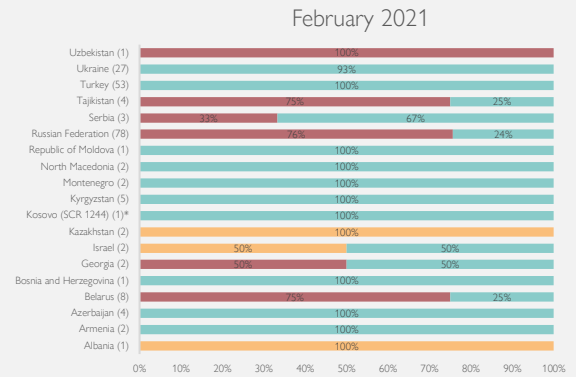
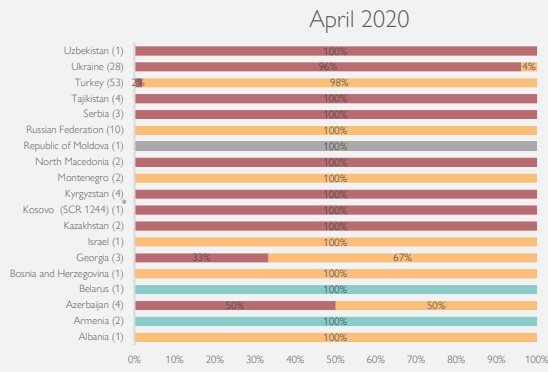
\*These two figures represent a quarterly breakdown only for 2020. As such, the percentages represented are based on the average of fully operational, partially operational, and fully closed PoEs recorded in 2020 by type of location. The month of January and February 2021 also represent the average of the PoE statuses in percentages.

3. By April and May a total of 122 airports were assessed. In September, 198 airports were assessed, in November and December a total of 196 airports were assessed, in January a total of 197 airports were assessed, while a total of 199 airports were assessed in February 2021.

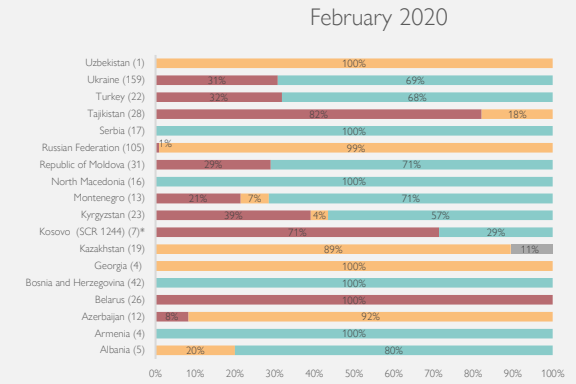
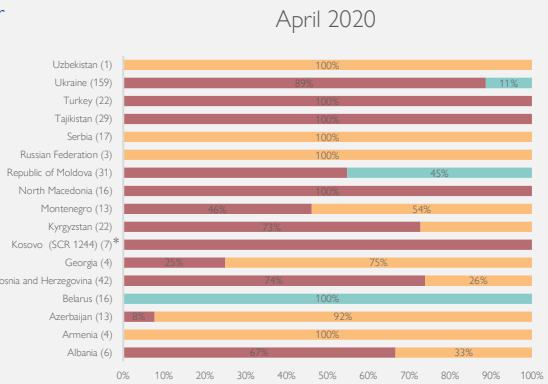
4. By April and May a total of 405 land border crossing points were assessed. In August, 433 land border crossing points were assessed, in October 432, in November 534, and in December, January, and February 2021, a total of 535 land border crossing points were assessed.

5. By April and May a total of 75 blue border crossing points were assessed. In June, 79 blue border crossing points were assessed, and in November, December, January, and February a total of 119 blue border crossing points assessed.

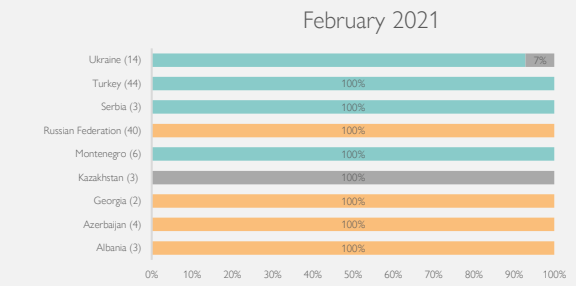
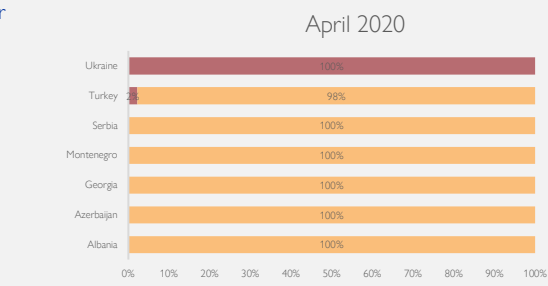
Airports



