How COVID-19 is changing the world: a statistical perspective Volume II

CCSA

Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities

Contributing organisations

Asian Development Bank (ADB)
African Development Bank (AfDB)
Bank for International Settlements (BIS)
Cooperation Council for the Arab Countries of the Gulf (GCC)
European Central Bank (ECB)
Eurostat
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
International Labour Organization (ILO)
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21)
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP)
United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA)
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)
United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN Habitat)
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (UN DESA/PD)
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division (UN DESA/SD)
United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)
Universal Postal Union (UPU)
World Bank (WB)
World Trade Organization (WTO)
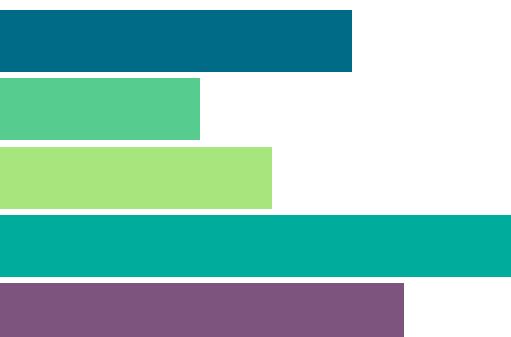
The Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA)

The CCSA is comprised of international and supranational organizations whose mandates include the provision of international official statistics guided by the Principles Governing International Statistical Activities (https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ccsa/principles_stat_activities/) and which have a permanent embedded statistical service that maintains regular contact with countries. The mandate of the CCSA is to ensure the efficient functioning of the international statistical system, to assist Governments in the development of common statistical standards, platforms and methodologies, and to provide inter-institutional support, outreach and advocacy for high-quality official statistics.

More information can be found on the CCSA webpage: https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ccsa/

Introduction

We are pleased to present the second volume of "How COVID-19 is changing the world: a statistical perspective".

Since the release of the first volume in May 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to rage around the world. By the end of August, countries around the globe had reported over 25 million cases, with nearly 850,000 deaths attributed to the disease.

The pandemic presents tough choices. National and regional governments, local communities, health and school systems, as well as families and businesses are being forced to take many difficult decisions: How to re open safely? How to safeguard people's lives and protect their livelihoods? Where to allocate scarce resources? How to protect those unable to protect themselves? Answers to questions like these will affect our short-term success in battling the virus and could have impacts for generations to come.

More than ever, the world needs reliable and trustworthy data and statistics to inform these important decisions. The United Nations and all member organizations of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA) collect and make available a wealth of information for assessing the multifaceted impacts of the pandemic. This report updates some of the global and regional trends presented in the first volume and offers a snapshot of how COVID-19 continues to affect the world today across multiple domains. The report also highlights the impact of the pandemic on specific regions and population groups.

The information contained herein is even grimmer than in the first volume, confirming the unprecedented impact of the pandemic on the economic and social fabric of our societies. Some key findings are as follows:

- Trends in COVID-19 caseloads differ widely by country, illustrating the unpredictable nature of the pandemic and the importance of remaining vigilant in our battle against the virus;

- Global foreign direct investment is now projected to fall by as much as 40 percent in 2020;

- Global manufacturing output fell by 20 per cent in April 2020 compared to the same period of the previous year, accelerating an already declining trend;

- The pandemic is pushing an additional 71 to 100 million people into extreme poverty;

- Globally, the first quarter of 2020 saw a loss of the equivalent to 155 million full-time jobs, a number that increased to 400 million in the second quarter, with lower- and middle-income countries hardest hit;

- Simulations suggest a steep and unprecedented decline in the Human Development Index (HDI), undermining six years of progress;

- As recipients of 43 per cent of global remittance inflows, the developing economies of Asia and the Pacific are especially vulnerable to the global economic stall and its impact on the transfer of remittances by migrant workers;

- To mitigate the impact of the pandemic in Africa, the African Development Bank has invested USD 10.2 billion to establish a Crisis Response Facility;

- Data from 31 countries over the period 2014 to 2019 show that about 1 in 5 people reported having experienced discrimination on at least one of the grounds prohibited by international human rights law, highlighting the need for COVID-19 responses to ensure that the pandemic does not exacerbate existing forms of discrimination;

- Even before the pandemic, women did three times more unpaid domestic and care work than men; since the pandemic, however, data from rapid gender assessment surveys indicate that women in some regions are shouldering the extra burden of an increased workload, particularly in terms of childcare and household chores.

The report also provides a glimpse of the challenges faced by national statistical systems. At a time when reliable information is more essential than ever, many systems are struggling to compile basic statistics, due in part to the pandemic but also because of a lack of resources needed to modernize operations and infrastructures.

The data and statistics presented in this report are but the tip of an iceberg. Readers are encouraged to visit the websites of the contributing organizations, where they can find additional information on the impact of COVID-19 and other topics.

Lastly, we would like to give special thanks to the CCSA secretariat (Statistics Division of UN DESA) and to the teams at UNICEF and in the Population Division of UN DESA, led by Mark Hereward and John Wilmoth, respectively, which joined forces to edit this collection of statistical information about the pandemic. Without their commitment and dedication, this report would not have been possible.

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#StatisticalCoordination

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COVID-19

Differential success in mitigating the pandemic

Countries have experienced the COVID-19 pandemic under various circumstances and have adopted a variety of policy responses. Accordingly, they have experienced a wide range of trends in their daily caseloads.

Figure 1. Early epidemics
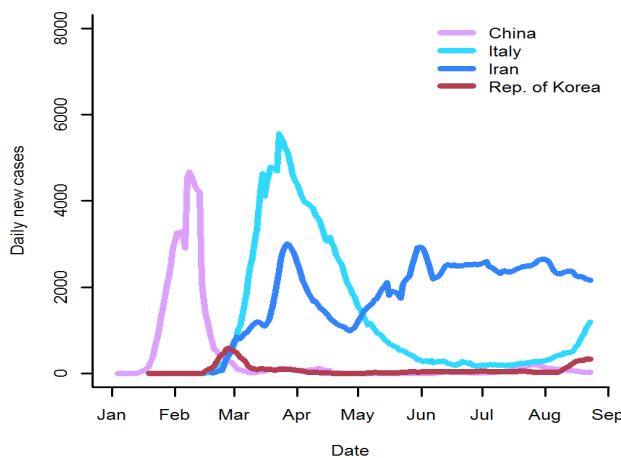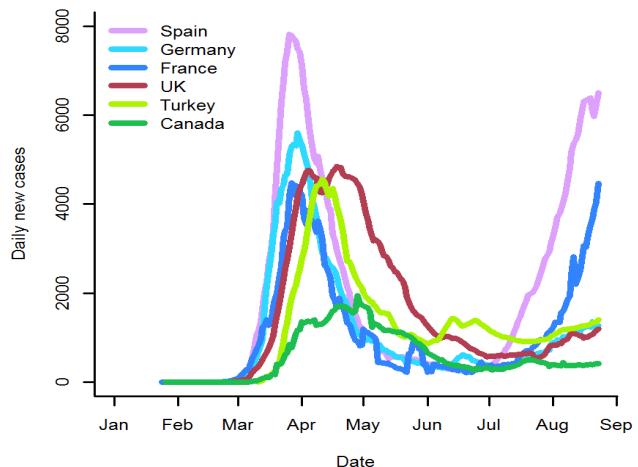
Figure 2. Initial success, ongoing challenges

Source: World Health Organization, Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard at https://covid-19.who.int/.

All countries have been challenged by the novel coronavirus, but they have not all fared the same. Here, distinctive patterns are illustrated using daily counts of new confirmed cases as reported to the World Health Organization.

Early scenarios of the COVID-19 pandemic often depicted waves, including a possible second wave in late 2020. On the ocean, waves follow troughs with a predictable rhythm. For pandemic influenza, a summer trough has often been followed by a fall or winter wave. Yet daily case counts of COVID-19 have followed various patterns, without a consistent summer trough or a predictable second wave.

A forest fire may be a more appropriate metaphor for the spread of COVID-19. Both chaotic and unpredictable, a forest fire may burn slowly in a controlled way; it may become larger and more difficult to contain; or it may rage out of control like a fire storm. Airborne embers may land on dry wood, igniting a new blaze or reigniting an old one. Wind and other factors may accelerate the spread.

Four countries with early epidemics—China, the Republic of Korea, Italy and the Islamic Republic of Iran—illustrate the new metaphor (figure 1). China and the Republic of Korea quickly tamed the forest fire in February and early March and have contained the blaze well since then. Italy controlled a fire that raged during March and April, reducing it to a slow burn in June and July. Yet all three countries have seen flare-ups in July or

August. Meanwhile, the fire has raged without stop since late February in Iran, where containment remains challenging.

Like Italy, several countries in Europe and elsewhere reduced a large outbreak to a slow burn but remain at risk for flare-ups (figure 2). Like Iran, in several countries, caseloads have been rising or remain at high levels (figure 3). Like China and the Republic of Korea, some countries successfully mitigated the epidemic, maintaining or reducing case counts close to zero, but all remain at risk for flare-ups (figure 4).

Few locations have seen epidemics that could be compared to a fire storm. The most prominent examples are cities or regions within countries where the epidemic initiated or was concentrated, including Hubei province, northern Italy and New York City.

For a successful re-opening, countries must remain vigilant in the face of COVID-19. Just as a single ember can rekindle a fire that had been brought under control, the virus can easily return to a population where it had been suppressed.

Stopping the uncontrolled spread of the virus requires a coordinated strategy, clear messaging and social solidarity. Even without a vaccine, countries can take decisive action to mitigate the pandemic and to create the essential conditions for economies to reopen safely.

Figure 3. Rising or high caseloads
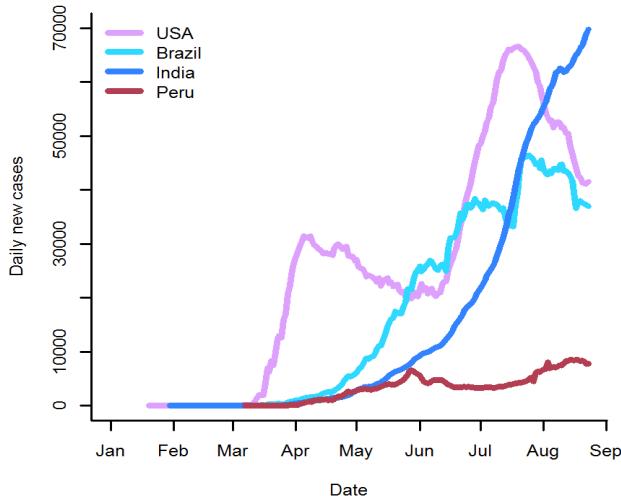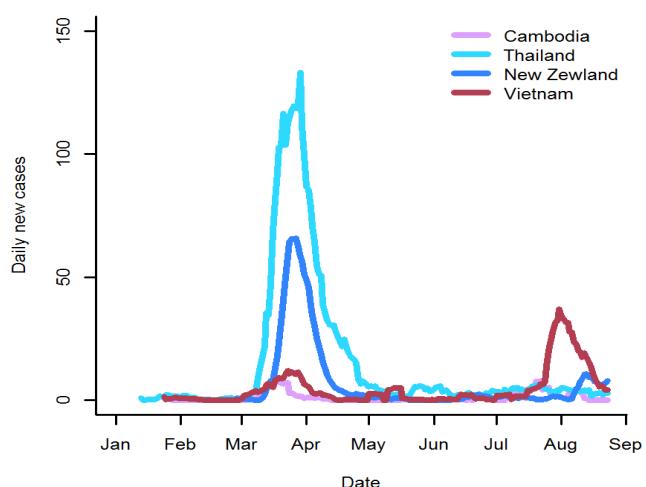
Figure 4. Few cases, effective suppression

Source: World Health Organization, Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard at https://covid-19.who.int/.
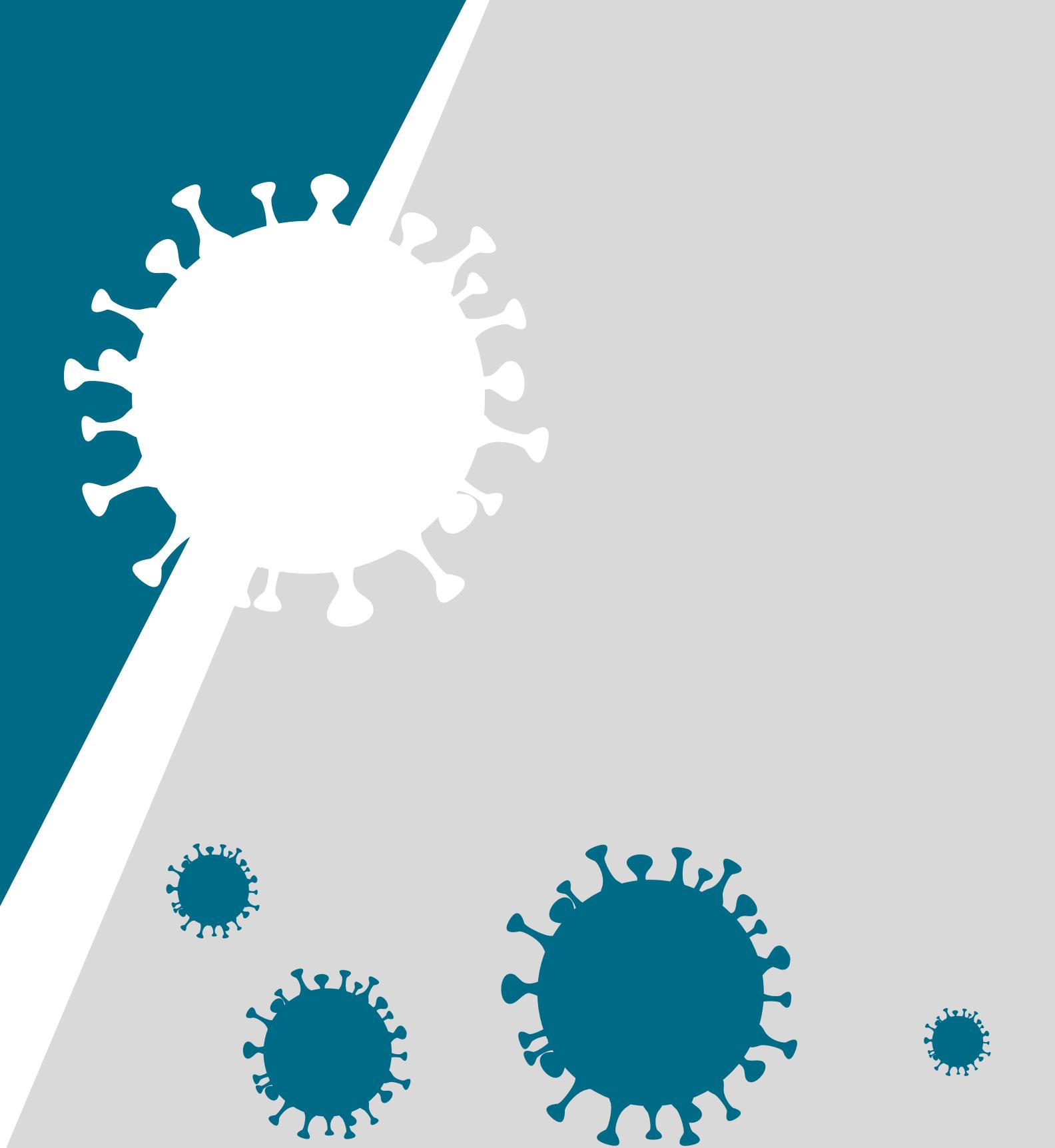
Note:

- Figures prepared by United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, using data from the World Health Organization, Coronavirus Disease (COVID 19) Dashboard, https://covid19.who.int/ (data last updated 30 August, 12:47 pm CEST). Observations are 7-day moving averages; therefore, the last data point for each country corresponds to 26 August.
- The vertical axes of figures 1 and 2 run from 0 to 8,000 cases; for figure 3, from 0 to 70,000; for figure 4, from 0 to 150.
- Confirmed cases are an imperfect measure of disease dynamics, both because they omit unreported cases and because their trend may differ from the trend in deaths. Further analysis using all forms of available data is likely to yield additional insights.
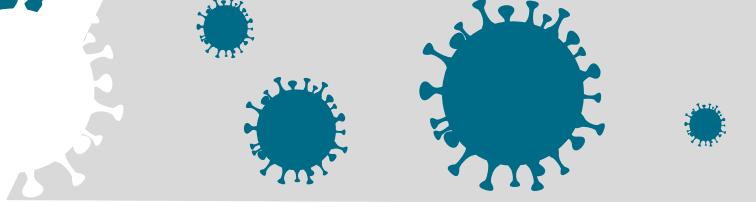
References:

Kristine A. Moore and others. "The future of the COVID-19 pandemic: Lessons learned from pandemic influenza", Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy (CIDRAP), University of Minnesota, 30 April 2020, https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/sites/default/files/public/downloads/cidrap-covid19-viewpoint-part1_0.pdf.

NBC News, Meet the Press, interview with Michael Osterholm, 21 June 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d_3cQZQLxJo.

DESA
Population

ECONOMIC IMPACT
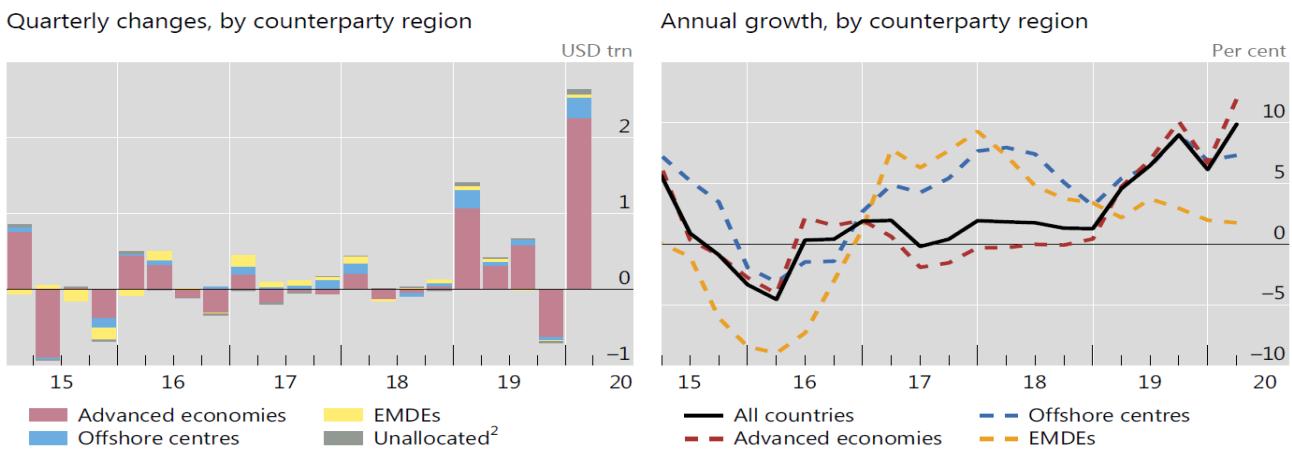
Global banking up in the initial phase of COVID-19

Bank for International Settlements (BIS) statistics show that global cross-border bank credit surged in the first quarter of 2020, accompanied, in particular, by a substantial increase in foreign claims on the US official sector. In contrast, credit on emerging market and developing economies (EMDEs) stagnated. Lastly, the pandemic-induced volatility in financial markets contributed to notable jumps in global banks' derivatives positions.

Figure 1. Global cross-border claims[1]

Quarterly changes, by counterparty region — USD trn
Annual growth, by counterparty region — Per cent

Legend: Advanced economies | EMDEs | Offshore centres | Unallocated[2]
All countries | Offshore centres | Advanced economies | EMDEs

Source: BIS locational banking statistics.
[1] Quarterly changes are adjusted for breaks-in-series and exchange rate fluctuations. The annual growth rates are calculated based on the adjusted changes for the last four quarters.
[2] Includes claims on international organisations (in addition to claims unallocated by counterparty residence).

Against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, banks' global cross-border claims surged in the first quarter of 2020. International banking credit is here measured by the BIS locational banking statistics (LBS), which follow balance of payments residence-based concepts and track the claims (assets) and liabilities of banks located in a particular country.

Cross-border claims rose (on a break- and exchange rate-adjusted basis) by $2.6 trillion in Q1 2020 (figure 1). This increased their year-on-year growth rate to 10% at end-March 2020, up from 6% a quarter before. Claims on borrowers in advanced economies, esp. the United States, and offshore financial centres expanded the most.

Another BIS dataset, the consolidated banking statistics (CBS), tracks the globally consolidated positions of banks headquartered in a given country. They cover global banks' foreign claims—i.e., cross-border claims and local claims booked by affiliates abroad (excluding inter-office positions).

These data show that non-US banks' foreign claims on the United States surged by nearly $950 billion in Q1 2020, the largest quarterly increase on record. Their local claims in local currencies—i.e., dollar-denominated claims on US residents booked by the US-based affiliates of non-US banks—accounted for much of this expansion.
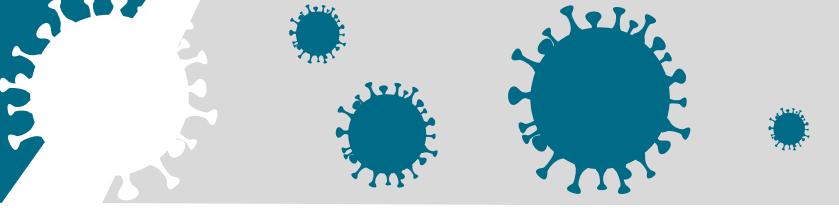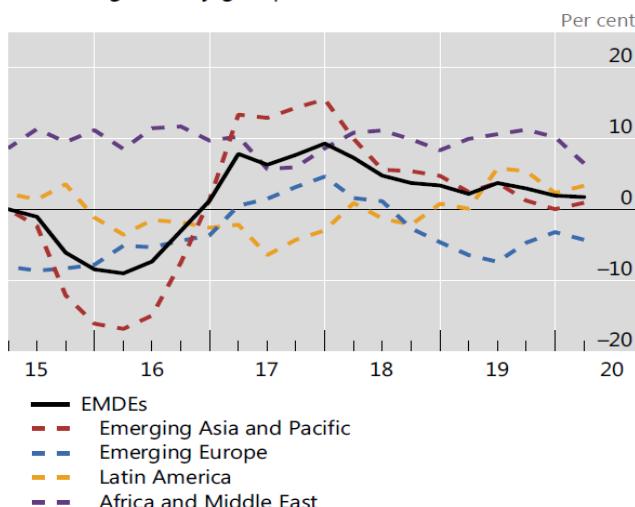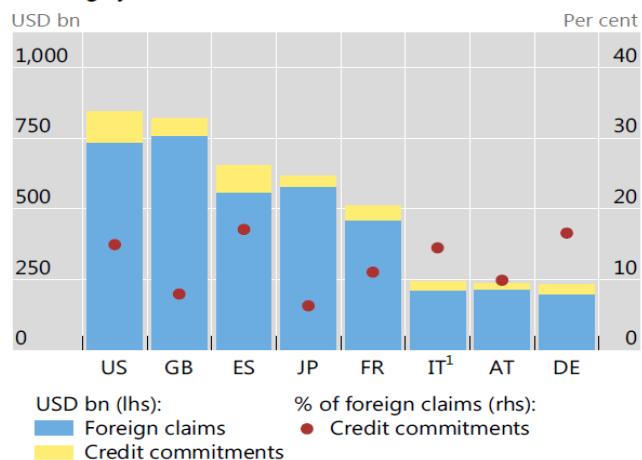
Figure 2. Claims on EMDEs

Year-on-year growth in cross-border claims, by borrowing country group

EMDEs
Emerging Asia and Pacific
Emerging Europe
Latin America
Africa and Middle East

Outstanding stocks (at end-Q1 2020), by creditor banking system

USD bn (lhs):
Foreign claims
Credit commitments

% of foreign claims (rhs):
Credit commitments

Source: BIS locational banking statistics; BIS consolidated banking statistics on a guarantor basis.
[1] Data at end-4Q 2019.

A key factor was the significant rise (by $560 billion) observed for non-US banks' foreign claims on the US official sector, which includes the US government and the Federal Reserve (US data show that non-US banks' branches and agencies in the United States held $870 billion of reserves at the Federal Reserve at end-Q1 2020, up from $550 billion at end-2019).

The annual growth rate of cross-border claims on EMDEs continued to decline from already low levels: it fell to 1.8% as of end-March 2020, compared to 3.7% at mid-2019 (figure 2, left-hand panel).

Foreign bank lending to EMDEs is highly concentrated (figure 2, right-hand panel). At end-March 2020, five bank nationalities (UK, US, Japanese, Spanish and French banks) accounted for almost two thirds of all foreign claims on EMDEs (blue bars).
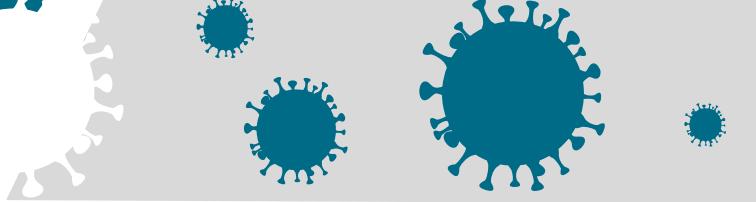
The CBS also reveal a significant increase in the market value of banks' derivatives positions at the time of the pandemic escalation. This is likely to have reflected the bout of market volatility observed in the first quarter of 2020, which widened the gap between market and contract prices and pushed derivatives contracts "into the money" for either the reporting banks or their counterparties.

Metadata:
- BIS international banking statistics cover the balance sheets of internationally active banks. The locational statistics provide information about the geographical and currency composition of banks' assets and liabilities, including intragroup business. The consolidated statistics measure banks' country risk exposures on a worldwide consolidated basis. Both data sets are collected under the auspices of the Committee on the Global Financial System and reported to the BIS at a country, rather than individual bank, level.

Source:
- BIS international banking statistics at end-March 2020, BIS Statistical release, 22 July 2020.

Increase of the Pandemic Emergency Purchase Programme

In crisis times there is even more a need for high-quality data to be available on a timely basis. The European Central Bank (ECB) and the national central banks (NCBs) offer assistance to reporting agents to ensure that data remains fit for purpose. The European Central Bank has introduced a Pandemic Emergency Purchase Programme (PEPP) to support the euro area banking sector, firms and households through the COVID-19 crisis.

Table 1. Purchases under the PEPP (Euro millions)

2020	Monthly net purchases
March	15,444
April	103,366
May	115,855
June	85,423

Note: On 4 June 2020 the Governing Council decided to increase the €750 billion envelope for the Pandemic Emergency Purchase Programme to €1,350 billion.

Table 2. Breakdown of cumulative net purchases under the PEPP
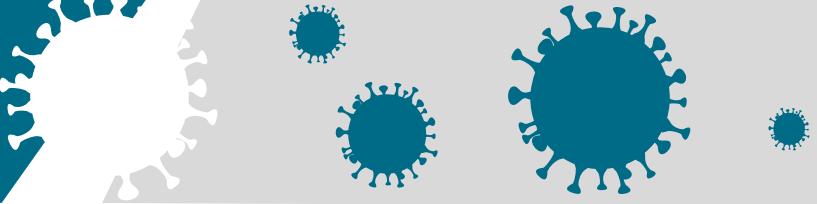
Mar-May 2020	Euro millions
Asset Backed Securities	0
Covered Bonds	3,128
Corporate Bonds	17,620
Commercial Paper	34,845
Public Sector Securities	384,464
Total	440,057

Note: Breakdown of holdings as at end-July 2020 under the PEPP (Figures may not add up due to rounding. Figures are preliminary and may be subject to revision)

Despite the current coronavirus pandemic, the ECB is determined to continue collecting data on a timely basis and of a quality that is fit for purpose. This will allow the ECB to have the necessary statistical information at its disposal to adjust all of its measures, should this be needed, to safeguard liquidity conditions in the banking system and to ensure the smooth transmission of its monetary policy.

