
[Updated 21/6/2020] GCC responses to tackle the Covid19 outbreak

As the GCC nations roll out various economic, financial, health and travel-related initiatives, the latest country-by-country measures is compiled below. Scroll down to see a map of the confirmed Covid-19 cases in the Middle East & North Africa region.

The list is update as of 3:00pm on 21st June, 2020.

Table: GCC responses to tackle the Covid19 outbreak

Bahrain	
Health & travel-related	Economic & Financial
Kuwait	
Health & travel-related	Economic & Financial
Kuwait eases “total curfew” to - lockdown on between 7pm to 5am; Hawally area has been lifted	Central bank: 1.5% Reduced the discount rate to - a record-low (from 2.5%)
for 2 weeks Parliament suspended - employees not public sector (from Jun 18); be allowed to return to offices from this week (starting Jun 21)	Reduced liquidity and capital - adequacy requirements for banks & cut (estimated to risk weighting for SMEs raise bank lending by USD 16bn)
Expiring residence permits/ visas - expiring in Jun extended for 3 months	of Domestic banks will defer payment - and financing, consumer & SME loans credit card instalments for six months
- Closed schools, shopping centres, cinemas, wedding halls & children’s entertainment	to KWD 10mn (USD 33mn) fund , Set up a be financed by Kuwaiti banks
- Halted ALL commercial passenger flights	Government authorized additional of KWD 500mn (USD 1.5bn) to funding ministries and state agencies for fight against Covid19
- All educational institutions in Kuwait Augth will reopen on 4	on point of sales devices Suspended fees and ATM withdrawals + increased the limit for contactless payments to KWD 25 from KWD 10

Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic The pledged almost USD 95mn **Development** to support government efforts

Oman

Health & travel-related

Economic & Financial

Lockdown in Muscat ended; Dhofar - Governorate in Oman closed from 12 noon of June 13 until July 3 for tourism

\$20bn incentive package CB announces a

- Repo rate cut by 75bps to 0.5%;

- At least 50% of employees in government entities will work from the offices starting May 31

- Reduce Capital Conservation Buffers for banks to 1.25% from 2.5%;

all - Oman has closed its borders; to and domestic and international flights from 12 noon of Mar 29

- Lending Ratio / Financing Ratio for lenders increased to 92.5% up from 87.5%

freeze - banks and financial institutions to of personal and housing loans **repayments** for three months, effective from May

Covid-19 tests and treatments will be - for all communities done for free

- Reduce existing fees related to banking services + avoid introducing new fees

will ;Suspend issuance of tourist visas - at its ports not allow cruise ships to dock during this period

Finance ministry slashed approved of civil, military and security budgets agencies by 5%

- Schools closed; all public parks closed, public gathering prohibited, Friday prayers at mosques suspended; limited staffing at estate entities

All government companies have to reduce approved expenditures for 2020 + no execution of new projects or by 10% capital expenditures for the year; all exceptional bonuses for state employees would be halted

(consulting, law, **Few shops in Oman - audit firms, flower shops, boutiques etc) reopento**

tourism & **Other measures include** municipality tax breaks, free government storage facilities and postponement of credit instalment payments

Restrictions are still in place on - (of more than 5 individuals) on gatherings beaches and other public places

Qatar

Health & travel-related

Economic & Financial

Four-phased recovery programme -

A \$23.3bn stimulus package

: Mosques to reopen Jun 15th, **planned** - QAR 75bn (\$20.6bn) to provide financial
restaurants to partially reopen (Jul 1) + economic incentives for private sector

from **international flights suspended** - All **appropriate** - CB to put in place an
Mar 18; cargo aircraft, transit flights **mechanism to encourage banks to**
exempt; travel ban on all travelers except **postpone loan installments and**
Qatari nationals with a **obligations of the private sector**
grace period of 6 months

Qatar Airways grounds its A380 - **postpone** - Qatar Development Bank to
temporarily reduce 40% of to fleet; for 6 **installments for all borrowers**
(in food and beverage, retail & ground **staff** months
staff) at Hamad Airport

- Educational institutions closed; parks and's government entities **Qatar** -
public beaches closed **reduce costs for non-Qatari** directed to
(either **employees by 30% as of Jun 1**
pay cuts or layoffs)