Land Border Crossing Points

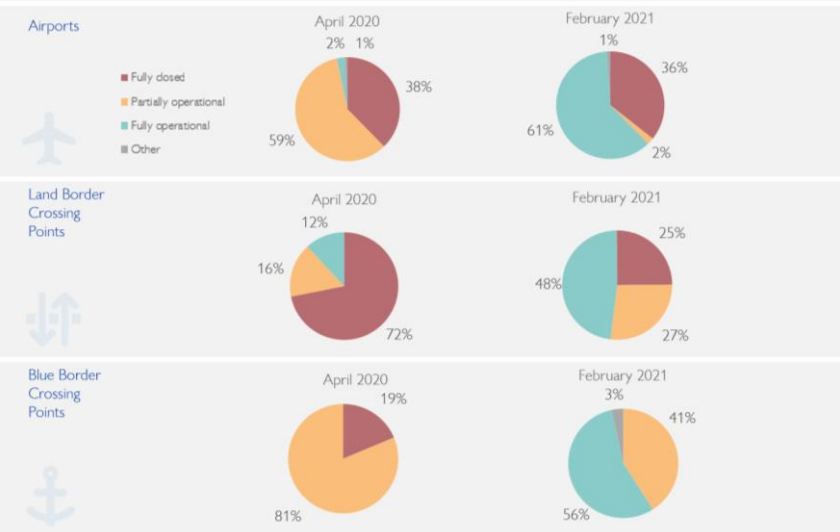


Blue Border Crossing Points



\* References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

Operational Status – Comparison: April 2020 – February 2021



Notes:

- The totals in the pie charts are relative to the assessed Points of Entry in April 2020 and February 2021.
- Under the category "Partially Operational" IOM includes "closed for entry," "closed for exit," "open only to returning nationals and residents" and "open for commercial traffic only".

## Changes in mobility restrictions over time: April 2020 – February 2021

Slight changes in the type of mobility restrictions implemented at each border crossing points were observed between April 2020 and February 2021. Mobility restrictions refer to restrictions of movements imposed both by entrance at PoEs and by exit through the PoEs, and medical measures.

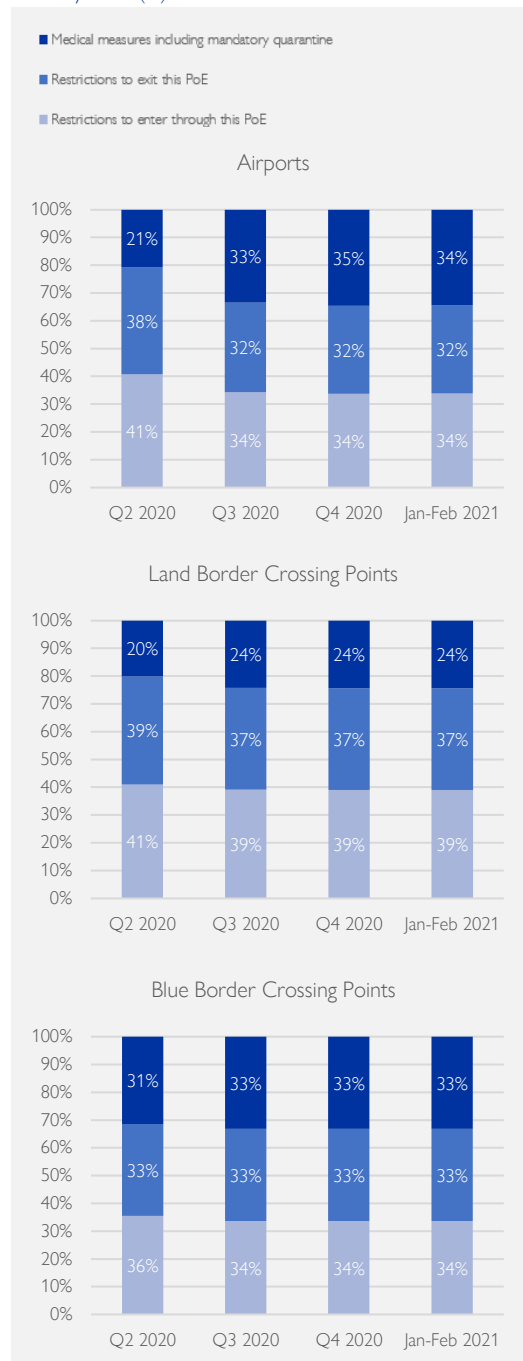
The largest share of **restrictions imposed on entering** through particular PoE at the **international airports** was recorded in the second quarter of 2020 (41% of all restrictions), while the restrictions imposed at entry were 34 per cent of total restrictions between Q3 2020 and February 2021, hence dropping by 6 per cent between Q2 and February. Furthermore, Q2 of 2020, recorded the largest share (38%) of **restrictions imposed on exiting** through particular PoEs at the international airports, when compared with the third and fourth quarter of 2020, and the two first months of 2021 (32%, respectively). The number of restrictions in average increased by 5 per cent between Q2 and February 2021. The share of **medical measures including mandatory quarantine measures** increased between Q2 and Q3 of 2020: in Q2, 21 per cent of the restrictions were medical measures imposed on the specific PoEs, while the share of medical measures out of all restrictions was 33 per cent in Q3. It then increased to 35 per cent in Q4, remaining relatively steady in the first two months of 2021 (24%).