This statistical information contributes to the maintenance of price stability and the smooth conduct of policies pursued by the competent authorities responsible for the supervision and resolution of financial institutions, for markets and infrastructures, and for the stability of the financial system.

Many reporting agents have adopted remote working arrangements. Meanwhile, the continuity and quality of statistical information reporting may be challenged by the exceptional circumstances surrounding the performance of day-to-day operations underlying the statistical reporting.

The ECB has therefore invited the national central banks and reporting agents to find pragmatic solutions within the existing legal framework to keep data reporting within limits that are manageable for reporting agents, while maintaining the quality of the statistical information at a sufficiently high level.

In case of difficulties, reporting agents are asked to contact their national central banks and the ECB for assistance. The ECB and the national central banks cooperate closely with other European institutions and bodies. Together with the reporting agents, the ECB will rise to these unprecedented challenges, thus ensuring that the data and statistics required to support the necessary policy measures are fit for purpose.

Link to statistics and metadata:
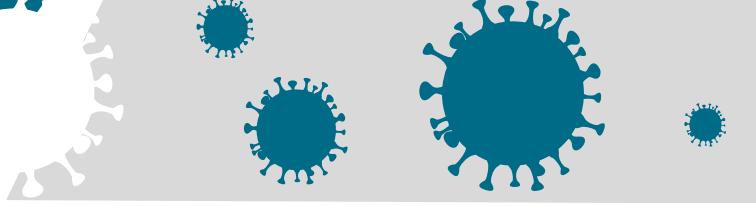
- Statistical Data Warehouse website
- Statistics webpage on ECB website
- Euro area statistics website
- ECB and SSM websites

Sources:

- ECB communication to reporting agents on the collection of statistical information in the context of COVID-19, ECB, 15 April 2020.
- Supervisory reporting measures in the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, ECB, 15 April 2020.
- Pandemic emergency purchase programme (PEPP)
- Our response to the coronavirus emergency, Christine Lagarde, President of the ECB, the ECB Blog, 19 March 2020.
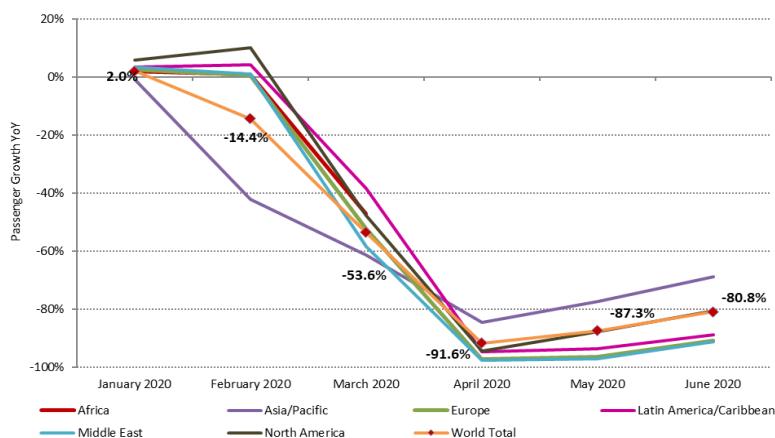
EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK

EUROSYSTEM

# Aviation standstill with slow and shallow recovery
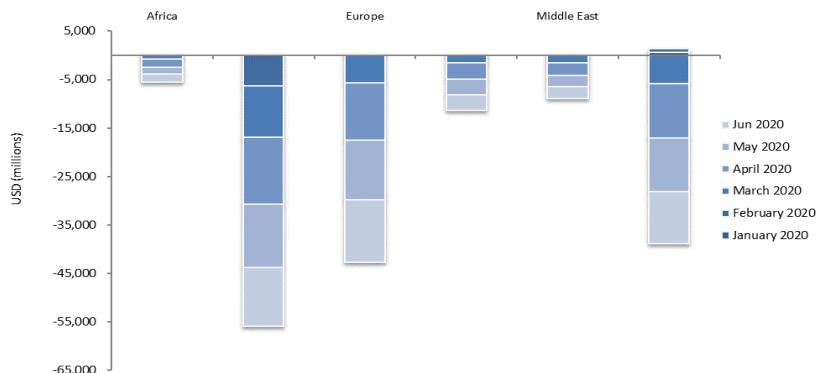
The global aviation came to a halt in the course of wide-scale lockdown and travel restrictions across all regions. Air travel demand was crippled with stagnant recovery anticipating a long shadow of the crisis.

Figure 1. Air traffic demand decline by region

Source: ICAO ADS-B operational data.

Figure 2. Passenger revenue loss by region

Source: ICAO Economic Impact Analysis of COVID-19 on Civil Aviation.

Since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak, both capacity offered and travel demand plunged. The situation got worsened alongside the widespread of the virus. Following the global pandemic declarations, air travel was decimated amidst the prolonged large-scale lockdown and travel restrictions enforced in most part of the world.

Economic impact analysis of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) reveals that in the month of April 2020 when almost all countries implemented full or partial lockdown, air traffic fell drastically to nearly zero with unprecedented contractions of over 90%.

For the first half of 2020, number of passengers dropped by 56% compared to 2019, from 2.2 billion to 1 billion. Asia/Pacific recorded the biggest fall in passenger numbers by 466 million, followed by Europe and North America, by 342 and

264 million, respectively. Air cargo demand also reached its historical low level, declining by -28%. Demand for medical supplies as well as essential goods has withheld air freight traffic from collapsing.

Revenue streams of the industry evaporated. According to ICAO's estimates, airlines have lost approximately USD 160 billion in passenger revenue for the first six months of the year, and airports and air navigation service providers are expected to lose around USD 52 billion and USD 6 billion, respectively.
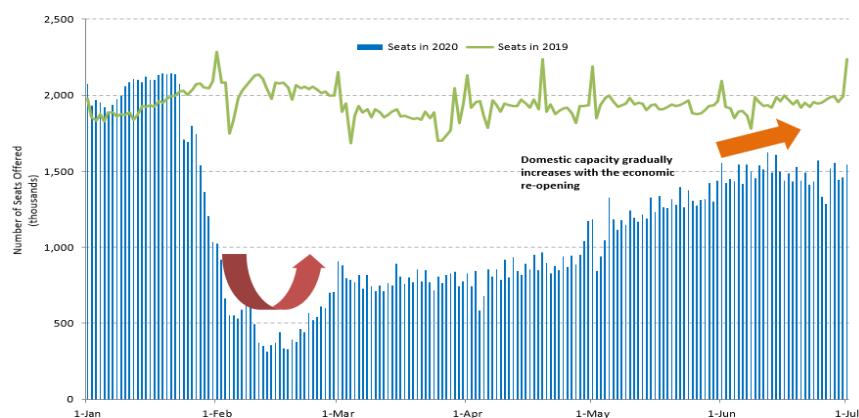
As the industry continues to find its way in the wake of the pandemic, gradual resurgence in air traffic was observed since May 2020, driven mostly by domestic market, particularly in China where domestic traffic was recovered to 76% of the June 2019 level. International traffic, however, remained sluggish with marginal improvements, indicating a slow return to normalcy.

Figure 3. Monthly passenger traffic compared to 2019

Source: ICAO ADS-B operational data.

Figure 4. Evolution of domestic passenger traffic of China

Source: ICAO ADS-B operational data.

Link to metadata:
- ICAO COVID-19 Air Traffic Dashboard: https://www.icao.int/sustainability/Pages/COVID-19-Air-Traffic-Dashboard.aspx
- ICAO Economic Impact Analysis of COVID-19 on Civil Aviation: https://www.icao.int/sustainability/Pages/Economic-Impacts-of-COVID-19.aspx
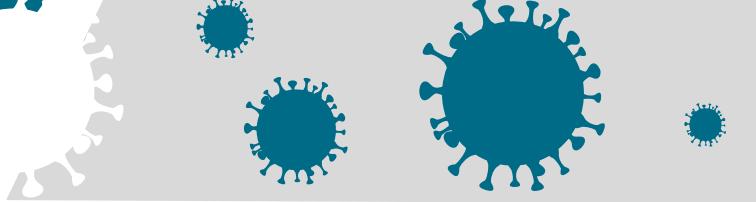
Sources:
- ICAO Air Transport Statistics, ADS-B FlightAware
- ICAO Economic Impact Analysis of COVID-19 on Civil Aviation
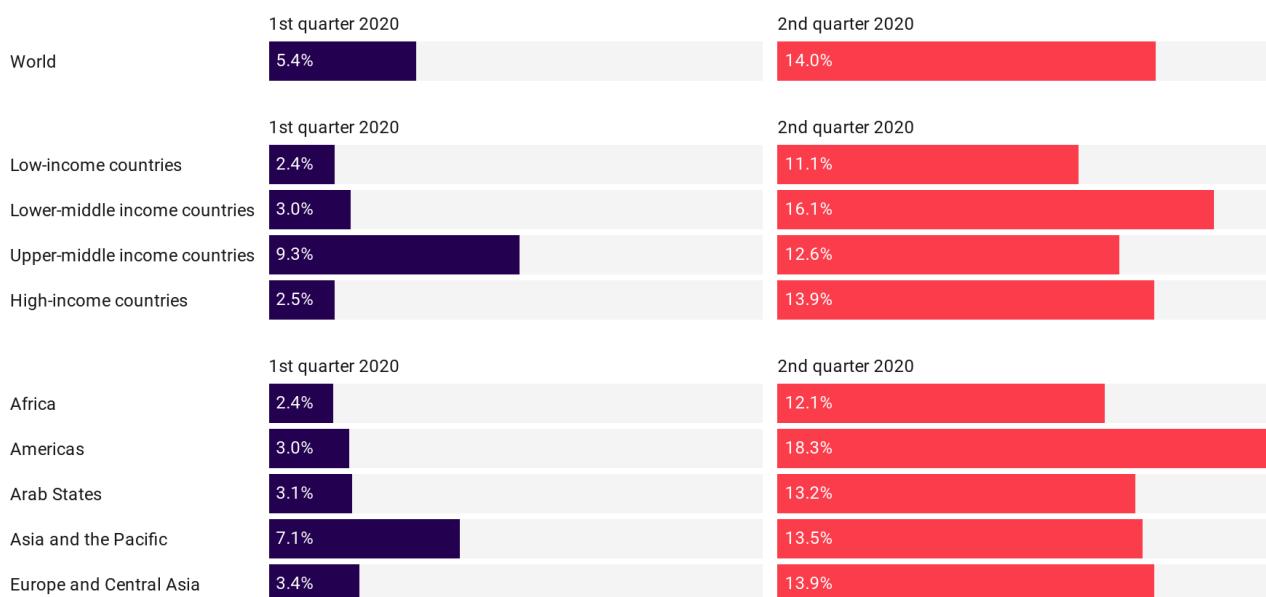
Working hours drop during the pandemic much larger than initially estimated, with a disproportionate impact on women workers

Rising unemployment, working time reduction, temporary layoffs and job-search discouragement lead to an estimated drop in aggregate working hours of 14 per cent in the second quarter of 2020 relative to the last quarter of 2019. Women workers are especially bearing the brunt of the crisis, with female employment at greater risk of disruption and an increased burden of unpaid work on women.

Figure 1. Estimated drop in aggregate working hours
(Estimated percentage drop in aggregate working hours compared to the per-crisis baseline, 4th quarter 2019, seasonally adjusted)

|	1st quarter 2020	2nd quarter 2020
World	5.4%	14.0%
Low-income countries	2.4%	11.1%
Lower-middle income countries	3.0%	16.1%
Upper-middle income countries	9.3%	12.6%
High-income countries	2.5%	13.9%
Africa	2.4%	12.1%
Americas	3.0%	18.3%
Arab States	3.1%	13.2%
Asia and the Pacific	7.1%	13.5%
Europe and Central Asia	3.4%	13.9%
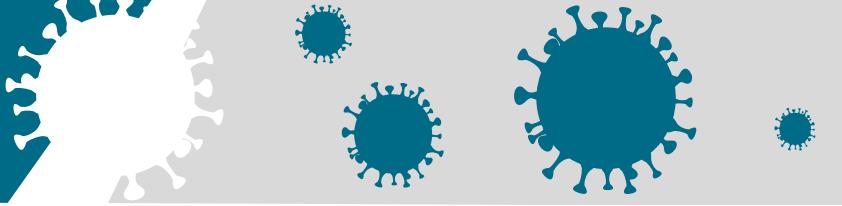
The closure of workplaces and implementation of other containment measures, combined with the rapid deterioration of economic conditions, led to immediate and massive losses in working hours over the first half of 2020. The ILO has consistently updated the estimates of working hours losses it presents on its Monitor. The latest ILO estimates integrate new data available and point to a considerably larger decline in global working hours in the first half of 2020 than initially estimated, reflecting the worsening situation in many parts of the world. The new estimates suggest that workers in developing countries, especially those in informal employment, have been affected to a greater extent than in past crises.

During the first quarter of 2020, an estimated 5.4 per cent of global working hours were lost relative to the fourth quarter of 2019 (up from 4.8 per cent in the previous ILO estimate), equivalent to 155 million full-time jobs. Asia and the Pacific accounted for approximately 80 per cent of the global reduction in working hours during the first quarter of the year. However, as the pandemic began to spread globally, significant losses in working hours were observed in other regions as well.

The ILO also substantially revised upwards its estimate of global working-hour loss in the second quarter of 2020 compared with previous estimates. The latest estimates reveal a decline in global working hours of 14 per cent in the second quarter of 2020 (up from the previous estimate of 10.7 per cent), equivalent to 400 million full-time jobs. Lower-middle-income countries are the hardest hit, experiencing a decline of 16.1 per cent. The Americas is estimated to have suffered a reduction in working hours of 18.3 per cent, or 70 million FTE jobs, in the second quarter of 2020, compared with the previous estimate of 13.1 per cent. This is the highest working-hour loss among the major geographical regions and the largest upward revision since the previous edition of the ILO Monitor.

ECONOMIC

Disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 crisis on women and threat to the goal of achieving gender equality

Latest data reveal alarming trends that threaten to exacerbate existing gender disparities and undo the modest gains achieved in recent years in terms of gender equality in the labour market. Despite some progress over previous decades, gender gaps were still considerable and persistent in labour markets around the world before the onset of the crisis: the gender gap in labour force participation was estimated at 27 percentage points in 2019, and among wage workers gender pay gaps persist at around 20 per cent globally.

What is more, the crisis is disproportionately affecting women workers in four main ways. First, a large proportion of women work in sectors severely affected by the crisis. Globally, almost 510 million, or 40 per cent of all employed women, work in hard-hit sectors, including accommodation and food services; wholesale and retail trade; real estate, business and administrative activities; and manufacturing (compared to 36.6 per cent of employed men).

Second, women in domestic work have been highly vulnerable to containment measures. According to ILO estimates, as at 4 June, 55 million or 72.3 per cent of domestic workers around the world were at significant risk of losing their jobs and incomes as a result of the lockdown and the lack of effective social security coverage. The vast majority—around 37 million —of these at-risk domestic workers are women.

Third, the overwhelming majority of workers in the health and social work sector are women. Globally, women represent more than 70 per cent of those employed in health and social work; in some developed regions, they account for almost 80 per cent of the health workforce. However, women in this sector tend to be engaged in lower-skilled and lower-paid jobs, which are associated with wider gender pay gaps (26 per cent in high-income countries and 29 per cent in upper-middle-income countries). Health workers, in particular those dealing with COVID-19 patients, are often subject to arduous (and sometimes dangerous) working conditions. Long working hours in intensive care units, a lack of personal protective equipment and other resources, understaffing and intense emotional stress expose health workers to higher risks of infection and transmission, especially in low- and middle-income countries.

Fourth, during the crisis, the unequal distribution of increased care demands affects women disproportionately. In normal times, women provide around three quarters of all unpaid care work. The amount of time dedicated by women to unpaid care work increases with the presence of children in the household. The closures of early childhood education centres, care services and schools, along with the unavailability of older relatives to provide support, have exacerbated care demands during the crisis. The situation for single parents, 78.4 per cent of whom around the world are women, can be even more difficult, especially if they have to juggle continuing to work (on-site or remotely) and caring for children on their own.

These disproportionate impacts on women could undo some of the gains in gender equality in the labour market and exacerbate disparities.
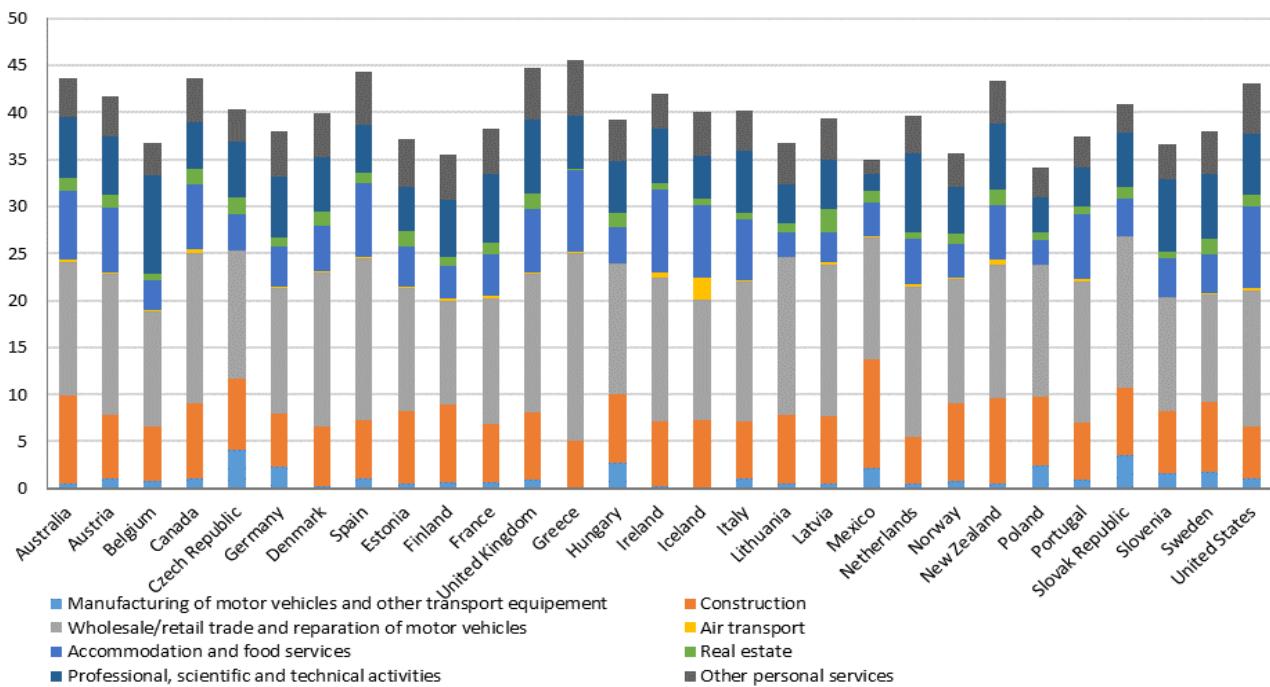
International Labour Organization

Small, medium and vulnerable

The sectors most directly affected by lockdown measures implemented by governments to curb the coronavirus outbreak account for 40% of jobs in OECD countries. Small and medium enterprises, which are particularly vulnerable to a prolonged lockdown, account for around three in four of these jobs.

Figure 1. Share of total employment in the sectors most directly affected by lockdown measures – Breakdown by economic sector (percentage)

Note: Economic sectors are defined using the ISIC rev.4 classification: manufacturing of motor vehicles and other transport equipment (29-30); construction (41-43); wholesale/retail trade and repair of motor vehicles (45-47); air transport (51); accommodation and food service activities (55-56); real estate activities (68); professional, scientific and technical activities (69-75); arts, entertainment and recreation (90-93); and other service activities (94-96). The latter two are grouped together as other personal services in the figure.

An increasing number of countries are imposing containment measures in order to curb the spread of COVID-19 infections. Most of the firms in the most affected sectors are Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) which are particularly vulnerable to a prolonged lockdown.

Employment in the most directly affected sectors alone account for 40% of total employment on average across OECD countries (figure 1). The impact of a shutdown on employment will of course vary by sector as some, for example, food retail, continue to trade, whilst many others, such as restaurants and cinemas, experience a complete halt in activity.

In most of the sectors, containment measures have led to a complete or partial shutdown and, so, the 40% figure provides some sense of scale around the potential number of jobs that could be lost from a prolonged slowdown or the level of policy support that governments will need to provide (and in many cases are) to support firms to retain staff.
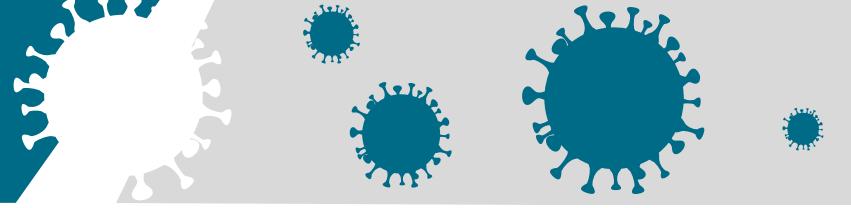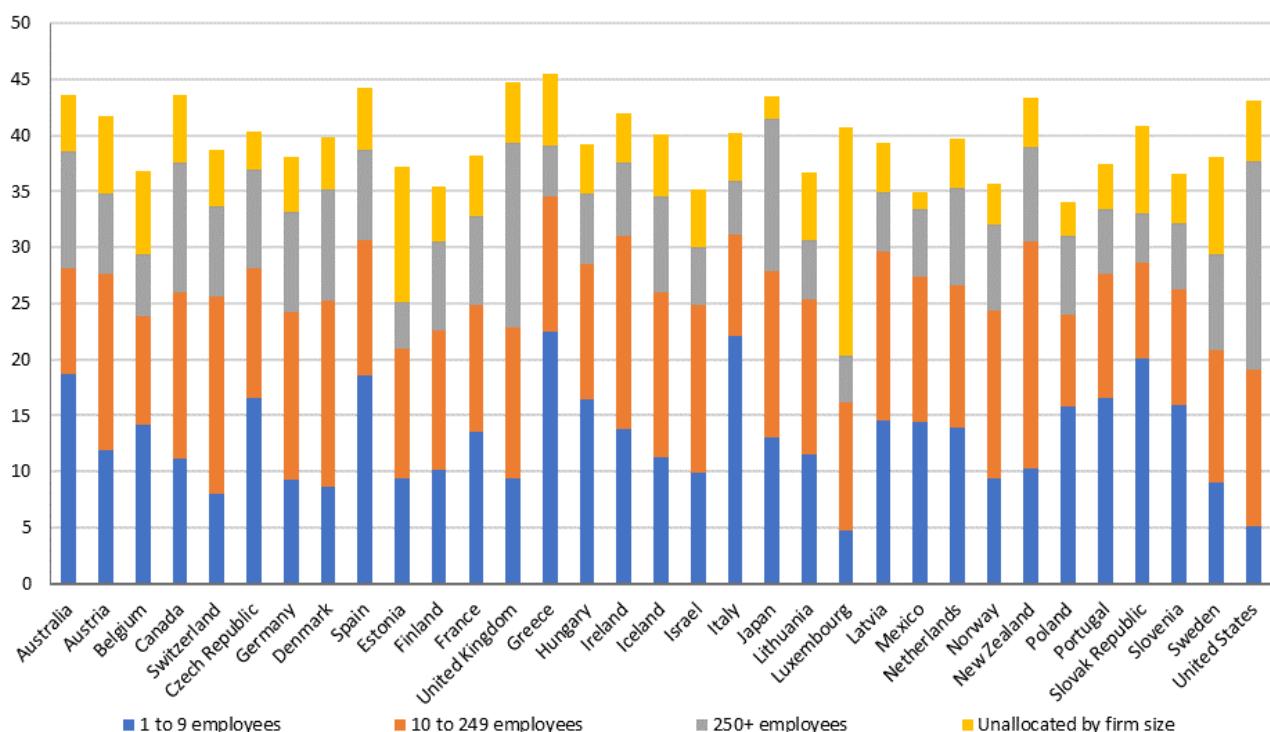
Figure 2. Share of total employment in the sectors most directly affected by lockdown measures – breakdown by firm size (percentage)

Legend: ■ 1 to 9 employees   ■ 10 to 249 employees   ■ 250+ employees   ■ Unallocated by firm size

Especially at risk from a prolonged slow down are SMEs, with many anecdotal sources pointing to significant cash flow problems and around one in three at risk of failure without support.

Figure 2 shows that SMEs account for the bulk of employment in the most affected sectors: 75% on average across OECD countries and nearly 90% in Greece and Italy. Microenterprises with less than 10 employees, probably the most at risk of cash shortages, account for around 30% of employment in these sectors, and up to 60% in Greece and Italy.

Most sectors beyond those mentioned here are also likely to be adversely affected, directly through closure and temporary shutdowns, or indirectly through supply-chain difficulties, staff shortages, or impacts on productivity.
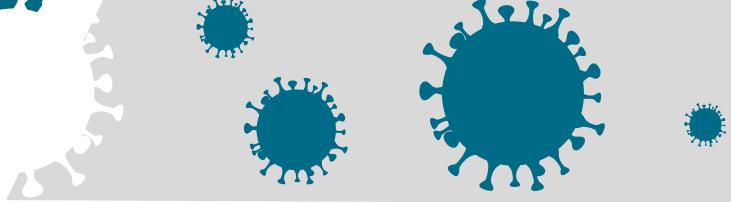
Moreover, it is likely that demand in the economy will be more widely affected. For example, investments may be postponed or cancelled, which will create both immediate and longer-term impacts on GDP levels and growth.

Additional information:
- Overview of policy measures already taken by governments to support SMEs
- Statistical Insights: Small, Medium and Vulnerable
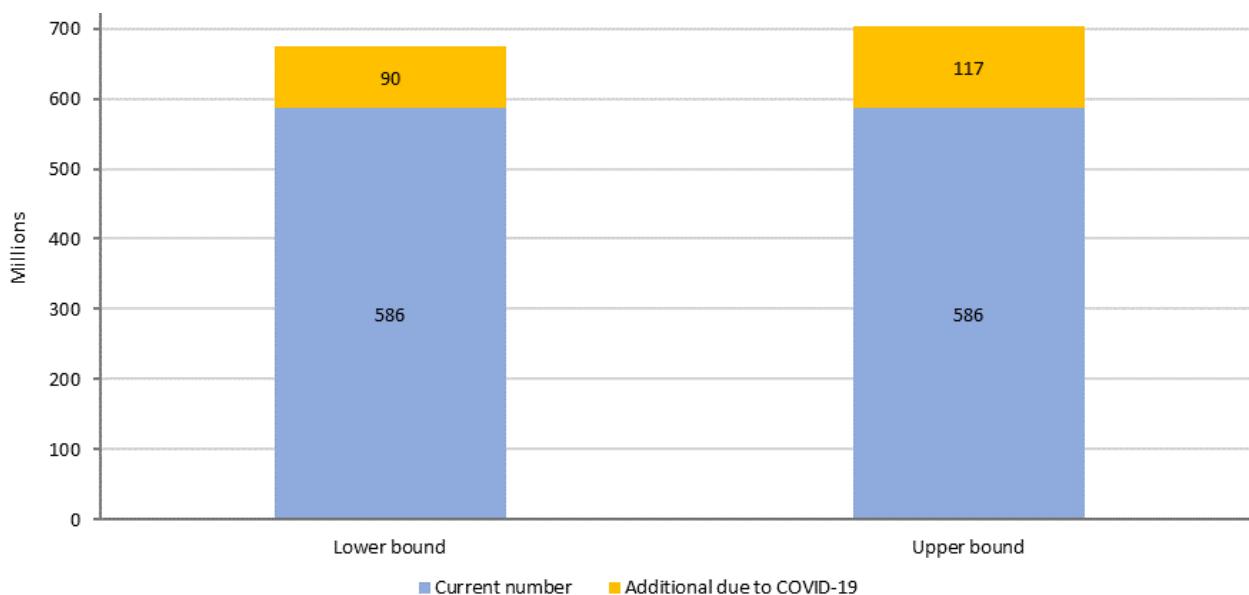
Sources:
- OECD Annual National Accounts and OECD Structural Business Statistics

Many more children likely in monetary poor households

Combining the latest available GDP projections (as of June 2020) and historical trends in changes in income distribution (in particular during years of crises), there could be between 90 and 117 million additional children in monetary poor households in developing countries.