; introduces **Bans social gatherings** -
enforcement measures: checkpoints and mobile police patrols
govt funds to increase - Directing
by **investments in the stock exchange**

to instructed Private sector companies - QAR 10bn (\$2.75bn)
, **have 80% of their staff work from home**
effective Thurs (Apr 2) for an initial 2 weeks **food & medical goods from** - Exempting
for 6 months **customs duties**

Public transport modes have been -
stopped for SMEs, **Utilities bill exemption** -
for 6 **rent exemption** affected sectors;
months

(medical **aid sent to Iran** - 6 tonnes of
equipment & supplies); donating \$150mn
in aid to Gaza

Saudi Arabia

Health & travel-related

Economic & Financial

Restrictions eased across the nation - to support **SAR 120bn worth measures** -
phase of rdSaudi Arabia initiates the 3: the pvt sector including postponement of
by opening most **its recovery plan** VAT/ excise/ income tax/ Zakat payments,
from Jun commercial activities exemptions of govt dues etc
Mosques in Makkah are also set to **20.**
reopen with social distancing measures in **: SAMA's SAR 50bn stimulus package** -
place. financing support for SMEs (including
deferred loan payments, concessional

Domestic flights resume; intl -
passenger flights still suspended + -loans) and coverage of points of sale & e
workplace attendance in both public commerce fees

and private sectors **SAMA's measures for supporting &** -
: adjusting or **financing the private sector**

Malls reopen with multiple safety measures - restructuring the current funds without any additional costs or fees + reviewing reassessment of interest rates and other

Mosques reopened with - -fees on credit cards + refunding travel
to Umrah pilgrimages restrictions; related forex transfer fees
Mecca & Medina under a temporary ban

urged - Capital Markets Authority
shareholders & invested in listed + SAR 32bn approved for healthcare
in **companies to vote electronically** facilities

Tadawul reduces upcoming meetings;
trading hours

SAR 7bn allocated to Health Ministry in -
addition to the SAR 8bn package earlier
+ SAR 32bn approved for healthcare

Government will cover 60% of private -
hit by **sector salaries (of Saudi citizens)**
Covid-19; first payment to be send on May
3.

(affected **allow private businesses - Will**
to reduce working hours by Covid19)
by not **and permit wages to be reduced**
more than 40%

- Additional set of measures

SAR 50bn to accelerate **announced:**
payment of private sector dues & provide
liquidity to several sectors while a further
SAR 47bn was set aside for the health
sector

- Saudi Industrial Development

revealed a SAR 3.7bn (USD 3.62bn) **Fund**
stimulus package for industrial sector
companies

Initiatives to reduce private sector's -

: e.g. lifting **burdens related to manpower**
halts on non-payment of fines, fines related
to workers recruitment etc.

(USD **Saudi Arabia will cut SAR 50bn -**
13.32bn or less than 5%) of the 2020
cost of living allowance budget;
scrapped

- VAT to be tripled to 15% starting 1st
Jul

- Land borders with UAE, KW, Bahrain
closed except for commercial trucks;

shipping services suspended from 50 countries; cargo traffic not affected

United Arab Emirates

Health & travel-related

Economic & Financial

Abu Dhabi imposes movement ban from/to the emirate till Jun 23rd;

mall capacity - **Easing of restrictions:** increased; restaurants, gyms, beaches, museums reopen.

- **Dubai permits shopping malls and private businesses to operate at full capacity**

; buses and taxis **Metro services re-open** are operational

- 30% of federal employees return to work **full capacity in Dubai's govt offices & 30% in Sharjah's govt offices from Jun 14**

to between 10pm-6am; **Curfews reduced** in Dubai from 11pm to 6am

- **Entry for residents overseas to start**; temporary ban to issue new **from Jun 1** visas

- All inbound, outbound and transit flights **Emirates** suspended from Mar 25; for 12 Arab **bookings are open from Jul 1** **airports welcome transit** nations; UAE **.passengers**

Schools to be closed till end-Jun; - distance learning extended. Schools will reopen in Sep, though discussions ongoing regarding the method of learning in the 2020-21 academic year.

- **UAE announces a 2-phase recovery** short-term gradual re-opening (including the AED 282.5bn stimulus) + focus on -sectors "with high potential" in the long term (AI, 5G, IoT, Blockchain, RE, EVs, 3D printing, robotics...)