Regarding the **LBCPs**, on average 41 per cent of the **restrictions** in the second quarter of 2020 **were imposed on entering** through particular PoEs, while these were 39 per cent of the total in Q3 and Q4 2020, and in January – February of 2021, representing a slight decrease of only 2 per cent. Furthermore, the largest share of **restrictions imposed on exiting** through particular PoEs was recorded in Q2 of 2020 (39%), while these were 37 per cent during Q3, Q4, and the two first months of 2021 (-2%). The share of **medical measures** increased slightly in Q3 of 2020 when compared with Q2 the same year: in Q2, 20 per cent of the restrictions were medical measures imposed on particular PoEs, while medical measures were 24 per cent of total measures from Q3 of 2020 until February 2021.

With regards to the **BBCPs**, Q2 of 2020 (36%) recorded the highest share of **restrictions imposed on entering** through particular PoEs, when compared with the Q2 and Q3 of 2020 and the first months of 2021 (34%). The share of **restrictions imposed on exiting** through particular PoE remained steady throughout the entire reporting period (33%). The share of **medical measures** imposed on particular PoEs also remained steady throughout the entire reporting period with only a slight increase observed between the second and third quarter of 2020: 31 per cent of the restrictions were medical measures in Q2, while the share of medical measures was 33 per cent from Q3 of 2020 until February 2021.

Most of **all imposed restrictions** concern the entry through PoEs (airports, land and blue border crossing points), and to a lesser extent the exit through or medical restrictions imposed at those PoEs. The highest number of restrictions to enter through the PoEs was recorded during the second quarter: 41 per cent at the assessed airports, and land border crossing points, respectively, and 36 per cent at the assessed blue border crossing points. The lowest number of restrictions to enter through the PoEs was recorded between July 2021 and February 2021: 34 per cent at the assessed airports, 39 per cent at the assessed land border crossing points, and 34 per cent at the assessed blue border crossing points.

## Mobility Restrictions – Quarterly comparison: April 2020 – February 2021 (%)



## Mobility Restrictions – Quarterly comparison: April 2020 – February 2021

| Location type               | Mobility Restriction                                     | Q2 2020 | Q3 2020 | Q4 2020 | Jan-Feb 2021 |
|-----------------------------|--|---------|---------|---------|--------------|
| Airports                    | → <b>R</b> Restrictions to enter through this PoE        | 41%     | 34%     | 34%     | 34%          |
|                             | ← <b>R</b> Restrictions to exit through this PoE         | 38%     | 32%     | 32%     | 32%          |
|                             | <b>M</b> Medical measures including mandatory quarantine | 21%     | 33%     | 35%     | 34%          |
| Land Border Crossing Points | → <b>R</b> Restrictions to enter through this PoE        | 41%     | 39%     | 39%     | 39%          |
|                             | ← <b>R</b> Restrictions to exit through this PoE         | 39%     | 37%     | 37%     | 37%          |
|                             | <b>M</b> Medical measures including mandatory quarantine | 20%     | 24%     | 24%     | 24%          |
| Blue Border Crossing Points | → <b>R</b> Restrictions to enter through this PoE        | 36%     | 34%     | 34%     | 34%          |
|                             | ← <b>R</b> Restrictions to exit through this PoE         | 33%     | 33%     | 33%     | 33%          |
|                             | <b>M</b> Medical measures including mandatory quarantine | 31%     | 33%     | 33%     | 33%          |