Figure 1. Number of children in monetary poor households (Estimates based on national poverty lines)

Source: Save the Children and UNICEF estimates.

Children suffer poverty differently from adults. What they require to survive and thrive is different. Their dreams and hopes are different. Moreover, their needs ought to be supported and taken care of by adults, not by themselves. Thus, when measuring child poverty, it is important to use a direct measurement that assesses their access and utilization of various goods and services such as education, health, housing, and nutrition.

However, sometimes this information is not readily available. In addition, children do have a right to a minimum standard of living which could be measured indirectly by the level of consumption/income of the household.

About a third of the children in developing countries were living in monetary poor households before COVID-19. As families lose their sources of income and home environments are turned upside down due to the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19, children are likely to be deprived of their basic needs and at higher risk to be in monetary poor households.

Save the Children and UNICEF further estimated the impact of COVD-19 on the scale of child poverty by analyzing economic projections by the IMF and World Bank, historical evidence on past income distribution changes from UNU WIDER, and demographic data from international household surveys for over 100 low- and middle-income countries.

Unless urgent action is taken to protect families from the financial hardships caused by the pandemic, there could be between 676 and 703 million children in these circumstances in low- and middle-income countries by the end of 2020. More than half of these children live in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia (table 1).

The headcount rates are highest in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. The highest percentage increases in the numbers of children are likely to occur in Central and East Asia (figure 2).
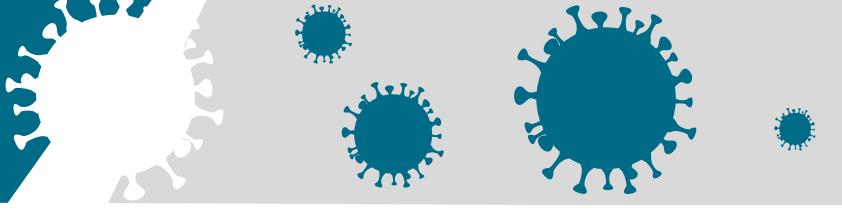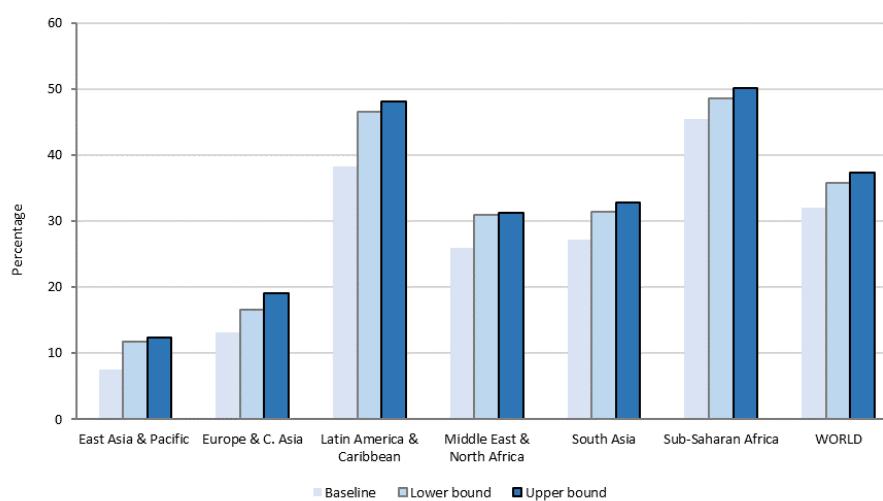
Table 1. Projections of number of children in monetary poor households in low- and middle-income countries by end of 2020

Region	Number of children (in million)		
	Baseline	Lower bound	Upper bound
East Asia & Pacific	43	63	67
Europe & Central Asia	14	17	20
Latin America & Caribbean	72	87	90
Middle East & North Africa	41	49	49
South Asia	168	193	202
Sub-Saharan Africa	250	266	275
WORLD	586	676	703

Source: Save the Children and UNICEF estimates.

Figure 2. Children living in monetary poor households: Baseline and projections to end of 2020

Source: Save the Children and UNICEF estimates.

Note:
Information on the most optimistic (pessimistic) of the GDP projections for each country was combined with likely changes in income distribution of varying strength (based on historical trends) to establish a range of possible paths for the percentage and number of children in monetary poor households. The headcount based on national poverty lines are used as well as the distribution of children by wealth quintiles.
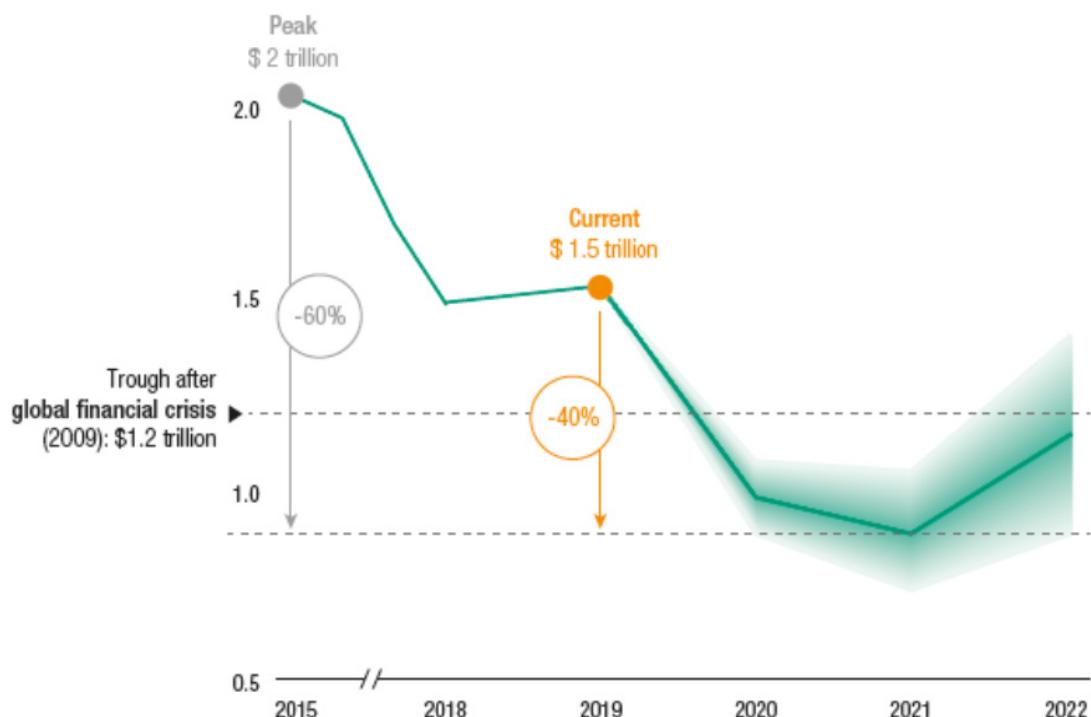
Sources:
- Save the Children and UNICEF estimates based on data from: IMF, World Economic Outlook Update, June 2020; World Bank, Global Economic Prospects, June 2020; World Bank, World Development Indicators, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.NAHC; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Population Prospects: 2019 Revision*; UN WIDER, World Income Inequality Database, April 2020 update; MICS and DHS databases.

Dramatic drop in foreign direct investment (FDI) in 2020 and 2021

COVID-19 has had immediate effects on FDI and will have potentially lasting consequences.

Figure 1. FDI inflows, 2015-2019 and 2020-2022 (Trillions of dollars)

Source: UNCTAD.

The COVID-19 pandemic will have an immediate and negative impact in 2020 and will result in a further deterioration in 2021. UNCTAD forecasts that global FDI flows will fall by as much as 40 percent in 2020, compared with their 2019 value of $1.5 trillion. A fall of this magnitude would bring FDI below $1 trillion ($900 billion) for the first time since 2005. FDI is forecasted to decrease by a further 5 to 10 percent in 2021.

The forecasted fall will be more severe than the one experienced in the two years following the global financial crisis, which at its lowest level fell to $1.2 trillion in 2009.

This latest downturn, triggered by the pandemic, follows several years of negative or stagnant growth and compounds a longer-term declining trend. The expected level of global FDI flows in 2021 would represent a 60 percent decline compared with 2015 levels—a fall from $2 trillion to less than $900 billion.

The outlook beyond 2021 remains highly uncertain. Even before the COVID-19 outbreak, UNCTAD's model forecasted a stagnant trend (-3 per cent in 2020 and +1 per cent in 2021) as a result of political and trade tensions and an overall uncertain macroeconomic outlook. A U-shaped recovery, that would bring FDI flows back to their pre-crisis trend line, is possible, but only at the upper bound of expectations. Economic and geopolitical uncertainty look set to dominate the investment landscape in the medium term. At the lower bound of the forecast, further stagnation in 2022 will leave the value of global FDI well below 2019 levels.

FDI projects in the first months of 2020 are showing sharp declines. The numbers of announced greenfield projects in March decreased by more than 50 percent compared with the 2019 monthly average (figure 2). Greenfield FDI is forecast to fall by more than 30 percent for the year as a whole compared with 2019.
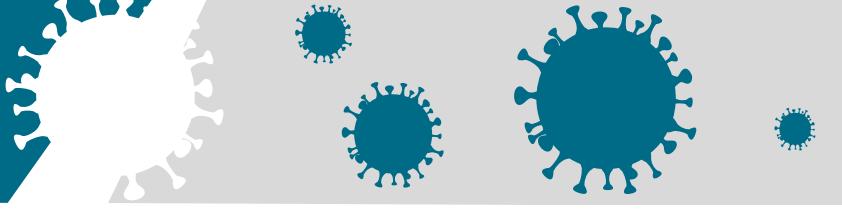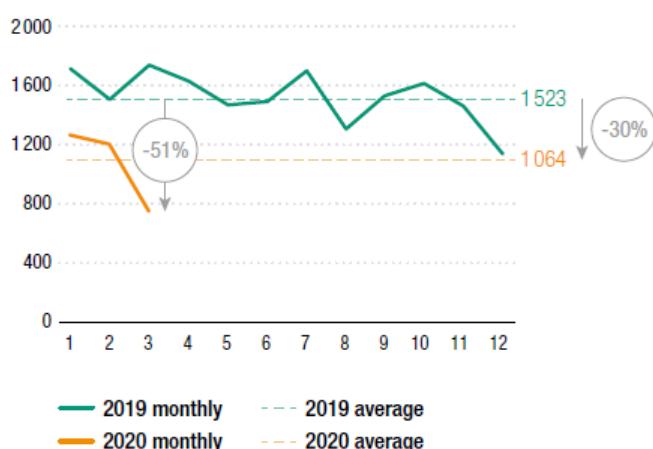
Table 1. FDI inflows and forecasts, by group of economies and region, 2017-2020

Group of economies/region	2017 USD Billions	2018 USD Billions	2019 USD Billions	2020 USD Billions
World	1,700	1,495	1,540	920 to 1,080
Developed economies	950	761	800	480 to 600
Europe	570	364	429	240 to 300
North America	304	297	297	190 to 240
Developing economies	701	699	685	380 to 480
Africa	42	51	45	25 to 35
Asia	502	499	474	260 to 330
Latin America and the Caribbean	156	149	164	70 to 100
Transition economies	50	35	55	30 to 40
	% change	% change	% change	% change
World	-14	-12	3	-40 to -30
Developed economies	-15	-20	5	-40 to -25
Europe	-16	-36	18	-45 to -30
North America	-40	-2	0	-30 to -20
Developing economies	7	0	-2	-45 to -30
Africa	-10	22	-10	-40 to -25
Asia	7	-1	-5	-45 to -30
Latin America and the Caribbean	14	-5	10	-55 to -40
Transition economies	-25	-31	59	-45 to -30

Figure 2. Announced Greenfield projects monthly and average number, 2019 and early 2020

a. Announced greenfield projects

All regions and economic groupings will see negative FDI growth rates in 2020 (table I). Developed economies as a group are forecast to experience a decline of between -25 and -40 percent. FDI in Europe will fall most (-30 to -45 per cent relative to 2019), as the severity of the virus adds to economic fragility in several large economies.
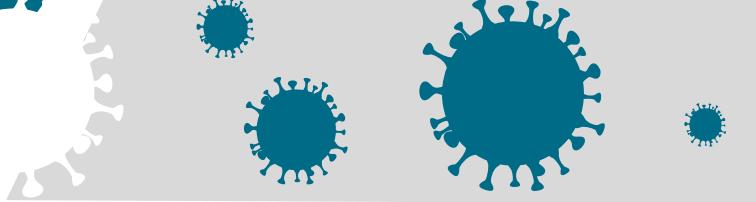
Developing economies as a group are expected to see a larger decrease in the range of 30 per cent to 45. Unlike the situation after the global financial crisis, developing economies appear more vulnerable to this crisis. Their productive and investment footprints are less diversified and thus more exposed to systemic risks.

Dependence on commodities for Latin America and the Caribbean and Africa and on GVC-intensive industries for Asia push these regions to the frontline of the crisis from an FDI perspective. Longer term, developing economies may be further penalized by the trend towards re-shoring or regionalization of international production, which could accelerate in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

Sources:
- UNCTAD World Investment Report 2020. Available at: https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/wir2020_en.pdf
- UNCTAD FDI/MNE database www.unctad.org/fdistatistics

UNITED NATIONS
UNCTAD

Slow recovery after production slump in April 2020

Global manufacturing growth, which already exhibited a decelerating trend in 2019, declined further due to the economic disruptions triggered by COVID-19. The latest production data for China already reached the same production level as before the pandemic, while other countries seem to recover at a slower pace.

Figure 1. Index of world manufacturing output for specific regions (base 2015)
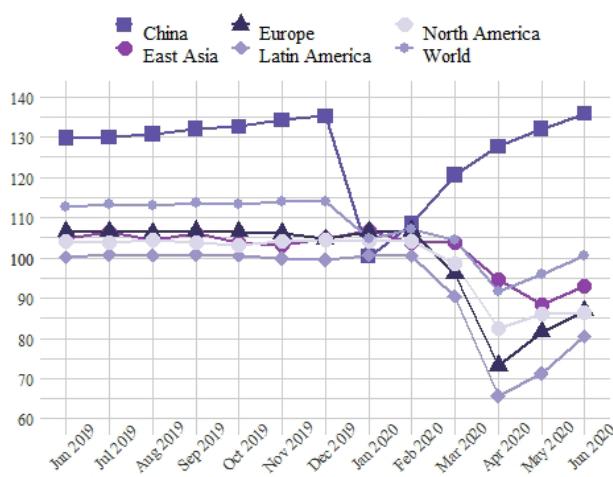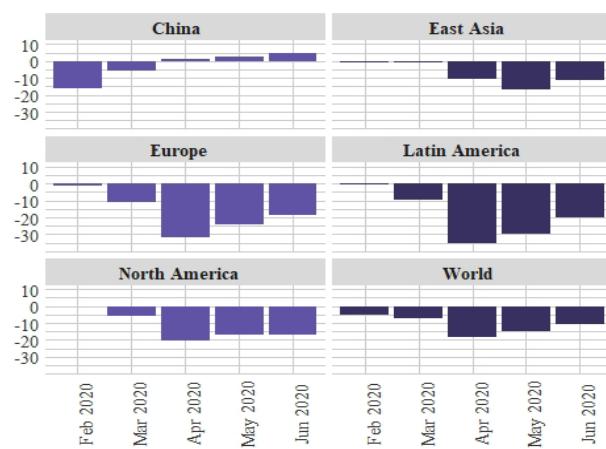

Figure 2. Growth of manufacturing output of specific regions, in percentage, compared to the same period of the previous year

Source: UNIDO Statistics.

Note: The preliminary data are based on observed index numbers of industrial production (base year 2015) collected by UNIDO's Statistics Division. The data coverage is limited to those country groups that are severely affected by COVID-19 containment measures and that have a high level of data availability.

Total world manufacturing production strongly declined over the last months, whereas a slow recovery is already visible.

In January 2020, China's manufacturing output dropped sharply primarily due to COVID-19 containment measures put in place (figure 1), although its economy recovered fast and already reached the production level of January in June 2020.

The economic impact of COVID-19 in Latin America and in industrialized countries (grouped into North America, Europe and East Asia) is visible from March 2020 onwards with its trough mostly in April 2020 (figure 2). Many countries began reopening their economies in May 2020, albeit not at full capacity. Global data already signal a recovery from May 2020 onwards, whereas the coming months will show whether the

economic downturn will continue in the majority of countries or whether the economy can be revived.

The majority of the observed countries, both industrialized and developing or emerging countries, registered a significant decrease in production (figures 3 and 4). However, developing and emerging industrial economies witnessed more intense production decreases than industrialized countries. Only a few countries, such as the Republic of Korea, maintained a stable production level.

Aggregate data for industrial groups reveal lower losses in June for electronics, machinery and electrical equipment, whereas in previous months the less affected groups were on basic consumer needs, e.g. food and beverages (figure 5).

ECONOMIC

Figure 3. Growth of manufacturing output for industrialised countries in percentage, compared to the same period of the previous year
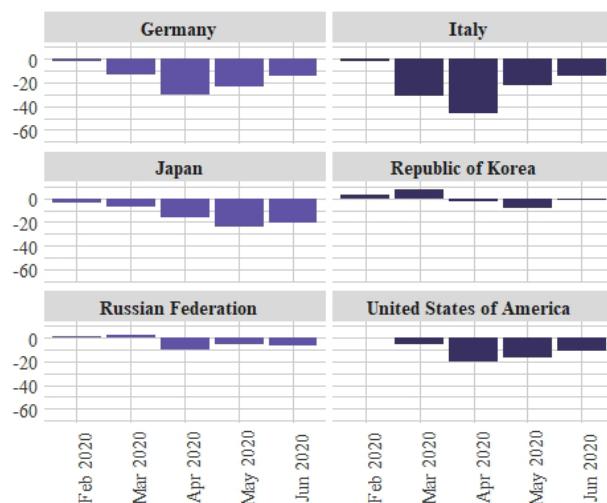

Figure 4. Growth of manufacturing output for developing and emerging countries in percentage, compared to the same period of the previous year
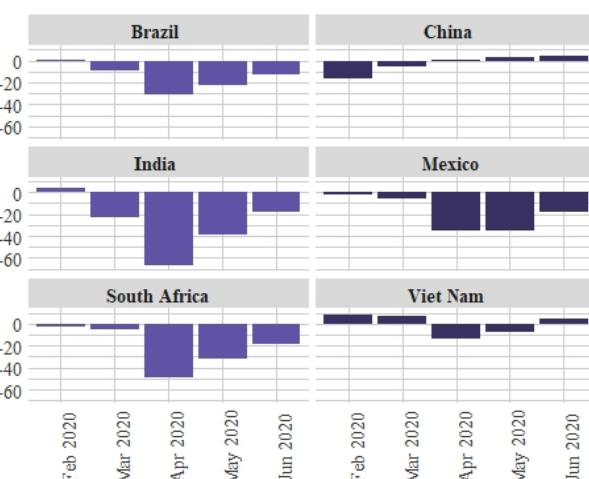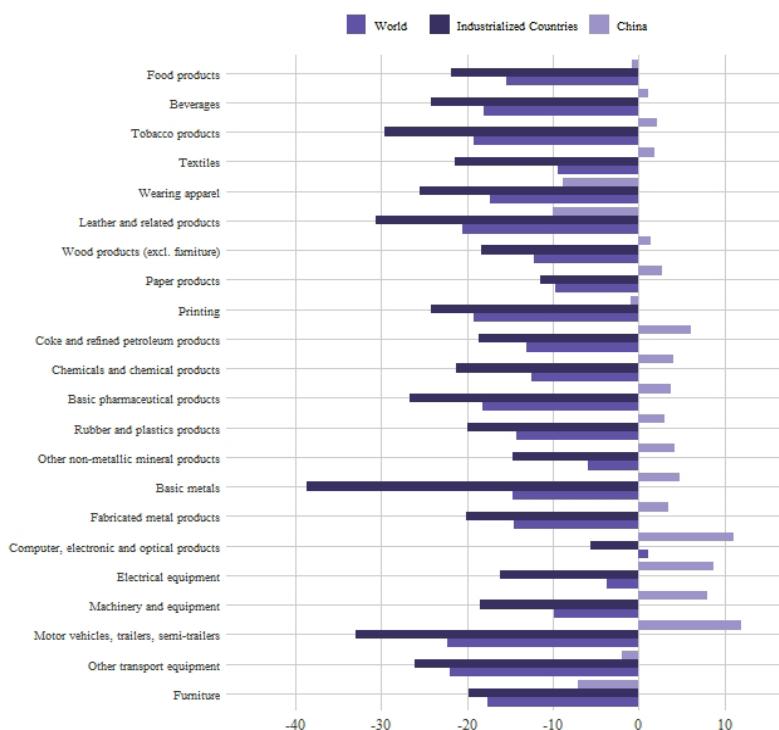
Figure 5. Estimated growth by industry in percentage, compared to the same period of the previous year, June 2020
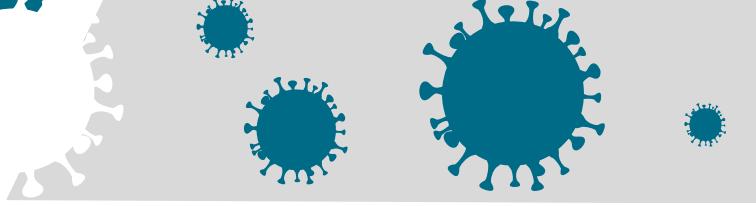
Source: UNIDO Statistics.

The preliminary seasonally adjusted data are based on observed index numbers of industrial production (base year 2015) collected by UNIDO's Statistics Division. The data coverage is limited to countries severely affected by COVID-19 containment measures and with a high level of data availability. Regional and world aggregates are calculated with weights referring to the base year 2015. Further information on the methodology of index calculation and seasonal adjustment can be found here. The most recent monthly data are available and regularly updated on the UNIDO Statistics data portal.
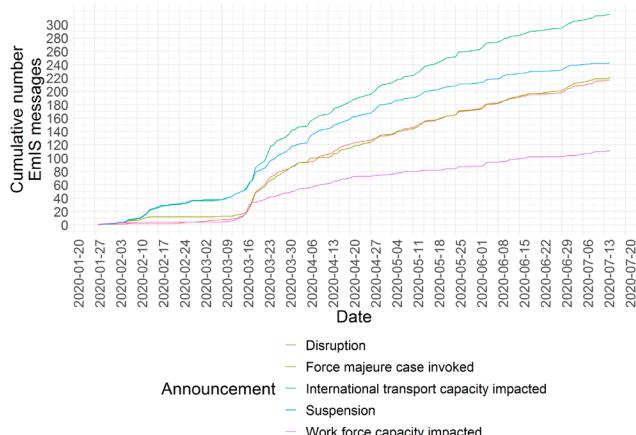
UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Disruption of the international postal supply chain due to COVID-19

- During the peak of the crisis, over one in two international mail items was "stranded".
- Since then, the logistics supply chain has started recovering.
- International mail volumes remain depressed, down by 20% due to the crisis.

Figure 1. Cumulative number of announcements to the UPU Emergency Information System

Source: UPU Emergency Information System (EmIS) messages.
Note: Daily cumulative sum of announcements at the global level.
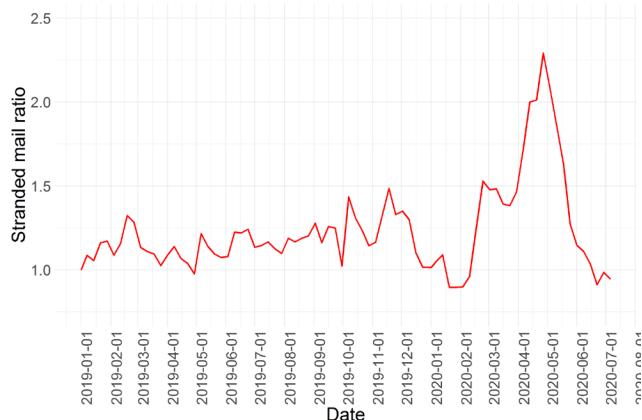
Figure 2. Ratio of international outbound messages to international inbound messages


Source: UPU big-data platform, EMSEVT3 messages.
Note: Weekly ratio between announced dispatch and reception of mail. Electronic Data interchange (EDI) messages at the office of exchange level.

Postal operators around the world have been facing hurdles in providing their traditional services due to the COVID-19 outbreak. In particular, the sanitary measures taken by governments have both restricted the access to labour (e.g. social distancing) and transportation services (e.g., closure of airports). At the same time, in countries experiencing economic shutdowns, postal services have been deemed vital and continue to function in contrast to many other businesses.

As the United Nations agency in charge of coordinating cross-border postal activity, the Universal Postal Union (UPU) monitors international mail in real time through its big data platform. Through its Emergency Information System (EmIS), it also collects essential information on the capacity of postal operators to supply services. As of 16 July 2020, 137 countries have submitted EmIS messages to announce disruptions in their operations. The international transport capacity has been the most impacted area, with over 316 EmIS messages sent to the UPU since the beginning of the crisis (figure 1).

The disruption of air-routes has impacted the delivery of many postal items. Figure 2 displays the "stranded mail ratio", based on information from bar-coded mail items. By calculating the ratio between items ready to be exported and

items received by the importing country, one can measure the level of disruption in the international supply chain. In normal times, the ratio is slightly above one, as in a given week almost every exported item is received by the importing country. Since February 2020, the ratio has climbed and, during the week of 27 April, reached its historic maximum. At the peak of the crisis, for every 2.3 weekly item exported, only one was notified as received. Since then, the ratio has decreased and eventually stabilized close to pre-crisis levels during the second week of June.

Problems related to the availability of labour (111 EmIS announcements) have also lengthened the clearance of items through customs, with bar-coded parcels showing an increase from an average of 2 hours to over 64 hours during the peak of the crisis.