:Central bank

to facilitate **AED100bn stimulus** - temporary relief on private sector loans & ; support also **SME lending** promote **real estate sector**the

- 50% reduction in reserve requirements for demand deposits to 7% (releasing ~ USD 16.6bn in liquidity)

reschedule loans contracts + **Banks to** - grant deferrals on monthly loan payments (till end-2020) + reduce fees and -commissions

UAE Cabinet: additional AED 16bn reduce cost of doing business, **stimulus to** support small business, accelerate implementation of govt infrastructure projects

Ministry of Economy reduced fees of 94 **services**

package to **Dubai: AED 1.5bn stimulus** support businesses affected by Covid19 including 10% reduction in utilities bills

: AED 5bn in utilities subsidies; **Abu Dhabi** free road tolls till end-2020, 20% rebate on rental values for restaurants + tourism & entertainment sectors (+ faster

osques, churches and other places of worship remain closed M- implementation of Ghadan-21 initiatives)

Opened, with social distancing - public parks, beaches, **measures:** cinemas, gyms

Sends 2 batches **Supporting others:** - **lew** in Mar + **medical aid to Iran** critical **215 people from different countries out** to Abu Dhabi's Emirates of Wuhan Humanitarian City

Dubai Freezones launch stimulus rents postponed for six months; **package:** cancellation of fines; free movement of labour with temporary contracts

Federal Tax Authority extends the Excise Tax return submission deadline for March and April 2020 to May 17, 2020

(Source: Johns Hopkins University) **Map: Number of Confirmed Covid19 cases by country**

google.charts.load('current', { 'packages':['geochart'], // Note: you will need to get a mapsApiKey for your project. // See:

https://developers.google.com/chart/interactive/docs/basic_load_libs#load-settings
'mapsApiKey': 'AlzaSyA4Q3e-hV2dl5w-sv8d4jG0V2jS1dXidTM' });

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google.charts.setOnLoadCallback(drawRegionsMap); function drawRegionsMap() { var data = google.visualization.arrayToDataTable([ ['Country', 'Confirmed cases', ['Bahrain', 21331], ['Kuwait', 39145], ['Oman', 29471], ['Qatar', 86488], ['Saudi Arabia', 154233], ['Lebanon', 1536], ['Iraq', 29222], ['Jordan', 1015], ['United Arab Emirates', 44533], ['Syria', 204], ['Iran', 202584], ['West Bank & Gaza', 448] ]]); var options = { region: '145', // Middle East colorAxis: {colors: ['#00853f', 'black', '#e31b23']}, }; var chart = new
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google.visualization.GeoChart(document.getElementById('regions_div')); chart.draw(data, options); } google.charts.load('current', { 'packages':['geochart'], // Note: you will need to get a mapsApiKey for your project. // See:
```

https://developers.google.com/chart/interactive/docs/basic_load_libs#load-settings
'mapsApiKey': 'AlzaSyA4Q3e-hV2dl5w-sv8d4jG0V2jS1dXidTM' });

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google.charts.setOnLoadCallback(drawRegionsMap); function drawRegionsMap() { var data = google.visualization.arrayToDataTable([ ['Country', 'Confirmed cases', ['Algeria', 11631], ['Morocco', 9957], ['Tunisia', 1156], ['Djibouti', 4565], ['Libya', 544], ['Sudan', 7007], ['South Sudan', 1882], ['Iran', 202584], ['Egypt', 53758], ['Syria', 204], ['Yemen', 922] ]]); var options = { region: '015', // North Africa colorAxis: {colors: ['#00853f', 'black', '#e31b23']}, }; var chart = new
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```

https://developers.google.com/chart/interactive/docs/basic_load_libs#load-settings
'mapsApiKey': 'AlzaSyA4Q3e-hV2dl5w-sv8d4jG0V2jS1dXidTM' });

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google.charts.setOnLoadCallback(drawRegionsMap); function drawRegionsMap() { var data = google.visualization.arrayToDataTable([ ['Country', 'Confirmed cases', ['Iran', 202584], ['Syria', 204], ['Afghanistan', 28833] ]]); var options = { region: '034', // SAsia colorAxis: {colors: ['#00853f', 'black', '#e31b23']}, }; var chart = new
```

```
google.visualization.GeoChart(document.getElementById('regions_div3')); chart.draw(data, options); }
```

Middle East

North Africa

Iran & Afghanistan