Overall, even if the international logistics postal chain has proved resilient to the crisis, the volume of international mail has decreased. Estimates gathered from high-frequency data indicate that the drop of international mail due to the emergence of the pandemic is 20 per cent (figure 3). This is just one of the symptoms of the extent to which COVID-19 has impacted international economic flows.
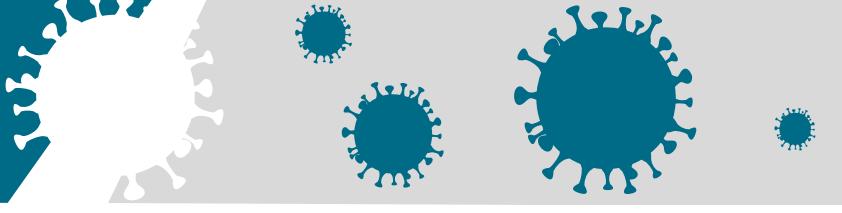
Table 1. Postal disruption due to COVID-19

Number of EmIS announcements of a disruption in the supply of postal services	217
Number of EmIS announcements of a disruption of international mail flows	316
Maximum stranded mail ratio (outbound messages/inbound messages) reached during the crisis (April 2020)	2.3 (+134% compared to April 2019)
Drop in international postal volumes due to the crisis (items, all mail classes)	20%
Average increase in customs clearance time (inbound parcels) during the peak of the crisis	from 2 to 64 hours

Sources: UPU big-data platform. UPU EmIS messages. UPU Quality Control System (QSC).
Notes: Drop in volumes obtained by comparing the period going from the 1 January to 13 July 2020 to the period 1 January to 13 July 2019.

Figure 3. Year-on-year weekly growth rates, all mail classes

Source: UPU big-data platform.
Note: The dotted line reflects the trend.
The dashed vertical line indicates the closure of Wuhan international airport.
The red curve depicts year-on-year growth rates.
The spikes in 2019 coincide with a seasonal Holiday.
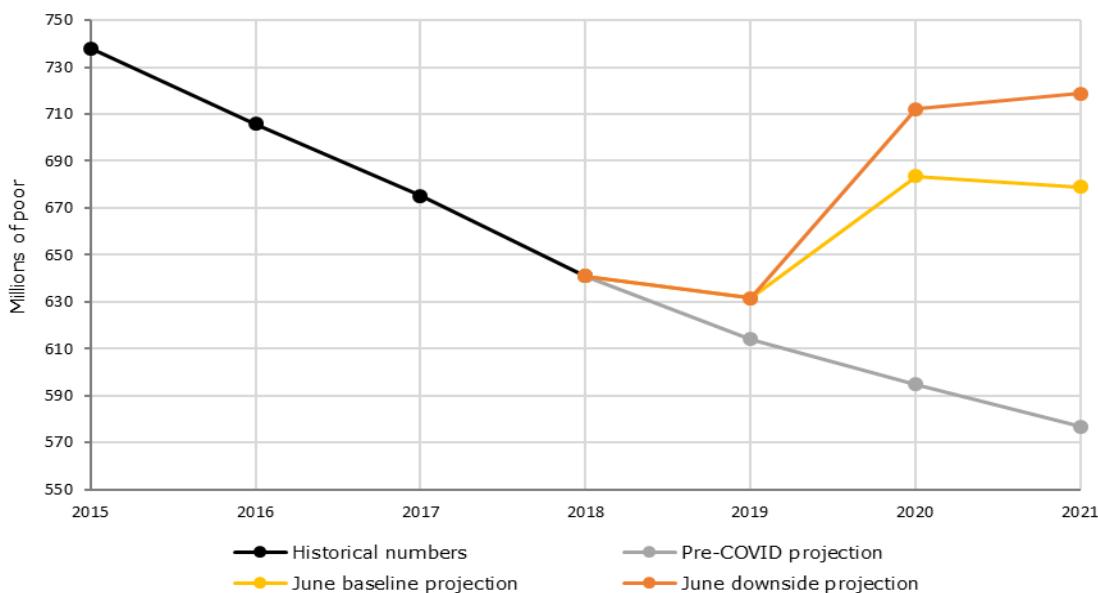
Sources and links:

- UPU (2019), "The COVID-19 crisis and the postal sector". https://www.upu.int/UPU/media/upu/publications/theCovid-19CrisisAndThePostalSectorEn.pdf
- UPU Emergency Information System (EmIS).
- UPU Quality Control System (QCS).
- UPU official statistics are freely available in the following platform: https://www.upu.int/en/Universal-Postal-Union/Activities/Research-Publications/Postal-Statistics
- UPU postal big data is a collection of Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) messages sent between postal operators, customs and airlines. The EDI messages are the result of the implementation of UPU standards. Several guides on standards are available in the UPU website https://www.upu.int/en/Postal-Solutions/Programmes-Services/Standards

- A description on how to transform EDIs into bilateral postal flows and supply chain indicators is available in the following two papers:
- Anson, J, Boffa, M, Helble and M. (2019). Consumer arbitrage in cross-border e-commerce. *Rev Int Econ*. 2019; 27: 1234– 1251. https://doi.org/10.1111/roie.12424
- Ansón, J, Arvis, J-F, Boffa, M, Helble, M, Shepherd, B. Time, uncertainty and trade flows. *World Econ*. 2020; 00: 1– 18. https://doi.org/10.1111/twec.12942

COVID-19 pushing 71 to 100 million people into extreme poverty

COVID-19 is taking its toll on the world, causing deaths, illnesses and economic despair. This contribution suggests that COVID-19 is pushing about 71 to 100 million people into extreme poverty, and that South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa might be the regions hardest hit.

**Figure 1. The impact of COVID-19 on global poverty**

Nowcasting global poverty is not an easy task. It requires assumptions about how to forecast growth, how such growth will impact the poor and many other assumptions. Estimating how much global poverty will increase because of COVID-19 is challenging and comes with much uncertainty.

This note is based on the latest household survey data for 166 countries in PovcalNet, an online tool for estimating global poverty, with extrapolations using growth projections from the June 2020 edition of the World Bank's Global Economic Prospects. Comparing these forecasts impacted by COVID-19 with the forecasts from the previous edition of the Global Economic Prospects published in January allows for an assessment of the impact of the pandemic on global poverty. Whereas other factors may have worsened or improved countries' growth outlooks between January and June, most of the changes in the forecasts are due to the pandemic.

The forecasts reveal that COVID-19 is likely to cause the first increase in global poverty since 1998, when the Asian financial crisis hit. With the new forecasts, global poverty—the share of the world's population living on less than US $1.90 per day—is projected to increase from 8.2 per cent in 2019 to 8.8 per cent in 2020, or from 632 million people to 684 million people. The projected decline over the same time period using the previous Global Economic Prospects forecasts was from 8.0 per cent to 7.7 per cent. The slight change in the base number from 8.2 to 8.0 per cent for 2019 happens because the revised growth forecasts also changed for non-COVID reasons in some countries. Taking this into account, the pandemic is driving a change in the 2020 estimate of the global poverty rate of 0.9 percentage points. In absolute terms, it is estimated that COVID-19 will push 71 million people into extreme poverty in 2020. In a downside scenario, which assumes that outbreaks persist longer than expected forcing lockdown measures to be maintained or reintroduced, 100 million people will be pushed into poverty.
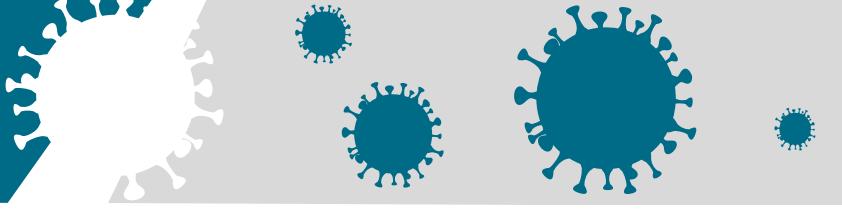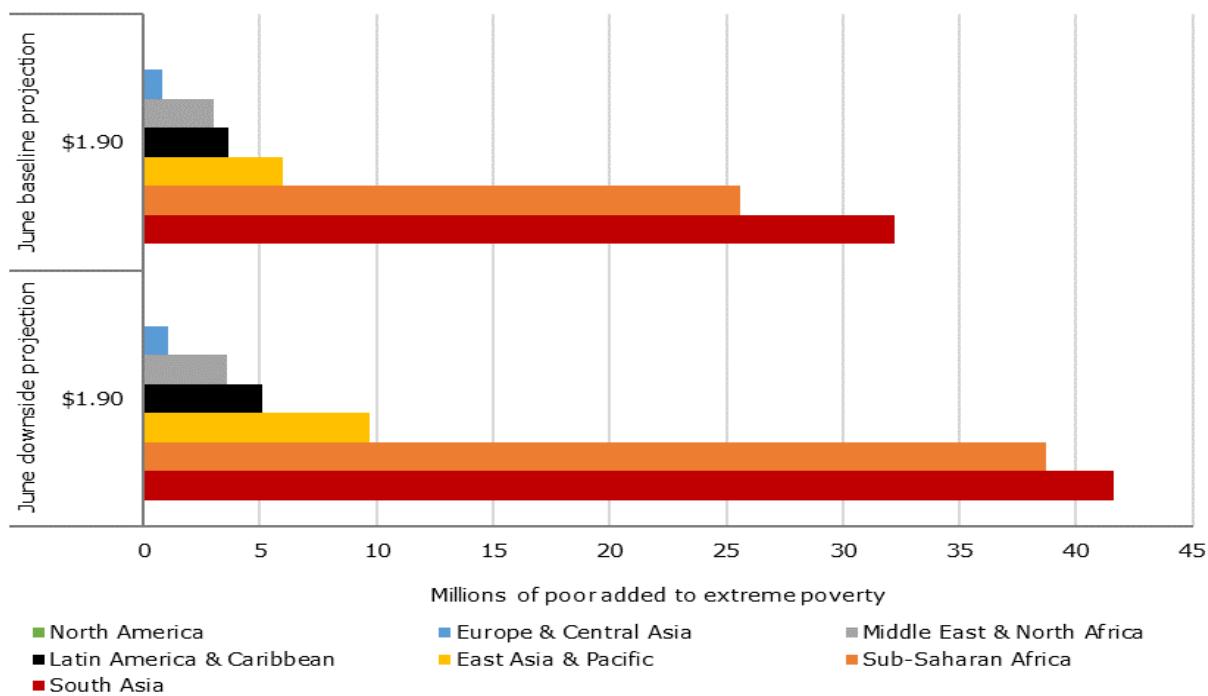
Figure 2. The regional distribution of the COVID-19-induced poor

Millions of poor added to extreme poverty

- North America
- Europe & Central Asia
- Middle East & North Africa
- Latin America & Caribbean
- East Asia & Pacific
- Sub-Saharan Africa
- South Asia

Sources:
- http://iresearch.worldbank.org/PovcalNet/home.aspx
- https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/global-economic-prospects
- https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/updated-estimates-impact-covid-19-global-poverty
- http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/765601591733806023/pdf/How-Much-Does-Reducing-Inequality-Matter-for-Global-Poverty.pdf

THE WORLD BANK

COVID-19 and related export restrictions

The COVID-19 pandemic triggered an enormous shock in the global demand for medical products. These products depend largely on international trade and global supply chains which often were subject to disruptions of manufacturing networks and international transport. This situation has been exacerbated by export prohibitions and restrictions which some members had introduced to mitigate critical shortages at the national level. As of mid-May, 85 countries and territories had imposed some form of export restrictions and prohibitions on COVID-19 related products.

Figure 1. Number of export prohibitions and restrictions introduced to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, by type of product and WTO membership status

Source: WTO Secretariat based on data available in the Trade Monitoring Report.

As of 18 May 2020, 85 countries and customs territories had introduced export prohibitions and restrictions to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, including 76 Members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and 9 non-WTO members from all world regions (EU Member States are counted individually).

Whereas these measures took different forms, including export bans and non-automatic export licensing procedures, they had in common that they mostly prevented exports of products.

What products are subject to export restrictions?

While there is considerable diversity in the types of products affected by export restrictions, the majority of the measures have limited the exportation of face and eye protection, protective garments, and gloves, sometimes referred to as Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) or Personal Protection

Products (PPP). Sanitizers, pharmaceuticals and foodstuffs have also been subject to export limitations, but to a lesser extent (figure 1).

For how long will these measures be in place?

While it is not possible to determine the precise duration of all measures, and measures could also be renewed, it is possible to calculate their duration for those that have an end-date. The information available to the WTO Secretariat suggests that roughly half of the export prohibitions and restrictions implemented in response to COVID-19 include a specific end-date (47%). For those measures with a known end-date, the average duration is 98.4 days, with a median of 77 days. While approximately 70 per cent of the measures implemented in response to COVID-19 are intended to be in force for less than three months, three measures indicate that they will remain in force for one year (figure 2).
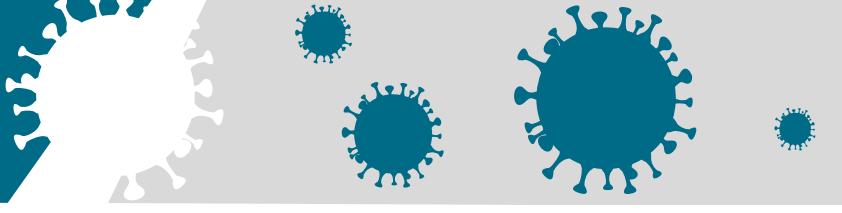
Figure 2. Duration in weeks of export measures
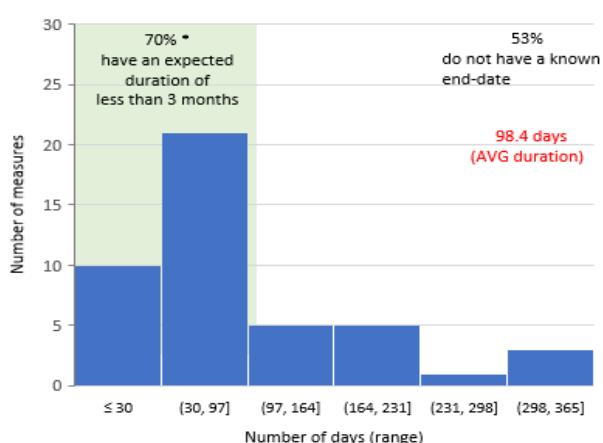
Table 1. Prohibitions and restrictions introduced to combat the COVID-19 pandemic by type of product

Section (category of products)	Share of world exports (%)
COVID-19 test kits	0.1
Protective garments and the like	21.5
Disinfectants and sterilization products	17.0
Oxygen therapy equipment and pulse oximeters	4.8
Other medical devices and equipment	3.0
Other medical consumables	12.0
Vehicles	0.0
Others	0.5
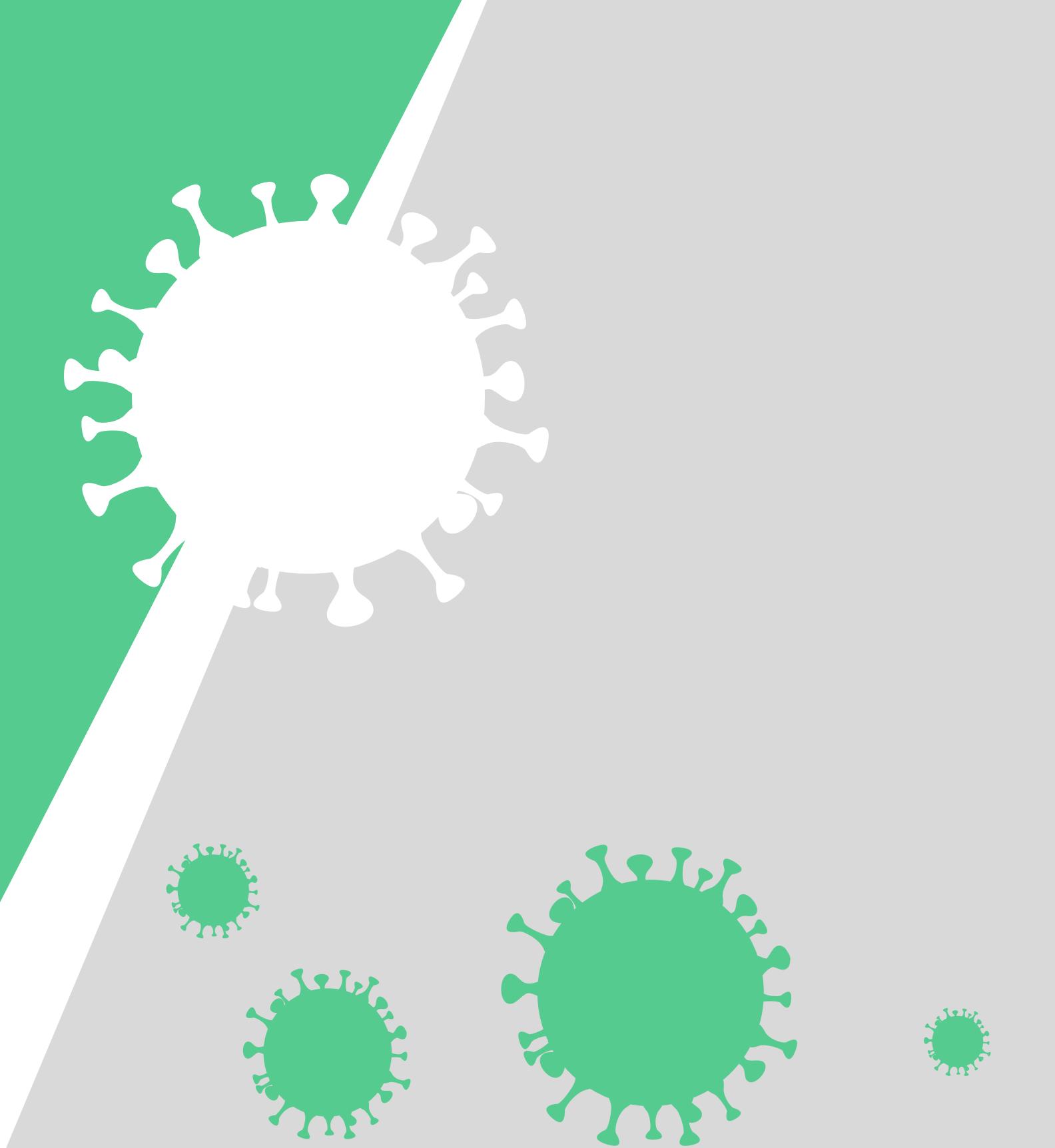
How much trade is affected by these export restrictions?

It is challenging to have an exact measurement of the value of exports that is being affected by the export prohibitions and restrictions, because most products covered by the measures do not have a specific tariff line or Harmonized System (HS) sub-heading that fully identifies them, and the available export data are only at the HS sub-heading level. Consequently, it is only possible to calculate rough estimates of the share of world exports affected by them. One way of making this rough estimate for a narrow group of products is by matching the export restrictions with the HS codes covered by the joint World Customs Organization's and World Health Organization's list of COVID-19-related products. Since only part of a given HS sub-heading is related to the relevant products, these estimates have to be considered as upper limits of the affected trade flow, that is, they may overestimate the actual value of the exports. Notwithstanding these methodological and data limitations, it would appear that the export prohibitions and restrictions affect, in particular, protective garments and disinfectants and sterilization products, where up to 21.5 and 17 per cent respectively of world trade may be affected by these measures.

Sources and references:
- WTO Report on G-20 Trade Measures (mid-October to mid-May 2020)
  https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news20_e/report_trdev_jun20_e.pdf
- WTO COVID-19 page: https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/covid19_e/covid19_e.htm

SOCIAL IMPACT

#StatisticalCoordination

Addressing widespread discrimination required to rebuild better

New time series data show that gender, disability, racial, ethnic, migration and intersecting discrimination is widespread. This data should guide COVID-19 responses to ensure that the pandemic does not exacerbate existing forms of discrimination and that its cumulative and intersecting forms are mitigated.

Figure 1. Gender discrimination, 2014-2019 (difference between discrimination experienced by women and men, in percentage points)
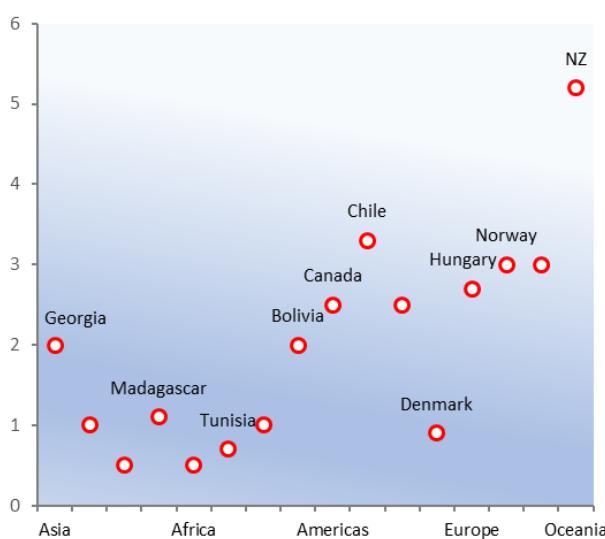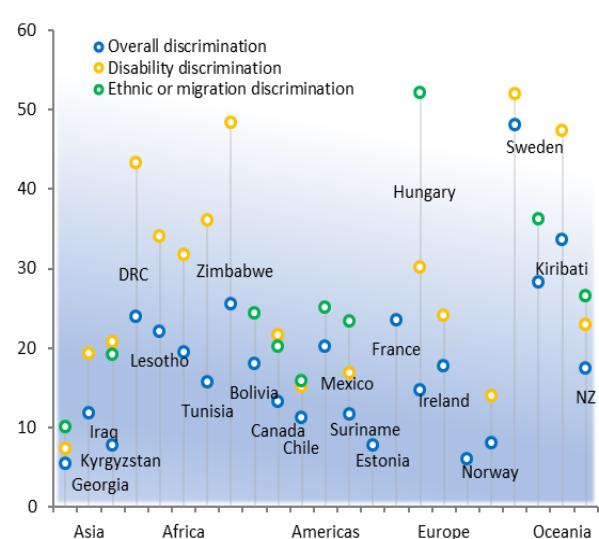

Figure 2. Prevalence of discrimination, 2014-2019 (percentage)

New data released by OHCHR from household surveys on SDG indicator 10.3.1/16.b.1 reveal that about 1 in 5 people reported having personally experienced discrimination on at least one of the grounds prohibited by international human rights law, according to data from 31 countries over the period 2014 to 2019.

Despite limited data availability, the collection of data on prevalence of discrimination is critical as a step towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and contributes towards the United Nations' efforts to protect people and rebuild better in the face of COVID-19. In addition, data on the prevalence of discrimination disaggregated by vulnerable and marginalized groups is particularly important to ensure that the challenges faced by these groups are identified and addressed.

How are different groups impacted by discrimination?

The collection of disaggregated data by gender reveals that women are more likely to be victims of discrimination than men. In New Zealand, women experienced more discrimination than men on at least one of the grounds prohibited by international human rights law, by 6 percentage points. In Europe and the

Americas, women in general experienced more discrimination than men, between 1 and 4 percentage points. In Africa and Asia, women also reported having personally experienced more discrimination than men, on average 2 percentage points more in the countries for which data is available. Women often witness discriminatory treatment in the spheres of employment, health, education, and housing.

Data disaggregated by disability status reveals that the highest prevalence of discrimination experienced by those with disabilities was recorded in Africa and Oceania, 39 and 35 per cent respectively. In addition, on average, 1 in 3 people have personally experienced discrimination, with higher levels still among women with disabilities. These women did not mention disability as the most frequently experienced ground of discrimination, but religion, ethnicity, and sex, pointing to the need for measures to tackle cumulative and intersecting forms of discrimination.

Data disaggregated by racial, ethnic and migration status show that these population groups experienced more discrimination than the general population, on average two times more. This was the case in all the countries with available data. For example, in Bolivia, 25 per cent of the indigenous peoples reported having personally experienced discrimination,

compared to 16 per cent of those not belonging to indigenous or native groups. In Chile, those born abroad experienced 3 times more discrimination than those born in Chile, 30 and 10 per cent respectively. In Canada, visible minorities experienced 2 times more discrimination compared to those that are not visible minorities, 20 and 10 per cent respectively. The Canadian Employment Equity Act defines visible minorities as "persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour". In Europe, the region where disaggregated data was the most available, 17 per cent reported having experienced discrimination, this ratio increases to 44 per cent among national or ethnic minorities and migrants.

The COVID-19 virus does not discriminate, but its impact does

It is essential to collect timely and disaggregated data on experiences of discrimination to inform country's COVID-19 response that mitigates the potential adverse effects of COVID-19 on those most left behind. Emerging scientific studies show that many of those that were already experiencing higher discrimination are also further negatively impacted by COVID-19 on their health and socio-economic situation. The data reveal that there are more deaths among the groups
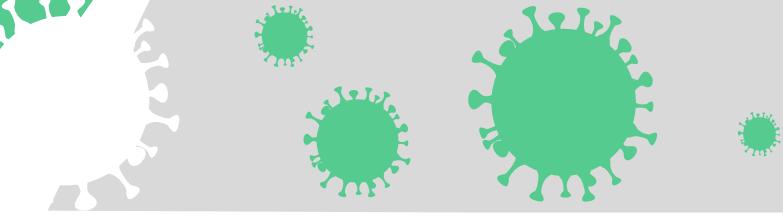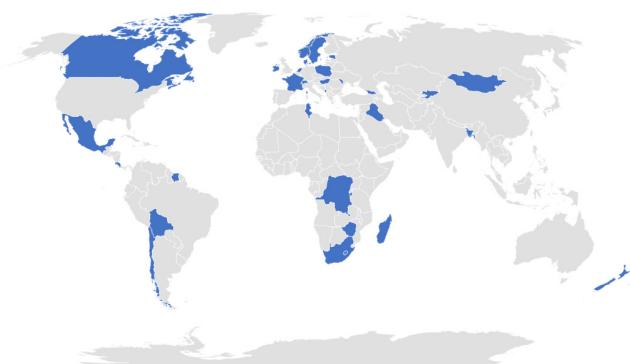
Figure 3. Availability of data on prevalence of discrimination across the world, 2014–2019

facing racial and ethnic discrimination (e.g. people of African descent, minorities and indigenous peoples, and women among them) due to inadequate access to health-care and intersecting forms of structural discrimination that put them on the front lines in so-called "essential" jobs that deepen their vulnerability. States need to tackle discrimination more comprehensively, and address its overlapping and cumulative forms as well as its consequences on everyday life.

Link to metadata:
- https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Indicators/Pages/HRIndicatorsIndex.aspx
- https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/

Sources:
- https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/COVID-19.aspx
- https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/COVID19Guidance.aspx
- https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25768&LangID=E

UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

Human Development to decline for the first time since 1990

COVID-19, with its triple hit to health, education, and income, is causing declines in human development worldwide. The pandemic lands on already growing inequalities that are amplifying its effect. Therefore, the use of an equity lens in our response can mitigate its effects and contribute to long term development.

Figure 1. Change in Human Development Index value, 1990-2020

Change in Human Development Index value, annual

The Global Financial Crisis

2020 simulated change in COVID-19-adjusted HDI

a) The 2019 value is a provisonal estimate.

Source: Human Development Report Office simulations based on data from the International Telecommunications Union, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Institute for Statistics, and the World Health Organization.

COVID-19 has, so far, caused the death of over 500,000 people, an increase in the effective-out-of-school rates which are expected to reach levels last seen in the mid-1980s for primary education, and the largest contraction in economic activity since the Great Depression.
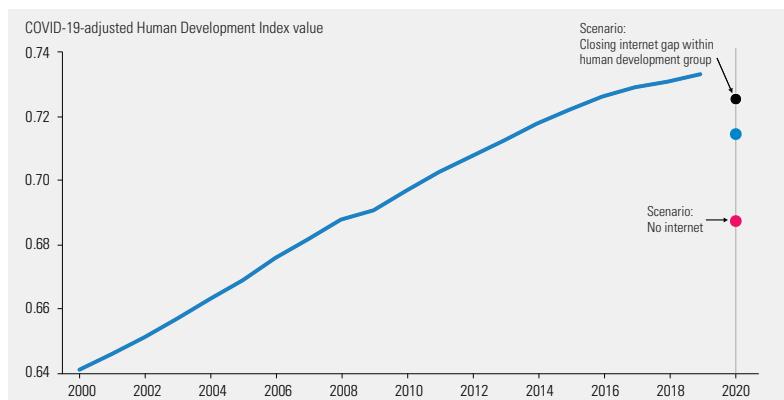
When taking a capabilities approach, simulations suggest conditions today would correspond to a steep and unprecedented decline in human development, equivalent to six years of progress.

About 9 in 10 children have been affected by school closures, but effects are unequally distributed. During the second quarter of 2020, 86 percent of children in primary education have been effectively out-of-school in countries with low human development—compared with just 20 percent in countries with very high human development.
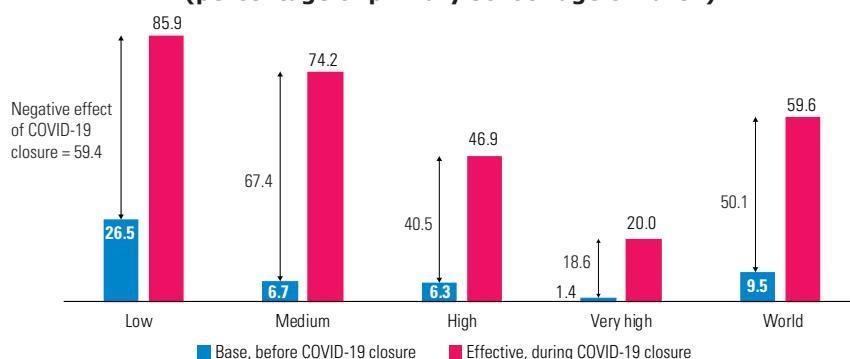
The simulations also show the importance of promoting equity in enhanced capabilities. In a scenario with more equitable internet access—where each country closes the gap with the leaders in its human development category—the decline in human development would be more than halved. Increased access to the internet would empower people with capabilities to accommodate the mitigation measures (including the physical closure of schools and workplaces). This would be eminently affordable. In 2018 it was estimated that $100 billion would be needed to close the gap in internet access in low- and middle-income countries—or about 1 percent of the extraordinary fiscal programmes announced around the world so far.

Three principles are suggested to shape the response to the crisis: Look at the response through an equity lens; Focus on people's enhanced capabilities; Follow a coherent multidimensional approach.

**Figure 2. COVID-19 adjusted Human Development Index value, 2000-2020**

Figure 3. Short-term effect out-of-school rate for primary education, second quarter of 2020 (percentage of primary school-age children)

Methodology:

To estimate the likely effects of the pandemic on people's capabilities, a version of the Human Development Index (HDI) that is more sensitive to the effects of COVID-19 was built, retaining the standard HDI dimensions but modifying the education indicators to reflect the effects of school closures and mitigation measures. What matters for capabilities is whether students are actually engaged in educational activities, which depends on physical and virtual (internet-based) access to schools and learning resources. After adjusting the percentage of primary school-age children facing school closures to account for households with access to the Internet, the effective out-of-school rate increases substantially everywhere, even under the optimistic assumption that all children with internet access will be able to continue their education online. Being out of school—even for a limited amount of time—is expected to have long-term impacts on learning, earning potential and well-being.

Sources:
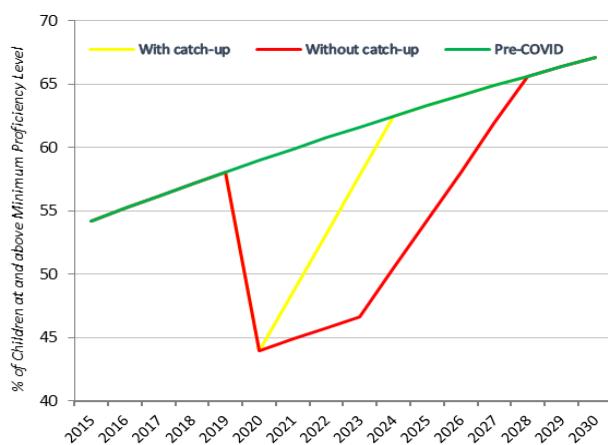
- Human Development Report Office. 2020 Human Development Perspectives: COVID-19 and Human Development: Assessing the Crisis, Envisioning the Recovery. http://hdr.undp.org/en/hdp-covid
- The adjusted HDI also uses International Monetary Fund (IMF) projections of gross national income per capita for 2020. Life expectancy at birth in 2020 (based on the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2019 Revision of *World Population Prospects*) is adjusted by the potential effects of COVID-19 on health, taking the low-impact scenario from a recent study published in the Lancet Global Health for child mortality.
- Data sources for the simulation and charts: International Telecommunications Union, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Institute for Statistics, and World Health Organization.

The impact of school closures on learning can be lessened with adequate catch-up strategies

Failing to deploy catch-up measures (e.g. training teachers, remedial classes) would hamper efforts to generate vital skills for societies.

Figure 1. Projected learning losses with and without catch-up strategies: Primary eduction

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics.
Note: Vertical axis is truncated.

Figure 2. Projected learning losses with and without catch-up strategies: Secondary education
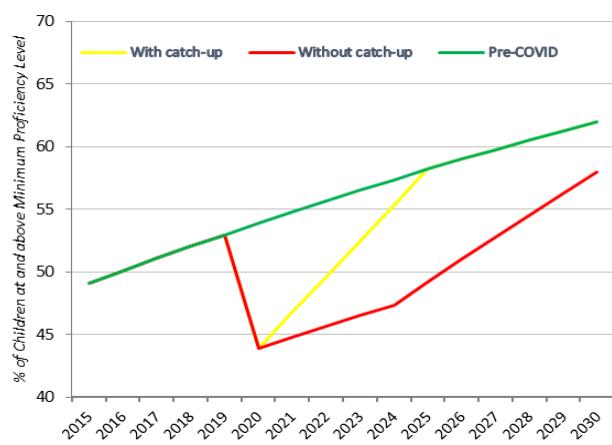
Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics.
Note: Vertical axis is truncated.

The effects of the COVID-19 crisis on learning are particularly worrisome, especially at the primary education level. Basic competencies are the building blocks for all education and are strong predictors of life opportunities. They are both the easiest to lose when schooling is interrupted and the hardest to regain once schooling restarts. Yet, they present a fertile area for improvement as the techniques to acquire foundational skills are better known than those at the secondary level.

Learning losses measured soon after the disruption, as a study from South Africa shows, are greater than that which actual days lost suggest. Yet, it is likely—as research in Pakistan years after a recent earthquake showed—that the impacts worsen over time if learning losses are not addressed, as learning is cumulative and children who are left behind lag even further behind. Thus, it is a prudent assumption that such losses will worsen without adequate education interventions. In figures 1 and 2, the green 'pre-COVID' curve assumes a reasonable trend of two per cent gains per year in primary education based on previous work by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). The yellow and red trajectories signify scenarios with and without 'catch-up' strategies, respectively. They project that learners will sustain education losses during the pandemic due to school days lost.

Education systems implementing remedial measures will help at least some learners' catch-up to the pre-COVID trajectory. Those that fail to do so will have to wait until the cohort of students affected by the pandemic move on to the secondary level. In the case of secondary education, learning levels will return to the pre-pandemic trend by 2024. But this return will take almost a decade for learners in systems that go without these measures given the lasting impact on primary graduates who did not receive remedial support.

Failing to deploy catch-up strategies should be avoided at all cost as this would hamper efforts to generate vital skills that citizens need to function in societies and economies. Yet, many countries are still not considering remedial actions, such as increasing learning time or accelerating learning (figure 3). Similarly, teachers in many countries have yet to be trained to use remote learning platforms (figure 4).
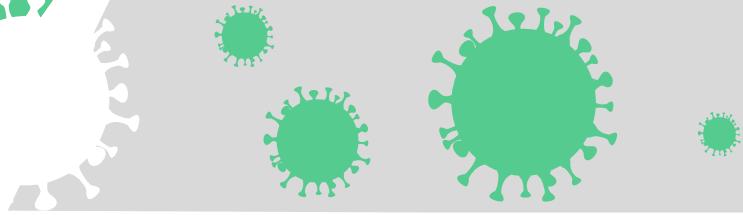
Figure 3. Percentage of countries planning selected actions in response to the pandemic
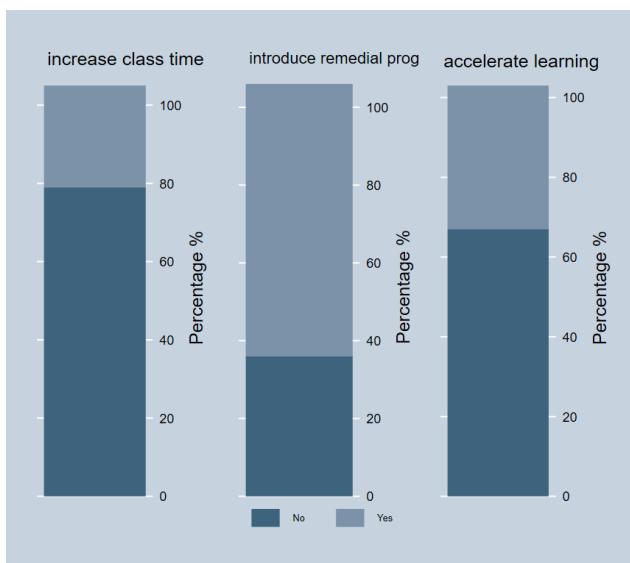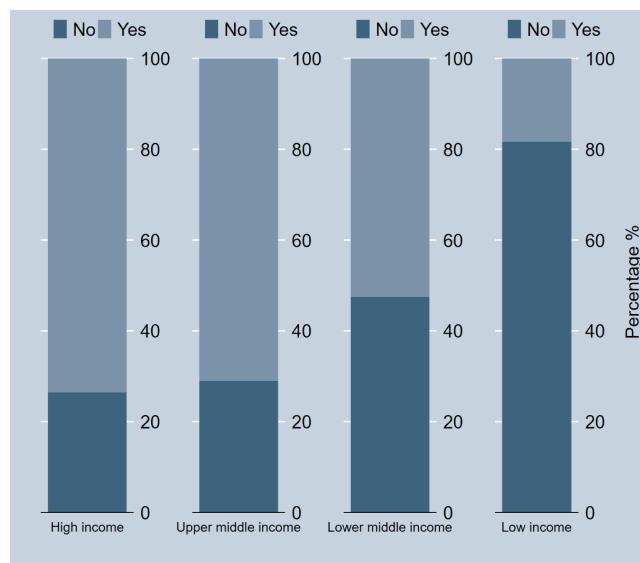

Figure 4. Percentage of countries that trained teachers to use remote learning platforms

Metadata:
- SDG 4.1.1 Indicator: http://tcg.uis.unesco.org/metadata-for-sdg-4-global-and-thematic-indicators/
- UNESCO Institute for Statistics based on the results of the 1st Iteration of the UNESCO-UNICEF-World Bank Survey on National Education Responses to COVID-19 School Closures.
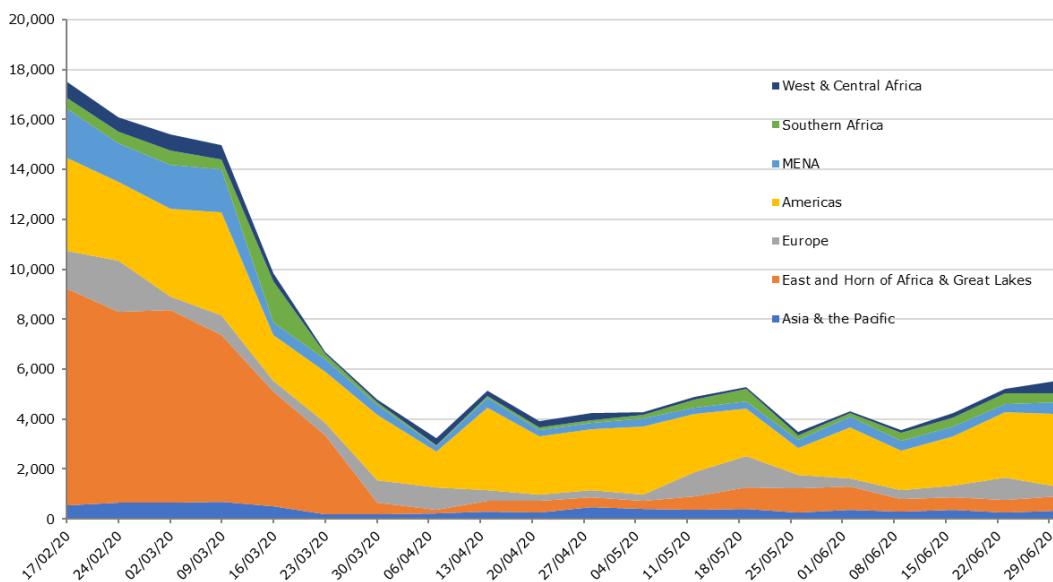
References:

Gustafson, Martin and Carol Nuga Deliwe (2020), "How is the COVID-19 pandemic affecting educational quality in South Africa? Evidence to date and future risks", RESEP.

UIS (2019). How fast can levels of proficiency improve? Examining historical trends to inform SDG 4.1.1 scenarios.

Forcibly displaced disproportionally affected by COVID-19

The three interlocked health, protection, and socio-economic crises caused by COVID-19 are disproportionally affecting the forcibly displaced. More accurate statistics are needed in all three domains to better understand the impact of the pandemic and devise appropriate responses.

Figure 1. UNHCR weekly refugee registration

In the past three months, the COVID-19 pandemic has greatly intensified, with the number of confirmed daily cases worldwide on a continuous increasing trend and hitting new highs almost on a daily basis. While very few people and places are left unscathed by the pandemic, its impact is the greatest for groups of people who were already most vulnerable before the crisis, such as the almost 80 million people who had to flee their homes because of war, violence, human right violations and persecution, both within their own countries (internally displaced) or across international borders (refugees and asylum-seekers). The disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on forcibly displaced people is compounded in three main interdependent crises which aggravate their already critical vulnerabilities: a health crisis, a protection crisis, and a socio-economic crisis.

Firstly, the health crisis is exacerbated by the fact that many displaced persons live in crowded situations, and often have limited access to health services due to legal and other barriers. For instance, it has been estimated that the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya with almost 200,000 residents has a population density about 1,000 times that of the host Turkana community. Their situation is made more dire by the fact that most refugees live in developing countries with weak health systems, and that asylum-seekers may fear detention and

deportation if reported to authorities. While a total of 5,000 persons of concern to UNHCR have officially tested positive thus far, this is considered a serious under-reporting, given that 134 refugee-hosting countries are reporting local transmission.

Secondly, measures implemented by governments to limit the spread of COVID-19, including limiting freedom of movement and border closures, are having a profound negative impact on the right of people fleeing war and persecution to access the protection they need. As mentioned in the previous brief, refugee registration, which is an essential protection activity conducted by UNHCR field staff, had dropped significantly in the period between mid-February and mid-April, and has remained quite stable since, with activities reduced to a minimum in the East Africa and Middle East/North Africa (MENA) regions, and continuing as much as feasible, especially remotely, in other areas (see graph). For countries that conduct refugee status determination, the right to seek asylum has also been affected as many countries have applied administrative measures (e.g. temporary closure of asylum authorities, suspended asylum interviews, suspension of registering asylum applications), which resulted in a drop in the number of asylum applications as well as in the number of decisions issued starting from March 2020. According to

UNHCR protection data, at least 78 countries have partially or totally restricted access to national asylum procedures, with 48 countries having restricted access to national registration (see graph below). Eurostat's asylum statistics, for instance, show a significant drop in asylum applications registered in April across the EU and other European countries (-86% with respect to January, see graph below). Following the loosening of restrictions in Europe, preliminary data show however a slow recovery in the volume of asylum applications in subsequent months in most countries.

Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic has already caused a global recession, bringing many economic activities to a halt. This especially impacted the socio-economic condition of forcibly displaced people, who lost jobs and income opportunities, but who have the least financial buffers to soften such shocks. Rapid remote surveys by telephone are being undertaken by UNHCR and its partners in many regions, including the Americas, MENA, and East Africa, to assess the needs of its assisted populations. The results of these data collection efforts show the increasing struggle of refugees to meet their basic needs. For instance, in Lebanon, one of the largest refugee-hosting countries in the world, over half of surveyed Syrian refugees reported having lost their already scarce livelihoods. As a result, UNHCR has estimated that the percentage of Syrian refugees below the poverty line increased from 73 to around 90 per cent, and the percentage of households eligible for cash assistance increased from 55 to around 80 per cent.

**Figure 2. National asylum procedures (Number of countries as of 30 June2020)**
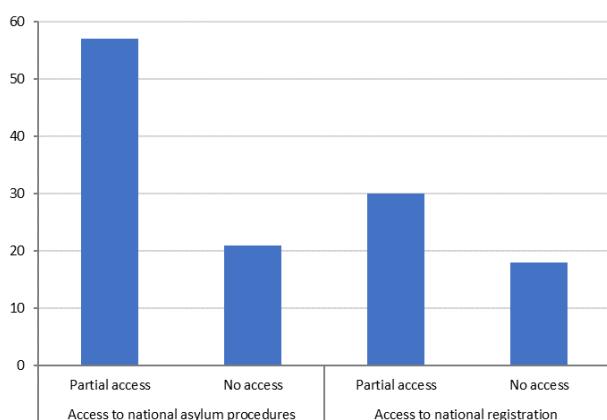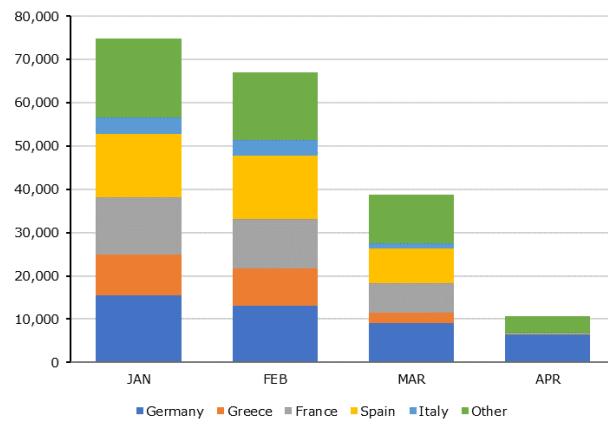
Figure 3. Asylum applications in the European Union, 2020

Link to metadata:
- https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics
- https://www.unhcr.org/population-data.html
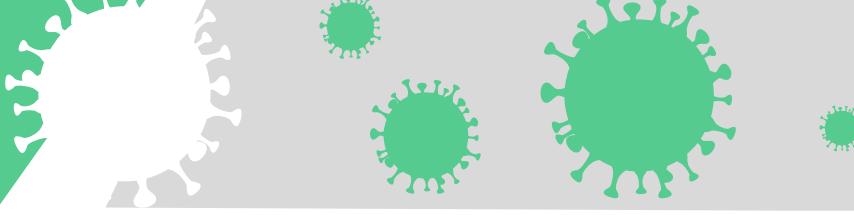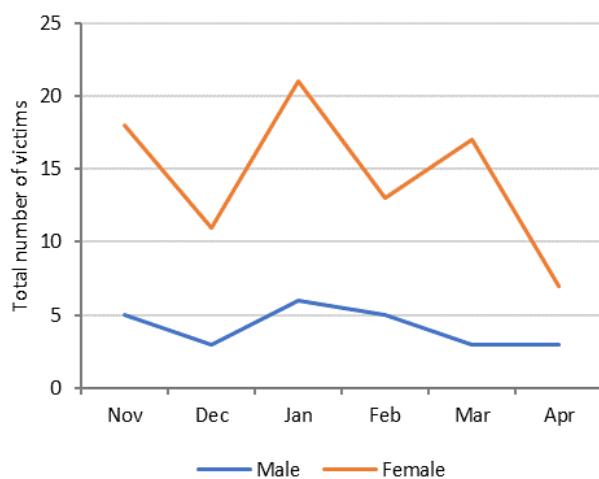
Sources:
- Global COVID-19 Operational Portal: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/covid-19
- UNSG Policy Brief: COVID-19 and People on the Move : https://unsdg.un.org/resources/policy-brief-covid-19-and-people-move
- Global Trends: Forced displacement in 2019: https://www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2019/
- Humanitarian Data Exchange: COVID-19 Pandemic: https://data.humdata.org/event/covid-19
- Global Focus: COVID-19 situation: https://reporting.unhcr.org/covid-19

Violence against women during COVID-19
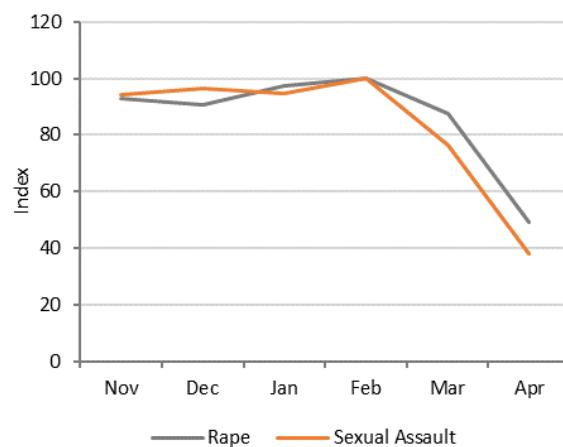
Data show mixed trends on violence against women during COVID-19: an increase in the incidents of domestic violence reported to helplines and a decrease in intimate partner homicide and sexual violence reported to police.

Figure 1. Total number of victims of intentional homicide by intimate partner, November 2019 – April 2020

Note: Eight countries with available data.

**Figure 2. Trends in sexual violence reported to police, February=100, November 2019 - April 2020**

Note: Rape—17 countries, Sexual assault—11 countries.

The rapid spread of COVID-19 forced many people around the globe to remain at home to protect themselves and others from the virus. While staying at home was considered a safe solution in response to the health emergency, there is a well-grounded concern that this would not be the case for many women and girls who would be forced to live in a confined space with an abusive partner or abusive family member.

Based on available data, the impact of COVID-19 on violence against women appears to vary across countries and by type of crime. In line with the overall homicide trend, data from 17 countries provides evidence that the total number of female victims of intentional homicide decreased in April 2020 by 17 per cent compared to February of the same year. When focusing on killings of women by an intimate partner (figure 1), the values recorded during the first months of the pandemic also point to a possible downward trend. However, the large data variability does not allow to make a more definitive conclusion.

Sexual violence is another serious problem affecting many women around the world. Available data suggests a substantial decrease in the number of cases of rape and sexual assault reported to police during the initial period of the pandemic through April 2020. This decrease, may be the results of multiple factors. Sexual violence originating outside of the domestic sphere has likely decreased due to lockdown measures. For sexual offences in the domestic sphere, it could be that they have decreased and/or that the rate of reporting to the police has decreased. Moreover, police and official reporting channels have been under additional strains during the COVID-19 emergency when first respondents including law enforcement, and health service providers were overburdened with COVID-related activities. Furthermore, women might have experienced additional oversight by partners or family members during the lockdown period leading to either limited or no access to support services.

Data from national helpline services show different trends compared to reported offences. In Italy, for example, data on the number of weekly calls received shows a very sudden and steep increase starting from the first week of the lockdown. Overall, when compared to the weeks prior to the lockdown, the number of calls by victims of violence increased by up to four times during the peak of the pandemic.
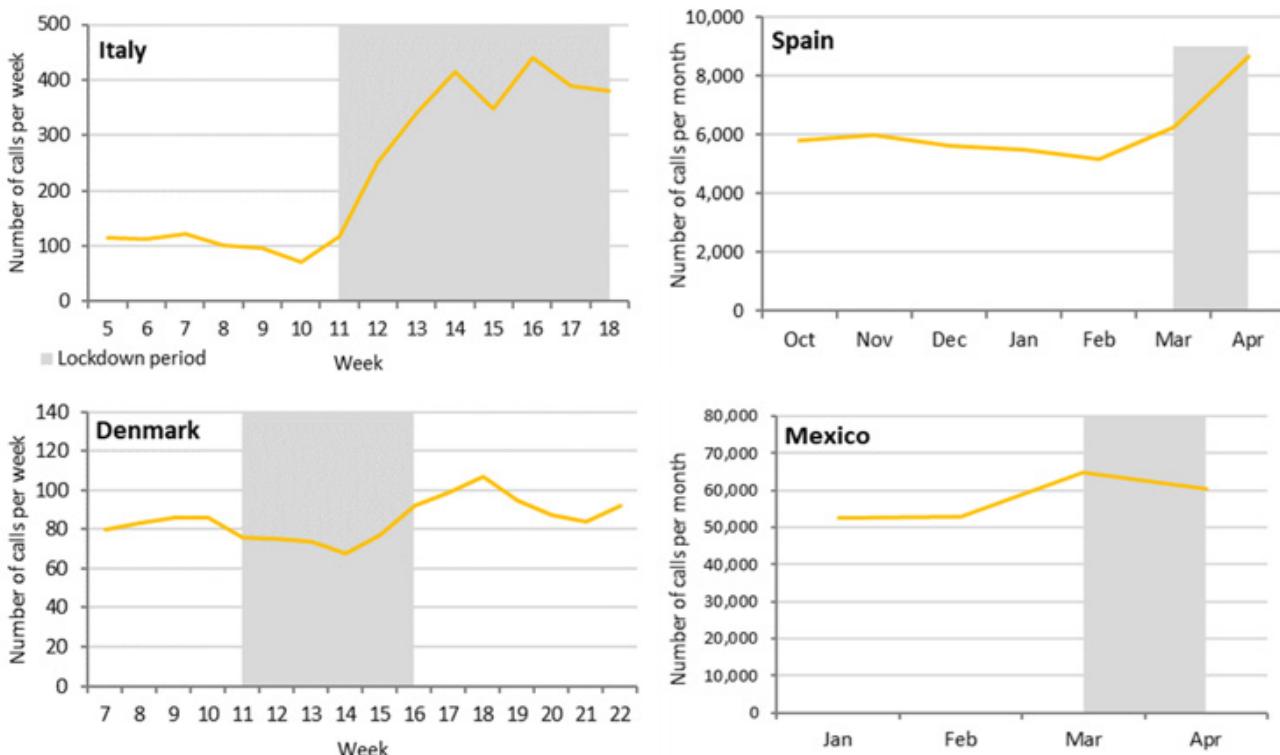
In Spain, calls to national helpline also increased by almost 70 per cent between February and April 2020. Contrary to the experience of Italy and Spain, the number of victims of domestic violence requesting assistance from helpline services in Denmark and Mexico remained relatively stable during the lockdown.

The different trends emerging from available helpline and police data could be a result of various factors at play. These could include differences in the types of crime reported to the police and helpline organizations, especially by type of perpetrator or location where the incident has occurred.

In addition, the variability of national measures implemented during the lockdown period may also explain the difference. UNODC is currently collecting more data in order to better understand the different trends.

Figure 3. Number of calls to national helpline organizations, Italy, Denmark, Spain and Mexico

Link to metadata:
https://dataunodc.un.org/content/covid-19
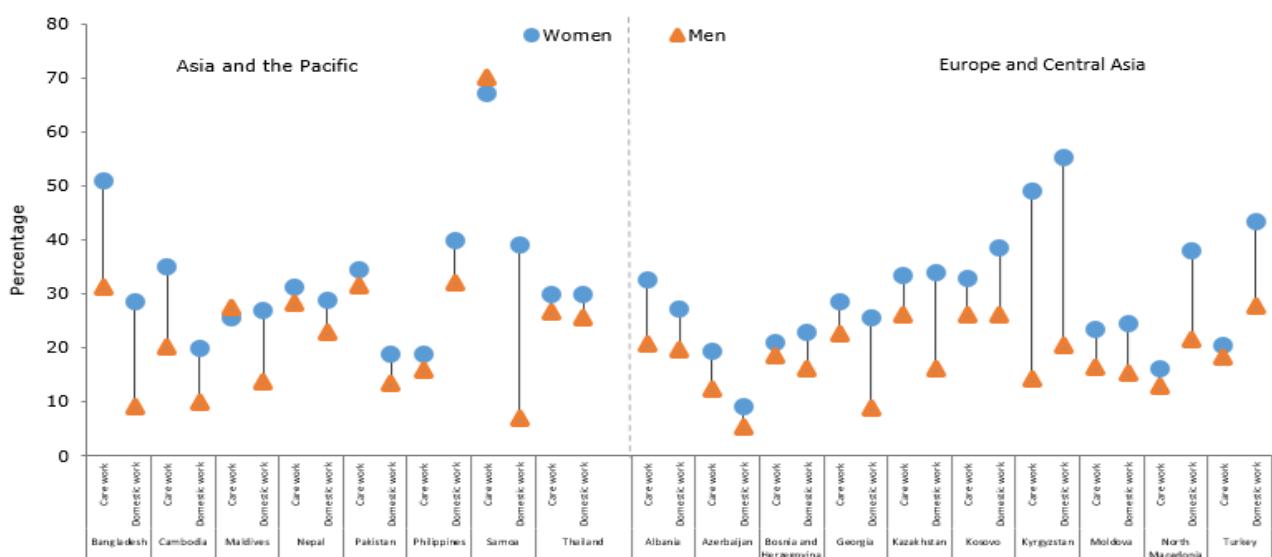
Sources:
- Figure 1 & 2: Country level data collected as part of the UNODC Global initiative to improve knowledge on COVID-19's impact on crime and drugs.
- Figure 3: Italy (National Institute of Statistics), Denmark (Lev Uden Volds National Helpline), Spain (Delegación del Gobierno contra la Violencia de Género), Mexico (Secretario Ejecutivo del Sistema Nacional de Seguridad Pública, Información sobre violencia contra las mujeres (Incidencia delictiva y llamadas de emergencia 9-1-1)).

Gendered impacts of COVID-19: Gender inequality as society's pre-existing condition

The nearly 40 rapid gender assessment (RGA) surveys, conducted by UN Women since March 2020, indicate that the COVID-19 pandemic is exacerbating gender inequalities and deepening gender-based discrimination and vulnerability. The survey results underscore the need to take drastic actions to redress long-standing gender inequalities as a prerequisite for a fair, speedy and sustainable recovery.

Figure 1. Proportion of population who reported increases on time spent in at least three activities on unpaid care and domestic work activities since the spread of COVID-19, by sex (percentage)

Source: UN Women Rapid Gender Assessments in Asia and the Pacific, and Europe and Central Asia, April–June 2020.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed large gender data gaps. With only 31 per cent of gender-specific SDG indicators data available, the lack of baseline data impedes evidence-based policymaking which in turn hampers efforts to address inequalities.

To fill these information gaps, UN Women launched a set of rapid gender assessment surveys (RGAs) in partnership with the public and private sector, using internet, landline and mobile phone-based data collection techniques. The data show that COVID-19 has gendered consequences that, if left unaddressed, will exacerbate existing inequalities.
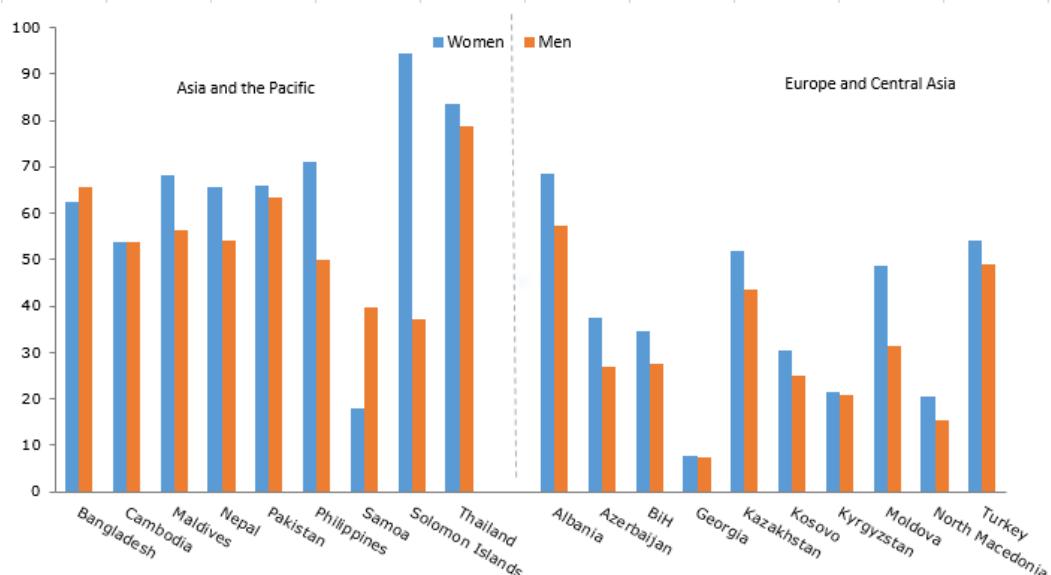
Women report doing more unpaid domestic and care work than men. Before the pandemic, women did three times more unpaid domestic and care work than men. While the crisis has led to increases in the workload for both women and men,

women are shouldering the extra burden, particularly in terms of care of children and household-related chores.

Survey results show that women sustained large drops in income from employment, savings, businesses and investments, farming and remittances. However, in several countries, particularly in Asia and Pacific, men are more likely to secure support from governments and non-governmental organizations.

Women's mental and emotional health is disproportionately affected. COVID-19 is not just affecting people's physical health. In almost all countries surveyed, high rates of mental and emotional distress are reported, with women reporting higher rates than men. Increases in unpaid care and domestic work, job and income loss, and increased gender-based violence may be some of the leading reasons for this increase.

Figure 2. Proportion of population who reported that their psychological/mental/emotional health was affected since the spread of COVID-19 in selected countries, by sex (percentage)

Source: UN Women Rapid Gender Assessments in Asia and the Pacific, and Europe and Central Asia, April–June 2020.

The UN COVID-19 and gender monitor dashboard was launched by UN Women in the Recover Better Together Action Forum held in June 2020. Hosted on UN Women's Data Hub, the dashboard is a compilation of indicators that will inform gender-responsive policy action on COVID-19. It was developed by UN Women in collaboration with other UN entities as a response to the call from the UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund to develop a dashboard of indicators to inform funding proposals from UN Country Teams.
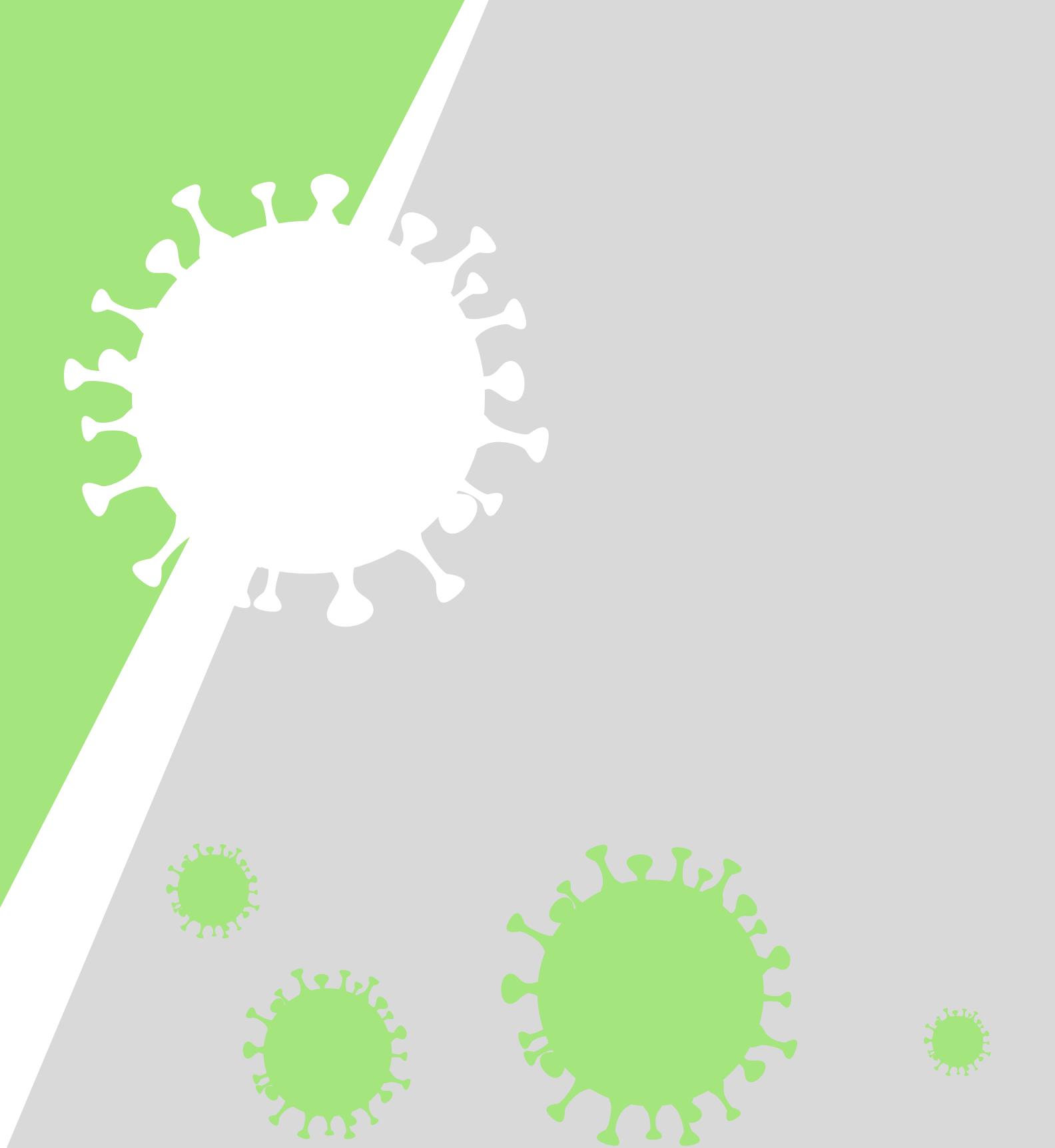
Link to survey methodology:

- UN Women. Guidance on Rapid Gender Assessment Surveys on the Impacts of COVID-19. Making Every Woman and Girl Count. New York, USA. May 2020. https://data.unwomen.org/publications/guidance-rapid-gender-assess-ment-surveys-impacts-covid-19
- UN Women. Methodological Note on Collecting Evidence during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Asia and the Pacific. Making Every Woman and Girl Count in Asia and the Pacific. Bangkok, Thailand. July 2020. https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/COVID19/Infographic%20on%20methodology.pdf

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UN Women. Impact of COVID-19 on Women's and Men's Livelihoods in Europe and Central Asia: Preliminary Results from Rapid Gender Assessments. Making Every Woman and Girl Count in Europe and Central Asia. Istanbul, Turkey. July 2020. Available at https://data.unwomen.org/publications/impact-covid-19-womens-and-mens-lives-and-livelihoods-europe-and-central-asia

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UN Women. COVID-19 and Gender Monitor. UN Women Data Hub. New York, USA. June 2020. https://data.unwomen.org/resources/covid-19-and-gender-monitor

REGIONAL IMPACT
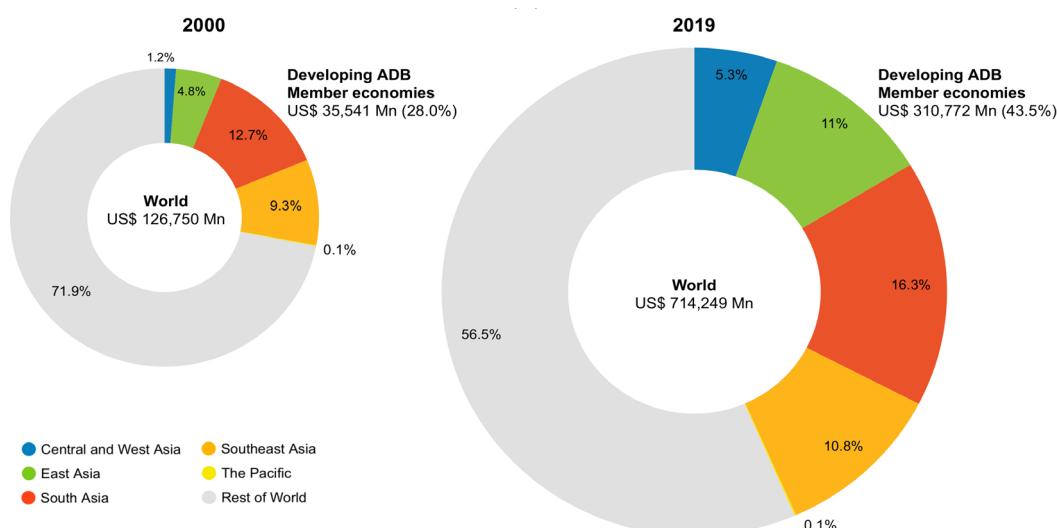
Remittances on the eve of COVID-19: Potential risks for developing economies in Asia and the Pacific

As global economic activity stalls, developing economies in Asia and the Pacific face domestic labour market upheavals and disruptions to remittance receipts. Economies with a significant or growing dependence on remittances are especially vulnerable.

Figure 1. Global total remittances, inflows (percentages)

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has led many countries around the world to implement lockdowns with severe impact on their economies. Developing economies in Asia and the Pacific face a dual threat: Apart from disruptions in domestic production, they also face significant drops in remittance receipts, as livelihoods of their citizens working overseas are also affected negatively by lockdowns in those countries.

Remittances are an important source of income for many households in developing economies. They are also significant contributors of foreign exchange earnings, and tend to be countercyclical.[1] However, with COVID-19 sweeping the world, remittances may no longer act as a countercyclical stabilizer, and disruptions to their inflows can compound the pandemic's severe impact on domestic economies and lower-income households.

Although remittance data can be noisy, the broad trend shows that developing member economies[2] of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) were major recipients of remittance income at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic (figure 1). They received a total of $311 billion in 2019, with the largest inflows in South Asia. This was almost nine times the aggregate remittances in 2000 ($36 billion), even though remittance receipts worldwide had grown only 5-6 times during the same period (table 1). The fastest growth was seen in Central and West Asia.

ADB's developing member economies received 43.5% of the world's total remittances in 2019, compared with 28.0% in 2000, leaving them more vulnerable to overseas labor market disruptions, including lockdowns.

The vulnerability of these economies can also be seen in the size of remittances relative to gross domestic product (GDP); this figure was 1.3% among all developing ADB member economies in 2019, higher than the 0.8% worldwide (table 2). There was nevertheless a wide variation at the economy level. Table 2 reports remittances relative to GDP for ADB subregions and the 10 leading recipients. In Tonga, remittances relative to GDP reached 36.1% in 2019, while this figure exceeded one-quarter in the Kyrgyz Republic, Nepal and Tajikistan. Nevertheless, some of the 10 leading recipients had experienced declines in remittances relative to GDP since 2010, as their economies grew at a faster rate than remittance inflows.

The adverse effects of overseas lockdowns on remittances, and the welfare losses for households dependent on such income, are expected to be greatest for these economies. Due to stigma, migrant workers also face difficulties obtaining alternative employment.[3] Moreover, to the extent that remittance incomes are spent on children's education, the impact of overseas lockdowns on the families of migrant workers could reverberate into the next generation.

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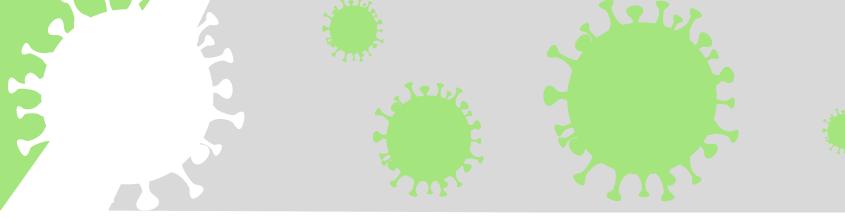
Table 1: Total remittances, inflows (US$ million)

Sub-Region	2000	2010	2019
Central and West Asia	1,565 (1.2%)	20,737 (4.4%)	37,603 (5.3%)
East Asia	6,042 (4.8%)	59,419 (12.5%)	78,641 (11.0%)
South Asia	16,092 (12.7%)	71,929 (15.1%)	116,406 (16.3%)
Southeast Asia	11,752 (9.3%)	43,120 (9.1%)	77,366 (10.8%)
The Pacific	90 (0.1%)	479 (0.1%)	756 (0.1%)
Developing ADB Member Economies	35,541 (28.0%)	195,685 (41.2%)	310,772 (43.5%)
World	126,750	474,839	714,249

Source: ADB estimates using economy sources and World Bank Migration and Remittances Data. http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/migrationremittancesdiasporaissues/brief/migration-remittances-data (accessed 30 June 2020). For Taipei,China: Central bank of Taipei,China (accessed 30 June 2020).

Notes: ADB = Asian Development Bank. Percentages in parentheses represent the share of the global total. Regional aggregates include reporting economies only.

Table 2: Total remittances, inflows by subregion and selected economies (% of GDP)

Sub-Region	2000	2010	2019
Central and West Asia	1.4	4.2	5.8
Armenia	4.6	18.0	11.2
Georgia	6.9	9.7	12.7
Kyrgyz Republic	0.6	26.4	28.5
Pakistan	1.4	5.6	8.9
Tajikistan	6.4 (2002)	35.8	28.3
East Asia	0.3	0.8	0.5
South Asia	3.0	3.9	3.5
Nepal	2.1	21.3	26.5
Sri Lanka	7.0	7.3	8.0
Southeast Asia	2.3	2.5	2.8
Philippines	8.3	10.3	9.3
The Pacific	1.6	2.3	2.4 (2018)
Samoa	0.2 (2004)	20.0	17.4
Tonga	31.5 (2001)	19.9	36.1
Developing ADB Member Economies	1.0	1.6	1.3
World	0.4	0.7	0.8

Source: ADB estimates using economy sources and World Bank Migration and Remittances Data. http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/migrationremittancesdiasporaissues/brief/migration-remittances-data (accessed 30 June 2020). For Taipei,China: Central bank of Taipei,China (accessed 30 June 2020).

Notes: ADB = Asian Development Bank. Regional aggregates include reporting economies only.

Link to metadata:
- https://kidb.adb.org/kidb/references/definitions
- ADB's Key Indicator Database has data on remittance receipts and other indicators on the region, with the latest release scheduled for mid-September 2020: https://kidb.adb.org/

Notes:

[1] ADB and World Bank (2018), Migration and Remittances for Development in Asia, May 2018, https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/419611/migration-remittances-development-asia.pdf.

[2] ADB subregions comprise: Central and West Asia (Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan); East Asia (People's Republic of China; Hong Kong, China; Republic of Korea; Mongolia; and Taipei,China) ; South Asia (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka); Southeast Asia (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam); and the Pacific (Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu).

[3] ADB (2020), COVID-19 is a Serious Blow to the Remittances that Millions of Families Depend on, https://blogs.adb.org/blog/covid-19-serious-blow-remittances-millions-families-depend-upon.

REGIONAL

The African Development Bank (AfDB) has put in place a US$10.2billion Crisis Response Facility (CRF) to provide a flexible range of support to African countries to help them deal with the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The CRF comprises about 70% of the Bank's planned lending for 2020, so it represents a sizeable share of AfDB's lending activities for this year. The CRF is delivering immediate relief to countries to address the crisis by providing them with additional resources for (1) public health interventions, (2) social protection programs, and (3) protection of their economies at a time of global volatility and uncertainty.

Many African countries are still highly dependent on commodity exports, and the recent economic turmoil has brought those export earnings down. This has led to reduced foreign exchange earnings as well as reduced fiscal revenues. Moreover, all the pandemonium has interfered with global supply chains, which has brought about a negative knock-on effect.

The Bank has therefore stepped up with this flexible approach that makes concessions on pricing and fees and generally helps with the immediate liquidity needs for African countries. All the funding support provided to African countries is intended to support government budgets to have maximum positive effects on households and economies without worsening the debt profiles of our member states. In fact, the resource flows are designed to be net positive to countries during the crisis without incidence of arrears. There is also flexibility to allow countries to address their specific needs, and to ensure that the Bank's financing complements other sources for maximum beneficial impact. In this regard, we are coordinating closely with our member countries as well as with our development partners.

During this crisis, the Bank will also provide support of about US$5 billion for non-CRF activities in the second half of the year to assist African countries on a broad range of needs, in most cases identified prior to COVID-19. This combined package of responses, along with other initiatives under way at the Bank, will help our countries cope with the current Covid-19 situation and put them in a position to restore growth once the crisis has passed. Going forward, the Bank intends to strengthen its

support to African countries to further boost their resilience so that they are able to better manage future shocks.

As part of the CRF operations, the Bank has put in place a robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework to ensure that resources are utilized effectively and for the intended purposes. The framework brings to the fore institutional arrangements for M&E and places importance on identifying sources, gaps and initiatives to strengthen data quality and availability for M&E. It brings out the central role played by national statistical systems in providing M&E data and particularly the coordinating role of national statistics offices.

The Bank is also in the process of developing its 5th Statistical Capacity Building Program that will support the development of statistics in Africa with special focus on statistics for measuring the social and economic impacts of COVID-19 during and post pandemic. Furthermore, the Bank has launched a COVID-19 dashboard in order to track daily developments and present reliable data on the spread of COVID-19 in Africa and its socioeconomic impacts. The COVID-19 Dashboard is an interactive platform intended to provide high frequency updates on relevant COVID-19 indicators, such as daily statistics on the number of cases, deaths, recoveries and number of tests conducted across Africa. In addition to the main COVID-19 indicators, the dashboard features critical socio-economic indicators on demography, the health sector and the economy.

Other data activities in support of the Bank's surveillance work on COVID-19 issues include generating projections for the analytical work on the Africa Economic Outlook (AEO).

Statisticians work closely with research and country economists on macroeconomic surveillance of African economies and provide the data that comprise the essential inputs for informing Bank support and for providing advisory services to African countries. According to our latest estimates, real GDP in Africa is projected to contract by 1.7 percent in 2020 in a base case scenario which assumes that the pandemic would be over by Q3 and by 3.4% in the worse case scenario where the pandemic is assumed to continue to the end of the year.

Sources:
- African Development Bank
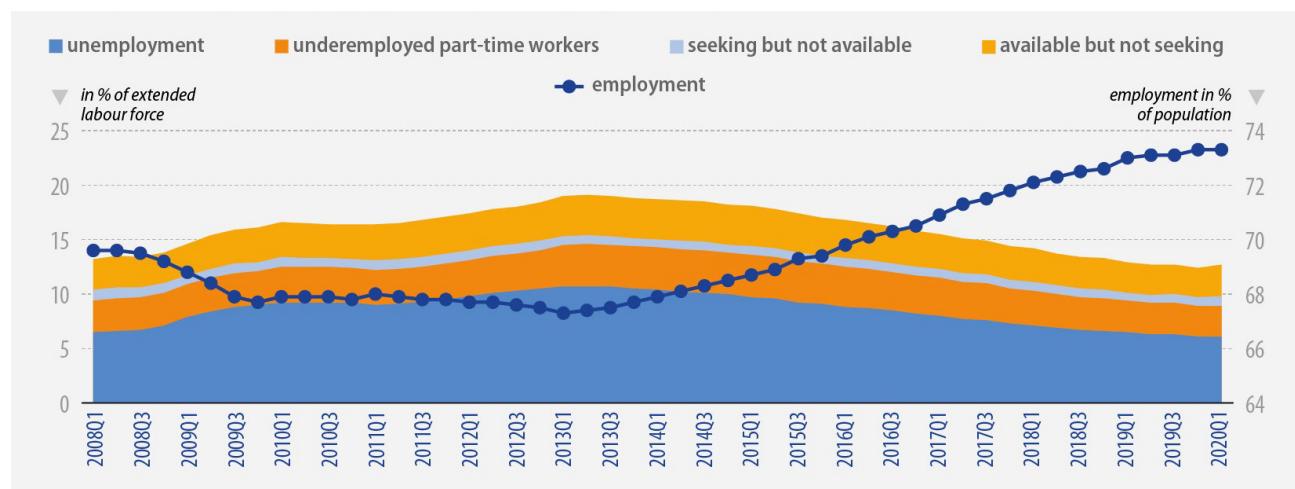
AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP
GROUPE DE LA BANQUE AFRICAINE
DE DÉVELOPPEMENT

Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the EU labour market

Labour market slack increased by 0.3 percentage points in the first quarter of 2020 compared to the fourth quarter of 2019, while employment remained stable. Absences from work reached a record high: 4.3 million more employed persons were absent from work in the first quarter of 2020 compared to the fourth quarter of 2019.

Figure 1. Labour market slack and employment in the EU
(from Q1 2008 to Q1 2020, in % age group 20-64, seasonally adjusted data**)**

*Source*: ec.europa.eu/eurostat
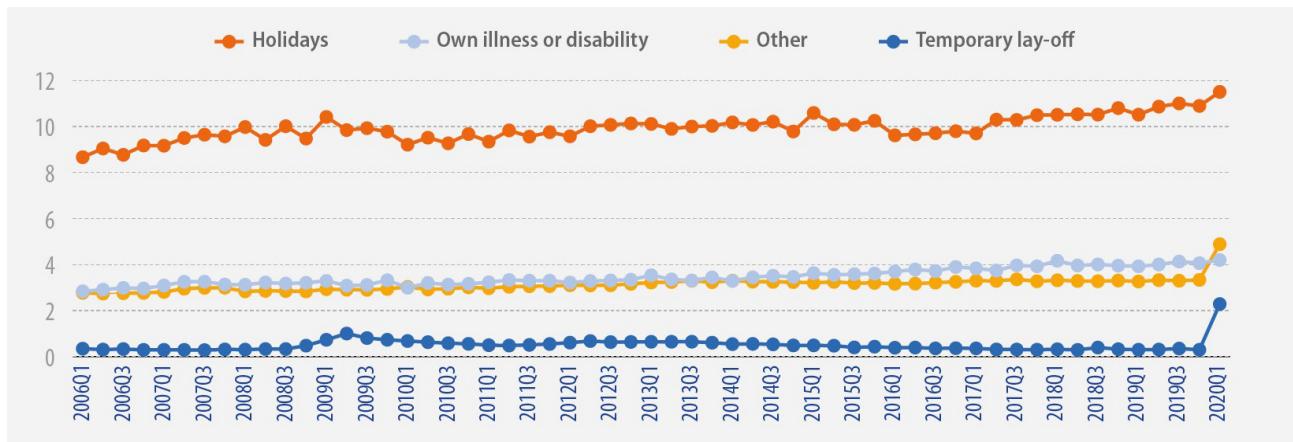
The first quarter of 2020 was the first quarter in which the labour market across the European Union (EU) was affected by COVID-19 measures taken by Member States. The concepts of employment and unemployment as defined by the International Labour Office (ILO) are, in this particular situation, not sufficient to describe all the developments taking place in the labour market. In this first phase of the crisis, active measures to contain employment losses led to absences from work rather than dismissals, and individuals could not search for work or were not available due to the containment measures and were therefore not counted as unemployed.

In July, Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union, published a set of additional seasonally adjusted quarterly indicators which capture the most recent movements on the labour market in the 27 EU Member States.

These additional indicators include total labour market slack, which comprises all persons who have an unmet need for employment, either because they are unemployed according to the ILO definition, are close to unemployment while not fulfilling all ILO criteria, or are working part-time and would like to work additional hours. Furthermore, absences from work broken down by reason are published, as well as an index of total actual hours worked in the main job. More new indicators on recent job leavers and starters, as well as weekly total absences and transitions out of employment, are published in the Eurostat database. In the first quarter of 2020, 190.9 million persons in the EU were employed. The EU seasonally adjusted employment rate for people aged 20-64 stood at 73.3%, unchanged compared to the fourth quarter of 2019 and up from 73.0% in the first quarter of 2019. At the same time, seasonally adjusted total labour market slack in the EU, consisting of unmet demand for labour, amounted to 26.8 million persons, which represented 12.7% of the extended labour force in the first quarter of 2020, up from 12.4% in the fourth quarter of 2019. This was the first quarter-on-quarter increase since the peak in the second quarter of 2013, when the labour market slack had stood at 19.0%
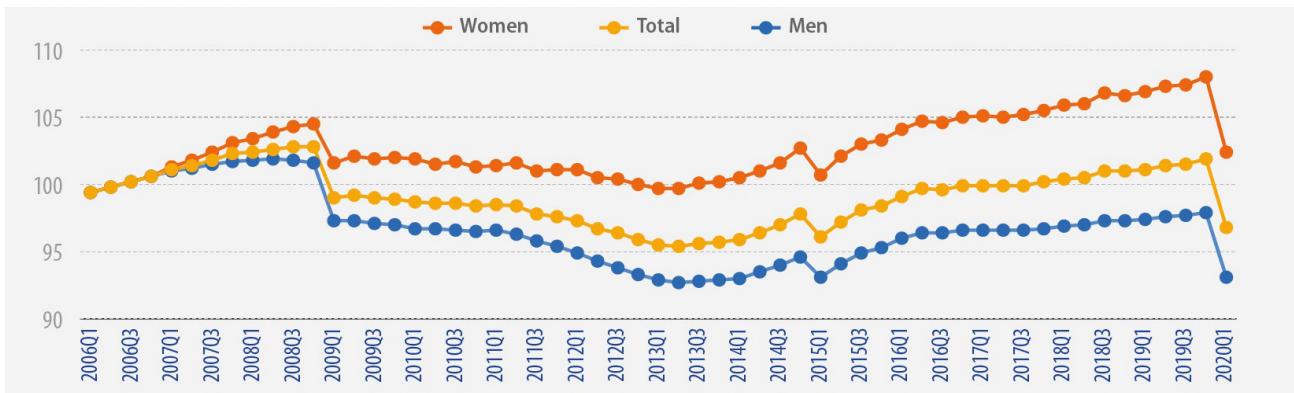
Figure 2. Absences from work by reasons in the EU
(from Q1 2006 to Q1 2020, in million persons, age group 20-64, seasonally adjusted data)

Source: ec.europa.eu/eurostat

Figure 3. Total actual hours worked in the main job in the EU
(from Q1 2006 to Q1 2020, 2006=100, people aged 20-64, seasonally adjusted data)

Source: ec.europa.eu/eurostat

In the first quarter of 2020, a total of 22.9 million persons were absent from work in the EU, an increase of 4.3 million compared to the fourth quarter of 2019. This increase is to a large extent due to a sharp increase in temporary lay-offs, which rose from 0.3 million persons to 2.3 million persons. Total actual hours worked have dropped sharply in the EU between the fourth quarter of 2019 and the first quarter of 2020, but have not reached the low values observed during the debt crisis. The levels of total actual hours worked are influenced by the total number of persons working, as well as the number of hours worked by each of these persons. Women have been harder hit than men, with a drop from 108 to 102 index points between the fourth quarter of 2019 and the first quarter of 2020, compared to a drop from 98 to 93 for men.

Note:
- German data underlying the EU aggregates for 2020Q1 are preliminary.

Sources:
- Eurostat COVID-19 website
- Eurostat website section on employment and unemployment
- Eurostat database section, including non-seasonally adjusted and trend data
- Eurostat metadata on LFS Main Indicators
- Eurostat "Statistics Explained" articles on quarterly data on labour market slack, on absences from work and on hours of work

GCC countries' intervention policies: mitigating the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 and staying on track with long term development plans

The Covid-19 pandemic represents the biggest economic challenge facing the world, with increasing uncertainty about the depth of the contraction and the speed of the expected recovery. The economies of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) are affected by two simultaneous shocks: the Covid-19 outbreak and lower oil prices. Despite the loss in oil revenue and the strained fiscal positions, GCC countries have responded rapidly to mitigate the economic consequences of the crisis on the private sector and households, and to maintain financial stability. As the crisis unfolds, more timely policy responses are needed to prevent GCC economies from falling into a prolonged economic recession that might result in increased unemployment and private sector bankruptcies.
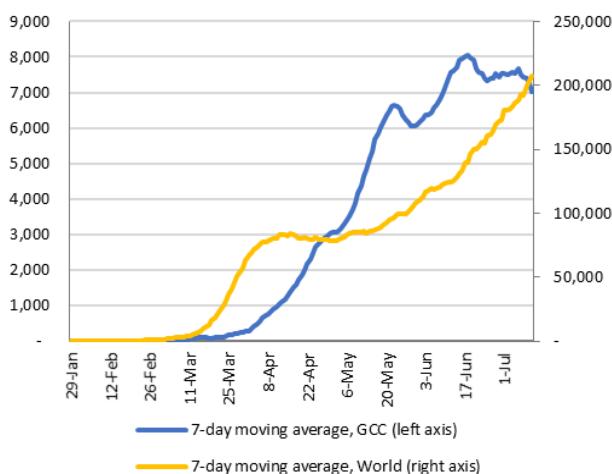
A Sign of recovery

After almost four months of lockdown, GCC countries are progressively starting to ease restrictions on mobility and economic activities. While the disease

is still spreading rapidly at a global level, the pattern of new cases in the GCC suggests that it is stabilizing, as indicated by the 7-day moving average of daily cases (figure 1). In addition, as of July 12, 2020, the number of recoveries have outpaced confirmed cases

By the end of the second quarter, various monetary and financial indicators suggest that the GCC economy is still resilient. The banking systems remain sound, with strong capitalization, adequate liquidity, relatively low NPLs, and stock markets are recovering, albeit slowly. International oil prices have partially recovered from their downturn during the first four months of the year (figure 2), with positive outlook for the third and fourth quarters as the global demand gradually rebounds. The growth in monetary aggregates (namely M1 and M2) is still steady, with slower growth in M2 during April-May 2020, reflecting lower growth in saving deposits (figure 3). The higher growth in M1 reflects lower interest rates and the expansions in bank reserves, directly resulting from central banks' recent liquidity measures.

**Figure 1. COVID-19 daily cases in GCC and the world**

Source: GCC-Stat and John Hopkins University, USA.

Figure 2. OPEC basket oil price

Source: OPEC.
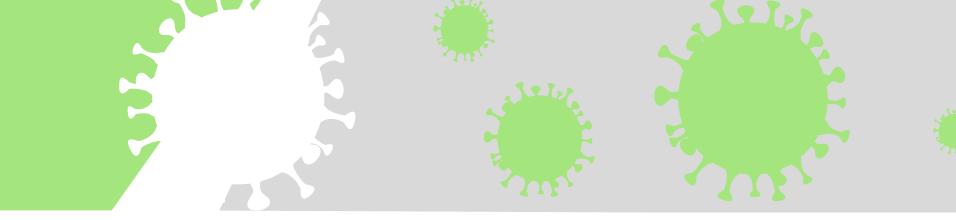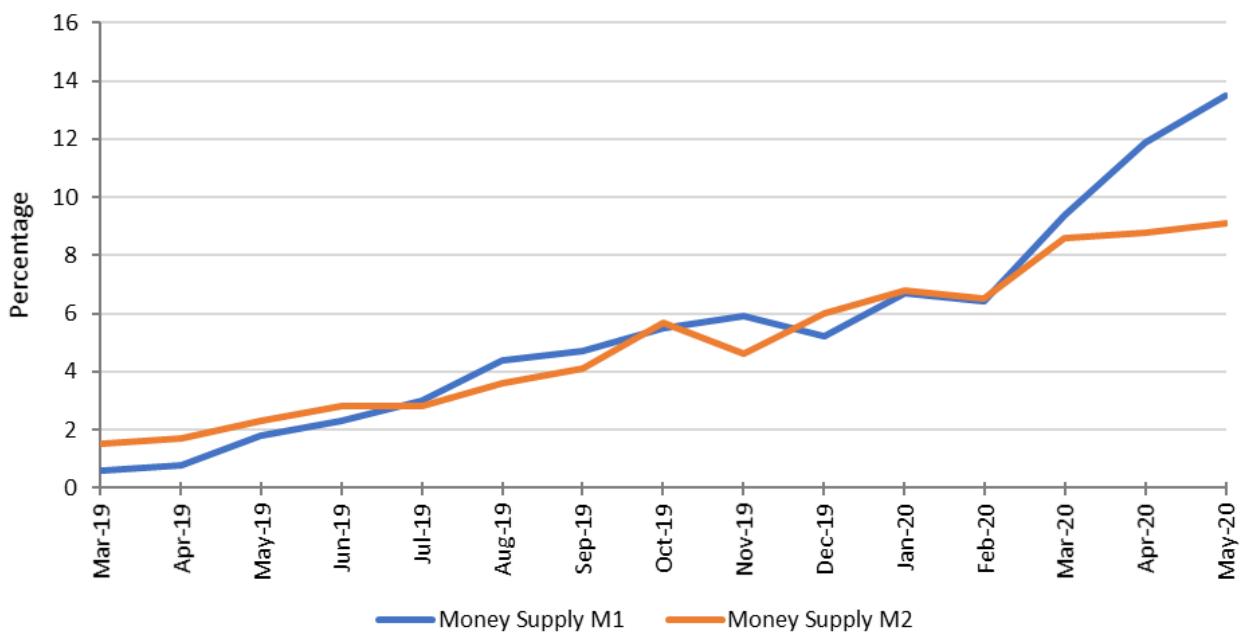
Figure 3. Growth rate in M1 and M2 for the GCC (%, YoY)

Source: GCC-Stat.

Intervention policies

As of July 12, 2020, the total value of the economic stimulus announced by the GCC countries to face the economic repercussions of Covid-19 stands at 149.2 billion US dollars. The GCC countries have devised a range of monetary, prudential, and fiscal measures to provide liquidity to the markets and support vulnerable sectors. Monetary measures have included reducing discount, interest and repo rates, with associated monetary policy instruments to reduce the cost of borrowing and ensure continued supply of credit to affected sectors. Authorities have also introduced prudential measures to help alleviate stress in the financial system through lowering capital conservation buffers and increasing the lending/financing ratio and bolstering investments in the stock markets. Central banks have also set up mechanisms to encourage commercial banks to postpone private sector loan repayments for six months to support its recovery. GCC countries have also adopted some measures to help SMEs including support to labour force, deferrals of payments (e.g., taxes, rent, utility payments, social security contributions, etc.), financial support (e.g., credit guarantees, subsidized loans, etc.). The GCC countries have also introduced social measures in the form of unemployment benefits and in-kind support to the most vulnerable households. GCC governments have also been working with other governments to support the return of people to their home countries.
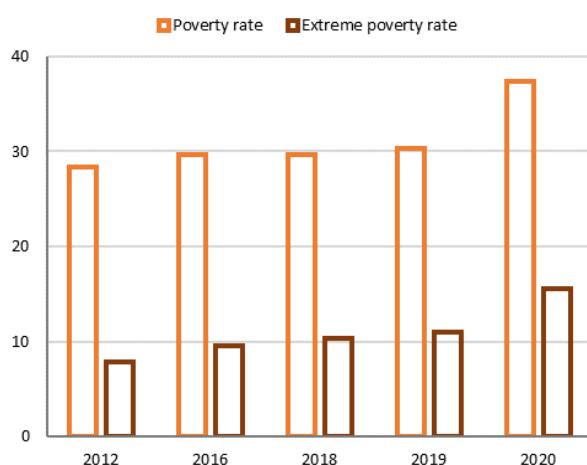
Sources:
- GCC--Stat – www.gccstat.org

Impact of COVID-19 on poverty and inequality in Latin America

The confinement measures necessary to stop the advance of the pandemic are generating an increasing economic and social cost in Latin America and the Caribbean, requiring urgent measures by governments.

Figure 1. Latin America: Population living in poverty and extreme poverty, 2012-2020 (millons of persons)

Source: ECLAC, based on own estimations and Household Survey Databank (BADEHOG).

Figure 2. Latin America: Incidence of poverty and extreme poverty, 2012-2020 (percentages)
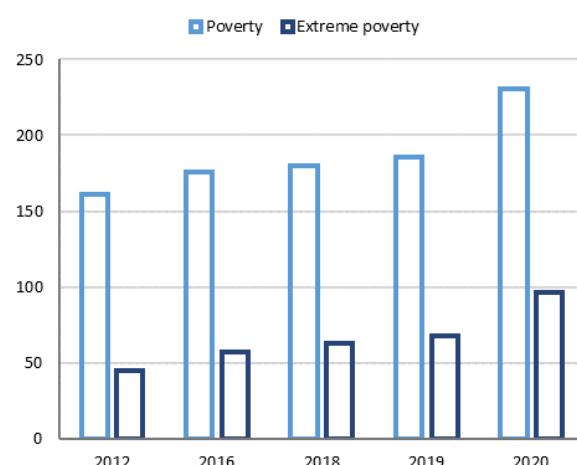

Source: ECLAC, based on own estimations and Household Survey Databank (BADEHOG).

As of mid-2020, Latin America and the Caribbean is at the epicenter of the pandemic. Although some governments in the region have started to ease containment measures, others have had to intensify them given the persistent increase in daily cases of the disease.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) estimates that the economies of Latin America and the Caribbean will experience a 9.1 per cent drop in GDP in 2020. As a result, the GDP per capita will be at a level similar to that observed in 2010. The regional unemployment rate is expected to reach 13.5 per cent at the end of 2020, which represents an increase of 5.4 percentage points compared to 2019.

Based on these figures, the number of persons in poverty in Latin America is projected to grow from 185.5 million in 2019 to 230.9 million in 2020, which represents 37.3 per cent of

the Latin American population. The number or persons in extreme poverty is expected to increase from 67.7 million people in 2019 to 96.2 million people in 2020, equivalent to 15.5 per cent of the total population.

The expected impact of the pandemic on poverty in the region will differ from country to country. The largest increases in the poverty rate would occur in Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Peru and Ecuador. In turn, extreme poverty would increase mainly in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico and Nicaragua.

Even though the projections show a decrease in household income across all income groups, it is expected that the lowest income groups will be affected to a greater extent, leading to an increase of the Gini index between one and eight per cent in the countries analyzed.
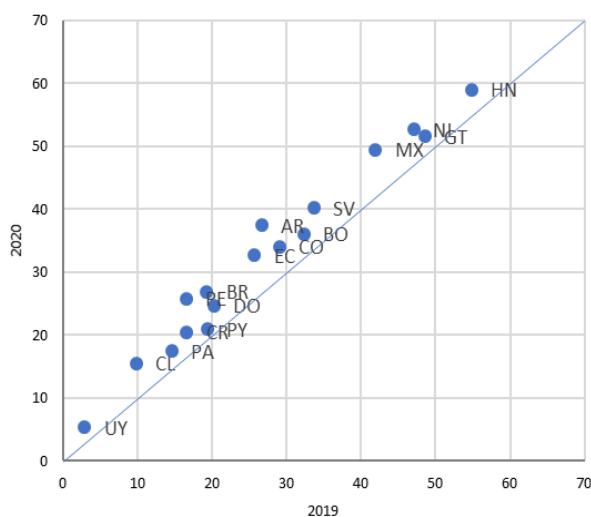
Simulations of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on living conditions take as a starting point poverty estimates for 18 Latin American countries, which are based on poverty lines constructed to maximize comparability between countries (ECLAC, 2019).

The projections assume that the reduction in GDP per capita translates into a similar reduction in per capita household labour income. The loss of labour income is not evenly distributed: job losses and fall in labour income will depend on the economic sector, labour productivity and wage levels.
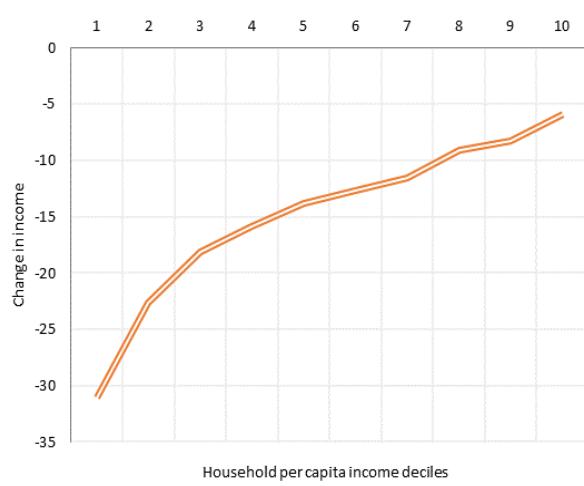
To contain the worst effects of the crisis on living conditions, ECLAC has recommended member countries to implement universal, redistributive and solidarity-based policies with a rights-based approach, to ensure that no one is left behind.

Figure 3. Poverty incidence by country, 2019 and 2020 (percentages)

Source: ECLAC, based on own estimations and Household Survey Databank (BADEHOG).

Figure 4. Projected variation of household per capita income, by decile, 2020 (percentages)

Source: ECLAC, based on own estimations and Household Survey Databank (BADEHOG).

Sources:
- https://repositorio.cepal.org/handle/11362/44920
- https://repositorio.cepal.org/handle/11362/45527 (preliminary link, to be replaced)

Impact of COVID-19 on older persons in the Arab region

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all aspects of life in the Arab region. Older persons with disabilities, especially women, will bear a double burden reflected in the health risks posed by the virus and in weak social protection systems, which leave a large group of older persons without protection.

The older population. The mortality risk of COVID-19 increases with age, as older persons, those aged 60 and over, have a higher risk of suffering from acute symptoms and health complications. COVID-19 has heightened the vulnerability of around 32 million older persons in the Arab region.

Disability is a compounding factor elevating COVID-19 risks and impacts on older persons. Disabled older persons may also face multiple functional difficulties in carrying out daily routines. Over 46 per cent of older persons have disabilities, including more than 7 million vulnerable older persons who suffer from moderate to severe disabilities.

Older women with severe to moderate disabilities are particularly vulnerable due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Of the 7 million older persons in the region with moderate to severe disabilities, 4 million are women.

Living arrangements. The majority of older persons in the Arab region live with their families. However, nearly 2 million older persons (14%) live alone or are single parents residing with children. The majority of older women are less likely to have the financial means to access required health services.
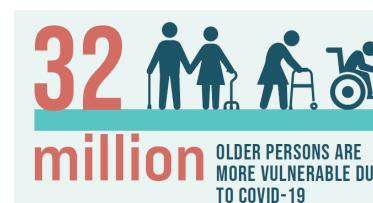
There are more older women living without a partner than older men. Older women with disabilities are twice as likely to live without a partner (66%) than older men with disabilities (34%).

Literacy is important during a crisis to keep people informed and aware of developments. In the Arab region, there are twice as many illiterate older women (68%) than men (36%). Illiterate older women are at a higher risk of isolation, and of lacking knowledge on COVID-19. They are also limited in their ability to connect with others through technology and social media.

Health of older persons. Ongoing research on COVID-19 has shown the heightened risk of mortality among patients with underlying health complications, including non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Older persons have higher NCD rates than other age groups. NCDs among older persons can range between 35 and 51 per cent, meaning that older persons are exposed to much greater risks during a pandemic.
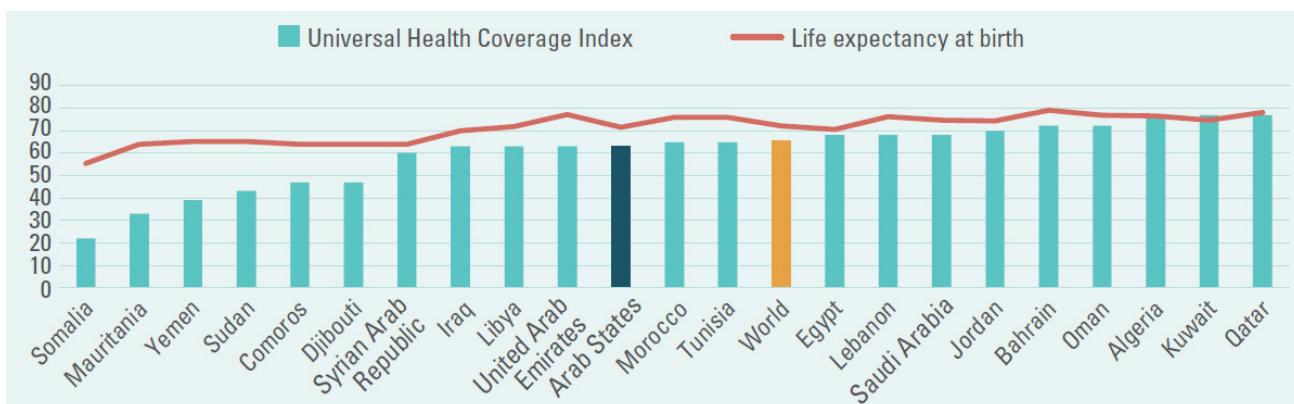
This situation is compounded by limited universal health coverage (UHC) and inadequate social protection services for older persons. The availability of UHC increases life expectancy. However, in 2017, the UHC Index for the Arab region was only 63 per cent compared with 81 per cent for the European Union, leaving many social groups vulnerable, especially older persons.

32 million OLDER PERSONS ARE MORE VULNERABLE DUE TO COVID-19

7 million VULNERABLE OLDER PERSONS SUFFER FROM MODERATE TO SEVERE DISABILITIES

OLDER PERSONS WITH MODERATE TO SEVERE DISABILITIES
OF THE **7 million** OLDER PERSONS, **4 million** ARE WOMEN

2 million LIVE ALONE, OR ARE SINGLE PARENTS WITH CHILDREN

66% 34%
LIVE ALONE

68% 36%
ILLITERATE
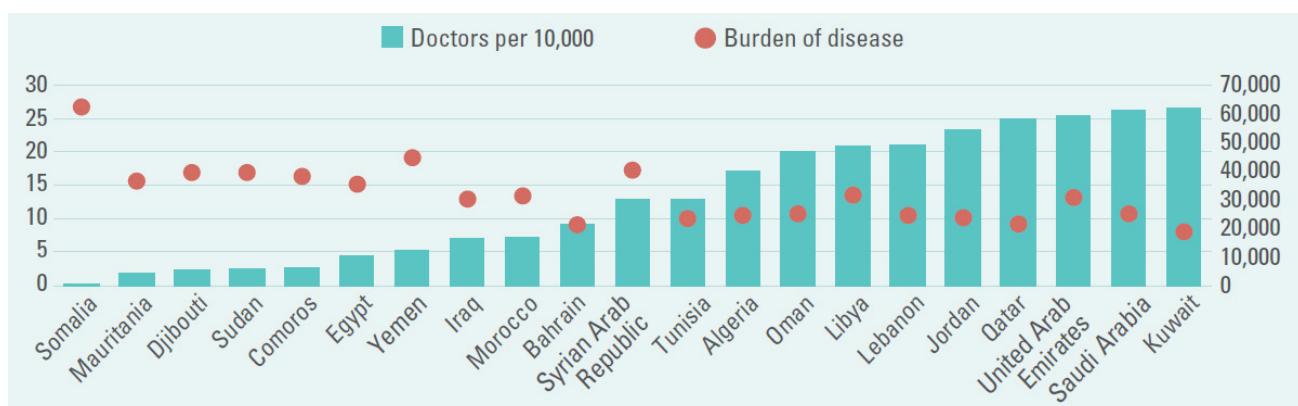
Figure 1. Universal health coverage (UHC) index and life expectancy at birth, latest data

Medical services. Medical services in Arab countries differ in their capacity to respond to COVID-19. The least developed countries are at higher risk, given their limited capacity. The need for medical professionals is urgent in the Arab region. Nearly half of Arab countries have less than 10 medical doctors per 10,000 people, and nearly a third report having less than five.

Many countries with a higher burden of disease, expressed in disability-adjusted life years, have access to only two or fewer doctors per 10,000 people. Overall, the doctor-population ratio is almost three per 1,000 persons, whereas there are, on average, two nurses per doctor across the Arab countries.

Figure 2. Medical doctors per 10,000 people and the burden of disease, latest data

Link to metadata:
- United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia: Website : https://www.unescwa.org/our-work/statistics
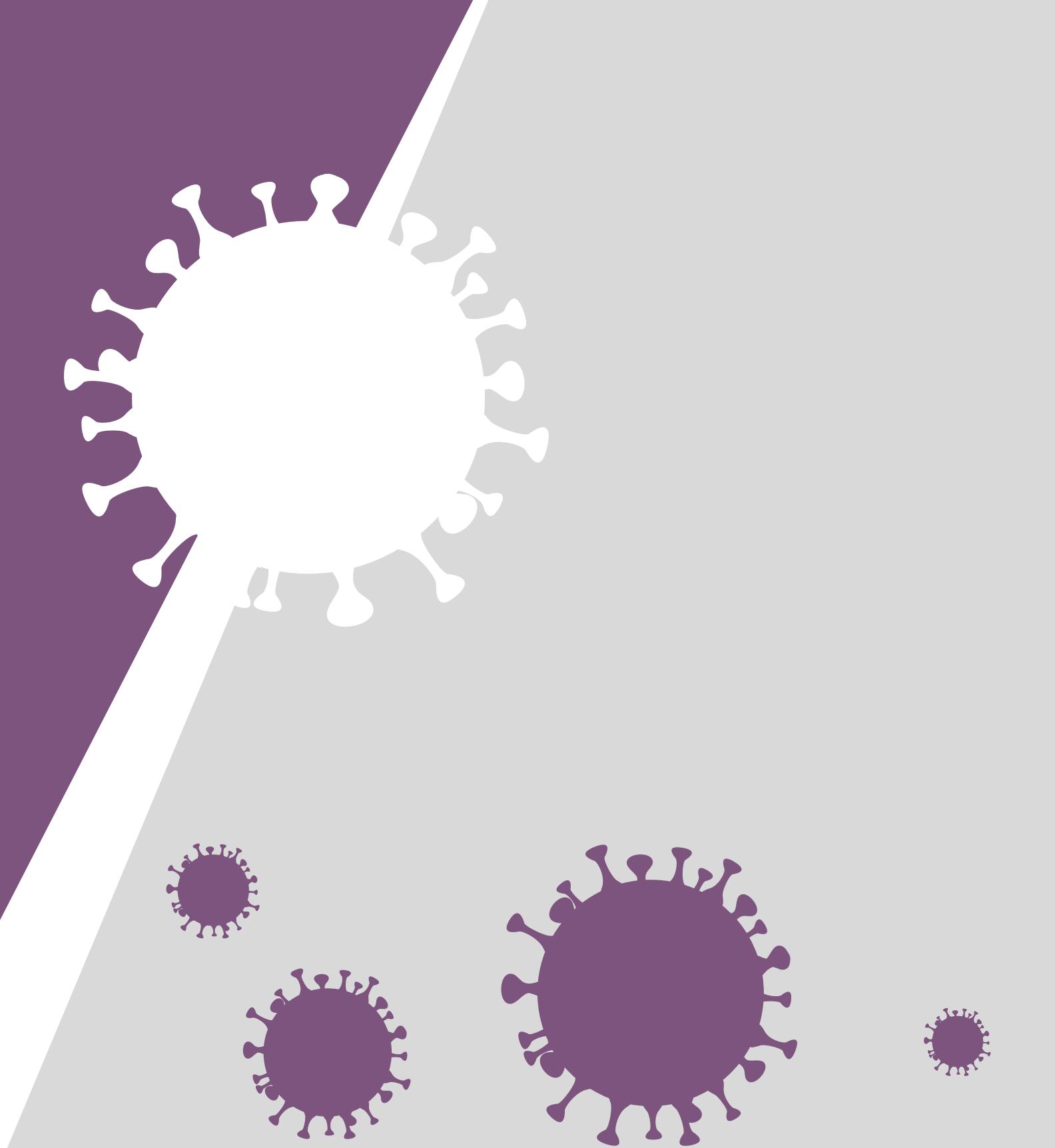
Sources:
- WHO and ESCWA, based on national and international data.
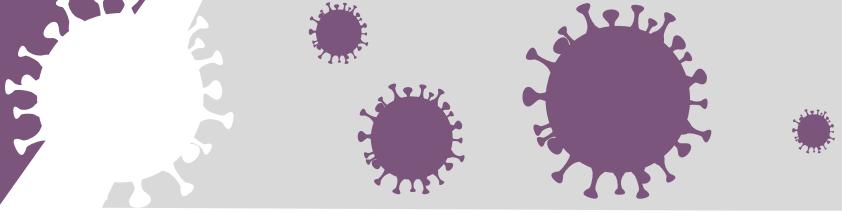
**United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)**

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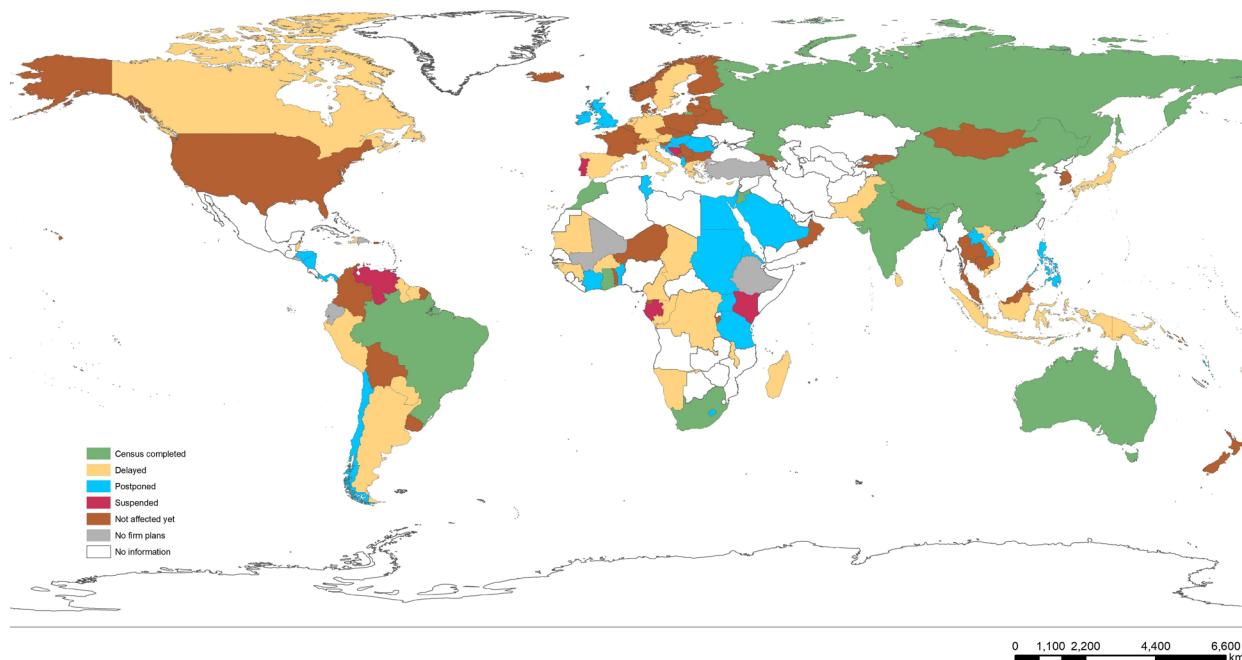
Impact on censuses of agriculture and mitigation measures

The census of agriculture's reference period is the agricultural year. Any delay may have knock-on effects and result in a full year deferment of the enumeration if the agricultural season is missed. This brings uncertainty on continued financing and undesirable shifting of reference periods.

Figure 1. The impact of COVID-19 on censuses of agriculture around 2020

Note: data from 150 countries and territories that provided an update to FAO.

The pandemic has been affecting planning and implementation of censuses of agriculture (CAs) in all world's regions. The extent of the impact varies according to the stages at which the censuses are, ranging from planning (i.e. staffing, procurement, preparation of frames, questionnaires), fieldwork (field training and enumeration) or data processing/analysis stages.

The CA's reference period is the agricultural year. Thus, countries carefully schedule census activities to ensure that crop and livestock data is collected at the right time. A delay in census activities may be critical and can result in a full year postponement of the enumeration if the agricultural season is missed.

FAO coordinates the World Programme for the Census of Agriculture 2020 (WCA 2020), which supports national CAs conducted during the 2016–2025 round.

The **Map** above shows the impact of COVID-19 on CAs in 150 countries and territories that provided an update to FAO. The **Chart** below focuses on 140 countries with ongoing census activities and shows that over half have been affected. CA activities have been delayed (27% of the countries), postponed (22%) or suspended (4%). An additional 9% of the reporting countries had completed their CAs and therefore were not affected (this excludes countries that completed a CA earlier in the round but plan a second one later in the round).

Another 38% of the countries reported that their AC activities had not been affected yet. However, three quarters of these countries are at a very early planning stage.

The situation has brought about concerns, such as uncertainty on the continued CA financing; unwanted shifting of census reference periods; data quality issues as it may not reflect the new reality; inducing biasness in samples of subsequent agricultural surveys; and delays in the population census that

could defer CAs plans (many developing countries use the population census to set up the CA frame).

Some of the countries with CAs not affected yet by the pandemic have developed statistical systems and information and communication technology (ICT). Census activities have continued through teleworking and e-learning, while data collection is carried out through CAWI and CATI or using administrative records.
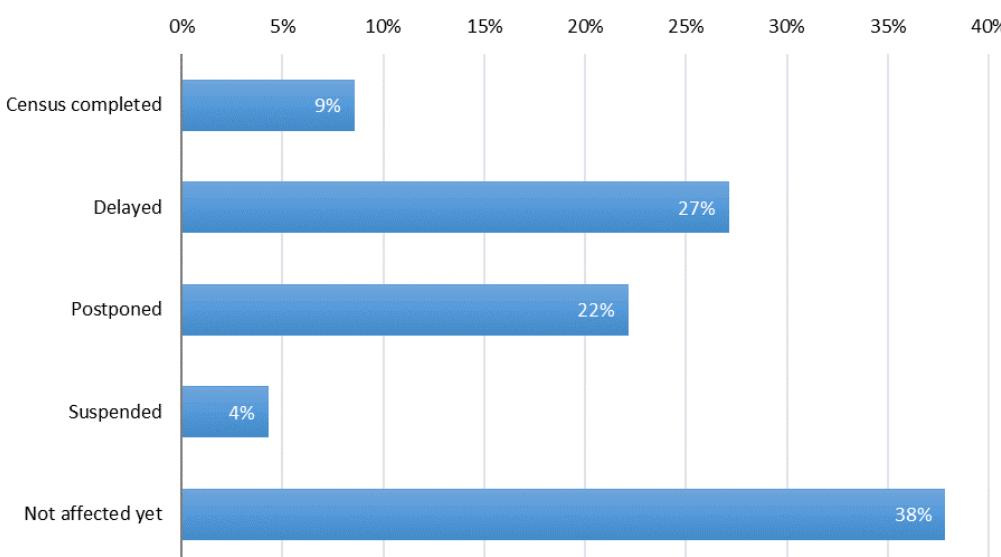
Some mitigation measures include:

- Using e-learning tools to train trainers, supervisors and enumerators.
- Reducing reliance on face-to-face interviewing and

encourage respondents to self-respond through CAWI, and CATI data collection modalities.

- Exploring the use of administrative records as census data.
- However, ICT and methodological capability takes time to build. Poor connectivity, high cost of access and lack of technical skills prevent some countries from switching halfway the CA work. Adequate time for testing and training prior to adoption should not be underestimated.
- When the enumeration has been postponed, questions could be simplified to minimize recall problems. Inventory items (e.g., livestock numbers) could be adjusted using known growth rates.

Figure 2. Impact of COVID-19 on censuses of agriculture

Category	Value
Census completed	9%
Delayed	27%
Postponed	22%
Suspended	4%
Not affected yet	38%
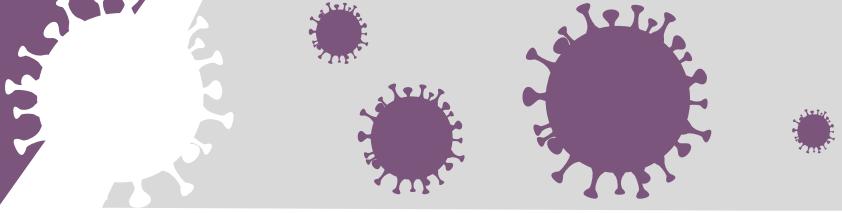
References:

Castano, Jairo. 2020. Impact of COVID-19 on national censuses of agriculture (Status overview). FAO Policy Brief, Rome. www.fao.org/3/ca8984en/CA8984EN.pdf

Castano, Jairo. 2020. National agricultural census operations and COVID-19. FAO Policy Brief, Rome. www.fao.org/3/ca8605en/CA8605EN.pdf

FAO. 2015. World Programme for the Census of Agriculture 2020 Volume 1: Programme, concepts and definitions. FAO. Rome. www.fao.org/3/a-i4913e.pdf
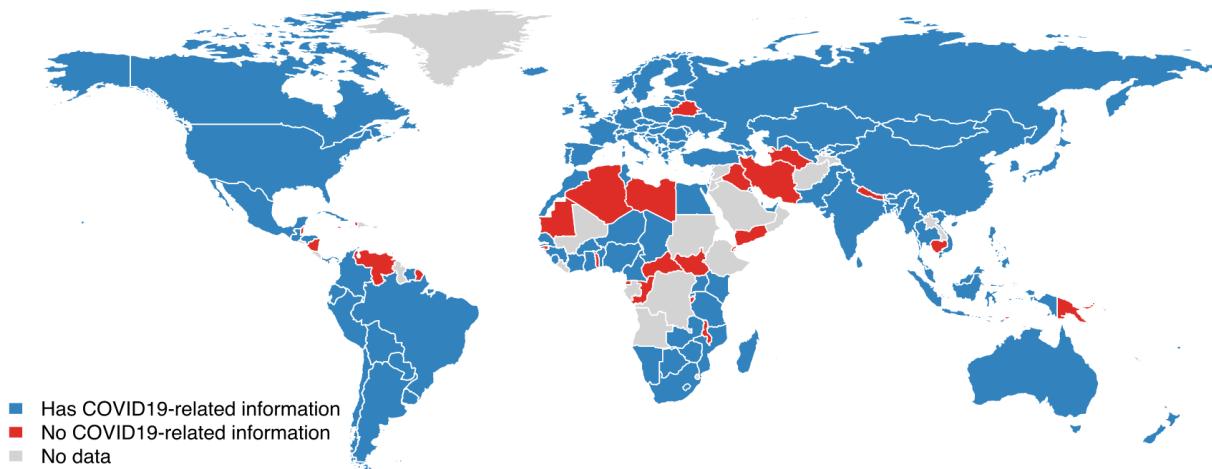
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Communicating COVID-19: The NSO response

In crises, communicating trustworthy information is crucial. At the onset of COVID-19, Twitter emerged as a popular channel of statistical communication. However, this trend has not been uniform across regions, and data show that overall online NSO communication lagged behind government measures.

Figure 1: NSOs in Africa lag behind in communicating COVID-19 on websites

- ■ Has COVID19-related information
- ■ No COVID19-related information
- ■ No data

To understand how NSOs are communicating during the pandemic, PARIS21 extracted data from active Twitter timelines of 90 NSOs worldwide from January 2020 until 09 July 2020. The analysis revealed key insights on NSO communication patterns on social media and NSO websites.

First, at the onset of the crisis NSOs communicated more frequently on COVID-19 on Twitter than on official websites. By 07 May, 2020, 64 of 90 NSO Twitter accounts analysed by PARIS21 had published information related to the pandemic in their timeline, compared to 54 NSO websites in the same sample. Over the coming months, NSOs were able to catch up in communicating on their websites. By 09 July 2020, 132 NSO websites have posted COVID-19 related information (figure 1). Yet, many NSOs in Africa still lag behind in providing information online.

Secondly, the reference to statistical information in NSO Twitter content is significantly higher than on the respective NSO websites. Websites of many NSOs in Africa, Latin America and Asia do not provide any COVID-specific information on their websites. Nearly one-third of the information on the websites are general announcements on programmes of work and reposts of government press releases. On Twitter, only 6 out of the 76 accounts analysed published non-statistical information.

NSOs in Europe and the Americas are more likely to tweet COVID-related information, with UK's Office of National Statistics leading the absolute and relative number of COVID-19 tweets (417/1783). Although Statistics South Africa leads non-OECD countries in number of tweets, and Senegal's Agence Nationale de la Statistique et de la Démographie leads in relative share (17/65), Africa still has the lowest percentage of NSOs using Twitter.

Thirdly, most NSOs using social media reacted rather slowly to the pandemic. When comparing data on government imposed measures such as public transport closures, the analysis found that for the 56 countries who have implemented some type of restrictions, NSOs take on average 19 days to tweet about COVID-19 for the first time (figure 2).

Dissemination and communication of statistical products is part of the core mandate of an NSO. During the COVID-19 crisis, effective and agile communication strategies for NSOs are key to interact with data users and enhance trust in data and evidence. It is vital that NSOs reach out quickly and accurately to public and private stakeholders to communicate on trusted, high quality data.
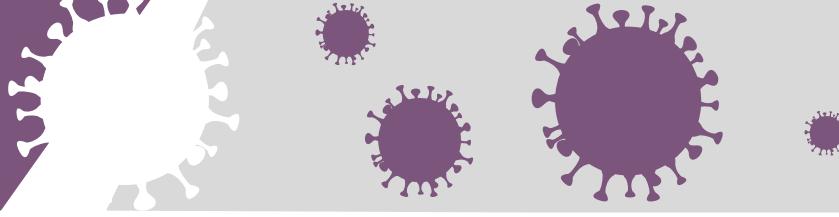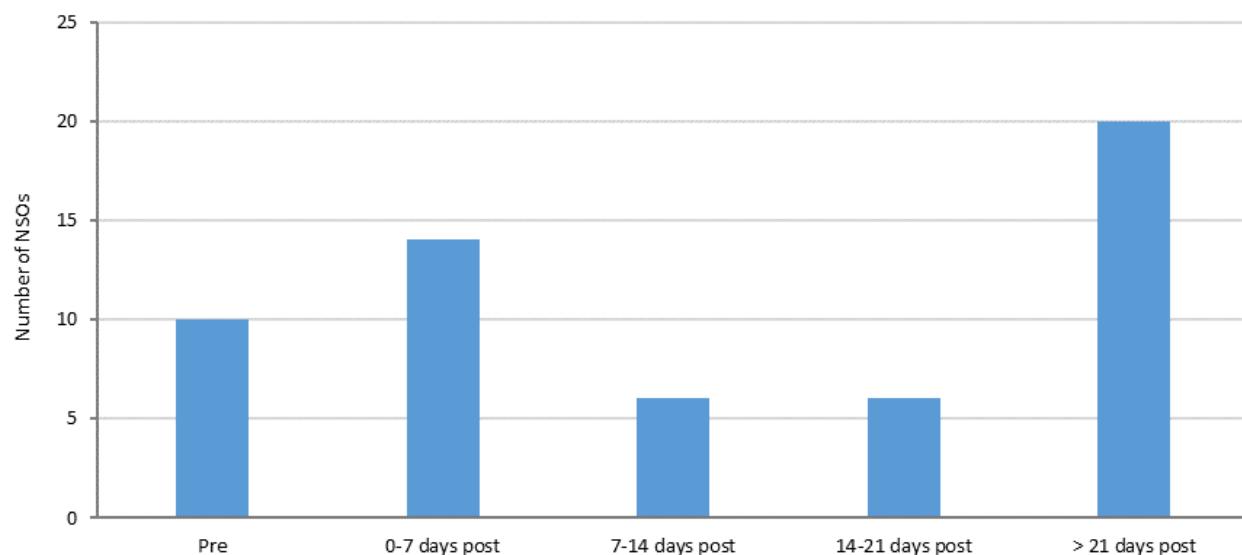
Figure 2. Pre-or-post lockdown: When was the first COVID-19-related tweet shared by the NSO?
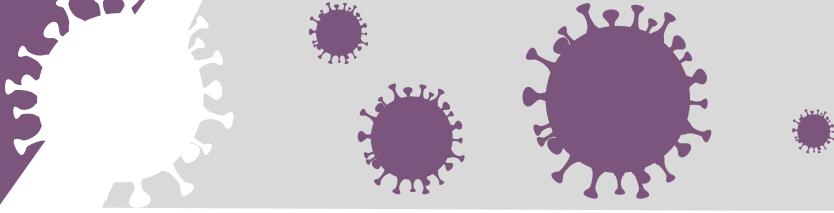
References:

Tian Y., Schmidt J., Misra A., (2020), Communication COVID-19: The NSO response. *The OECD Statistics Newsletter*, Issue No. 72, July 2020, https://www.oecd.org/sdd/theoecdstatisticsnewsletter-allissues.htm

Dashboards to monitor the COVID-19 impact on trade, travel, and transport

The COVID-19 pandemic has a major impact on international trade, travel and transport. International air travel decreased by more than 90 per cent during April and May 2020 as compared to same period in 2019. Policies for economic support and recovery need to be informed with time-sensitive high-frequency indicators. International agencies led by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) maintain dashboards of policy relevant high-frequency indicators for international trade, air travel and maritime transport.

Table 1. Air travel: monthly number of international passenger flights by region for June 2019 and June 2020

Region of origin	2019	2020	Difference	% Difference
Africa	49892	4328	-45564	-91.33%
Asia/Pacific	237546	29990	-207556	-87.38%
Europe	598351	62484	-535867	-89.56%
Latin America and the Caribbean	87701	14295	-73406	-83.70%
Middle East	74775	9524	-65251	-87.26%
North Africa	114879	18814	-96065	-83.62%
Grand total	1163144	139435	-1023709	-88.01%

As part of the interventions to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, Governments have severely restricted domestic and international travel. These restrictions have had a major impact on the airline industry. In Europe, for example, the number of international flights dropped by 95 per cent, from 576,572 in May 2019 to only 26,796 flights in May 2020. In June 2020 a slight recovery was noticeable, but the difference with June 2019 was still very large (see table 1). A dashboard to monitor the monthly number of international passenger flights, developed by ICAO, allows for a further drilldown to countries within a region.

International trade, while also dropping significantly, was not affected to the same degree as international travel. To help decision makers and researchers Statistics New Zealand has published daily trade data from 1 February 2020 to the most recent week, comparing 2020 values with those from previous years. Given that the daily trade numbers were available with breakdowns by trading partner and commodities traded, the effect of New Zealand's

trade relationship with China could be studied in great detail. Very few countries will be able to release daily trade data at such short notice, but New Zealand showed the art of the possible, see https://tinyurl.com/yxmvqp8x.
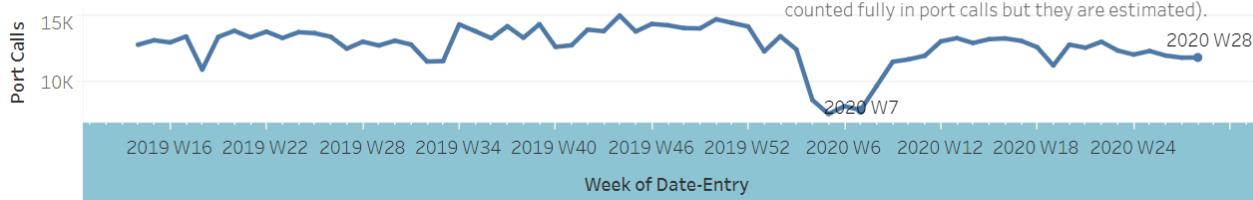
At global level, maritime data from the Automatic Identification System (AIS) have emerged as a potential source for real-time information on trade activity. UNSD leads a task team on use of AIS data under the UN global working group on big data for official statistics. The task team develops methodologies for several indicators on transport and environment-related issues and produces weekly estimates of port calls for some 1,200 ports around the world. Figure 1 shows the total number of weekly port calls for Eastern Asia in the period of April 2019 until 12 July 2020. The graph indicates that a major dip in maritime traffic occurred in January-February 2020. The dashboard allows to create additional breakdowns geographically (region and country) and by type of vessel. Figure 2 shows for which ports in Eastern Asia these data were estimated.

Figure 1. Port calls for Eastern Asia by week from April 2019 until 12 July 2020


Global / Regional Port Calls
7/13/2020 2:47:09 PM

Disclaimer:
The latest week data may contain a slight downward bias because some vessels may still be in the ports (not counted fully in port calls but they are estimated).

In a recent study, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) leveraged different machine-learning techniques to identify port boundaries, construct port-to-port voyages, and estimate trade volumes at the world, bilateral and within-country levels. The methodology achieved a good fit with official trade for many countries (https://tinyurl.com/y2t36svd).

Detailed monthly trade data from the United Nations Comtrade database (official statistics) can give additional insights when read in combination with the high-frequency airline and maritime data. Figure 3 shows the monthly imports and exports for South Africa for 2018, 2019 and 2020. These data reveal a significant drop in the exports of South Africa in April 2020 as compared to the same month in previous years.
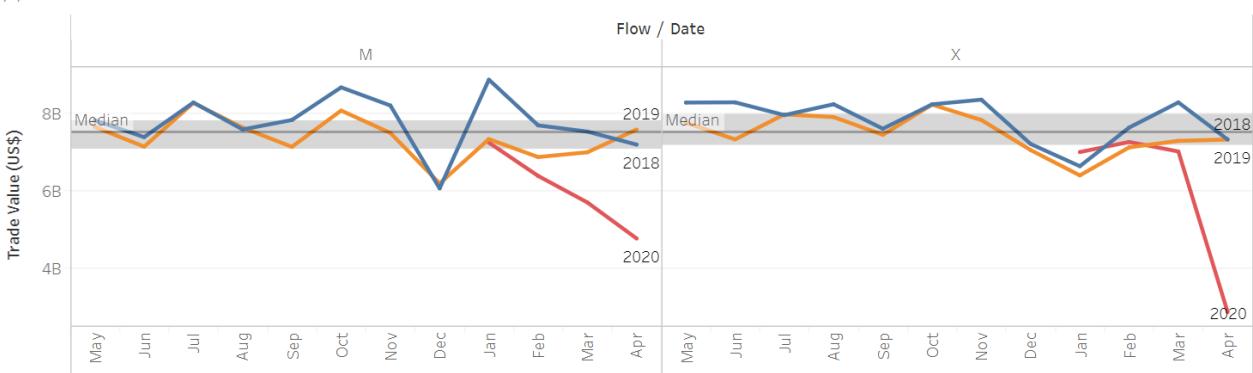
The dashboards on trade, travel and transport will become available and be updated frequently on the UN Global Platform (https://tinyurl.com/yxe922vm). The platform also allows access to the underlying AIS and flight tracking data. Dashboards with additional high-frequency economic indicators on tourism and prices are being considered and may be added in the future.

Figure 3. Monthly Imports (M) and Exports (X) Trade of South Africa for 2018, 2019 and 2020


7/7/2020 12:12:51 PM
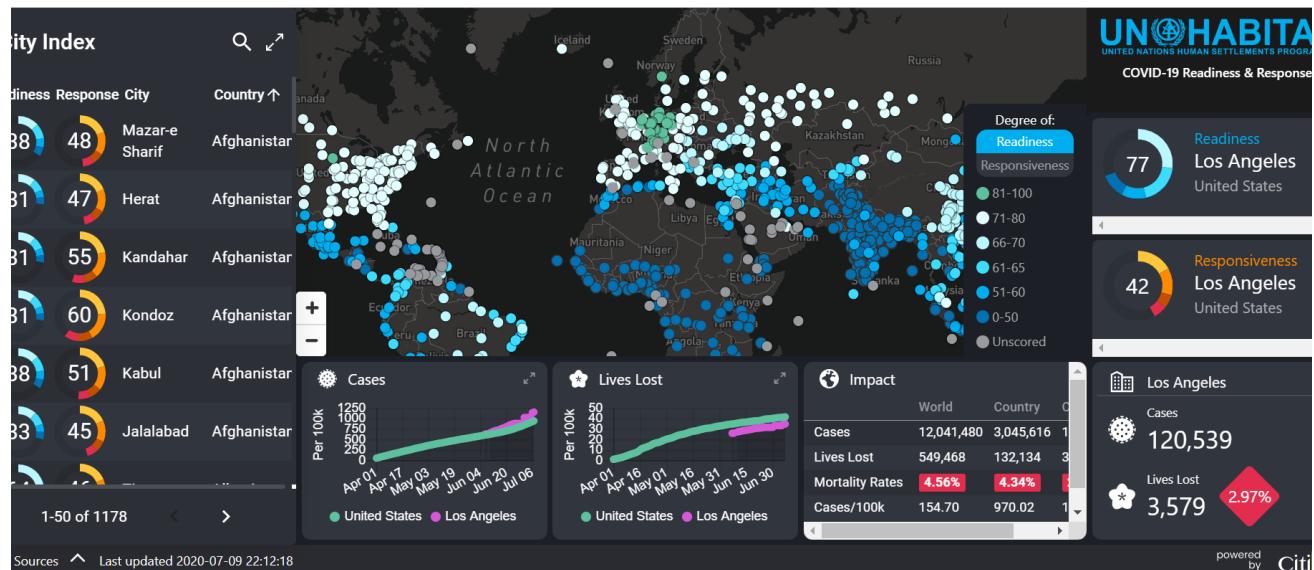
Data in support of COVID-19 response in cities

As COVID-19 continues to spread across the globe, it is important to understand local trends, levels of readiness and preparedness, as well as the presence and distribution of key services, facilities and the roles of different actors. Any response to address the adverse socio-economic impacts must be based on tangible and close to real-time data.

Figure 1. COVID-19 City Readiness and Response Tracker

Source: https://unhabitat.citiiq.com/

To address the challenge of data availability on COVID-19 trends in cities, UN-Habitat and CitiIQ developed a COVID-19 readiness and response tracker that assesses how ready the world's cities were for the COVID-19 pandemic and how they have coped with its spread. The tracker, which scores readiness and responsiveness on a scale of 0 to 100 based on more than 50 weighted and normalized indicators, provides information that is critical for building resilience and for informing responses and recovery strategies to the pandemic.

The readiness score is based on five core indicator areas: public health capacity, societal strength, economic ability, infrastructure and national collaborative will. The responsiveness score focuses on four thematic areas: spread response, treatment response, economic response and supply chain response. Currently, the web-based tracker (https://unhabitat.citiiq.com/) provides scoring for over 1,000 cities with a population of 500,000 and above. The data presented in the platform are automatically populated from multiple sources, with new cities being added as infections spread and more data become available.

At city level, UN-Habitat is leading the collection and use of data for COVID-19 response and recovery in support of the most vulnerable urban populations—the slum dwellers.
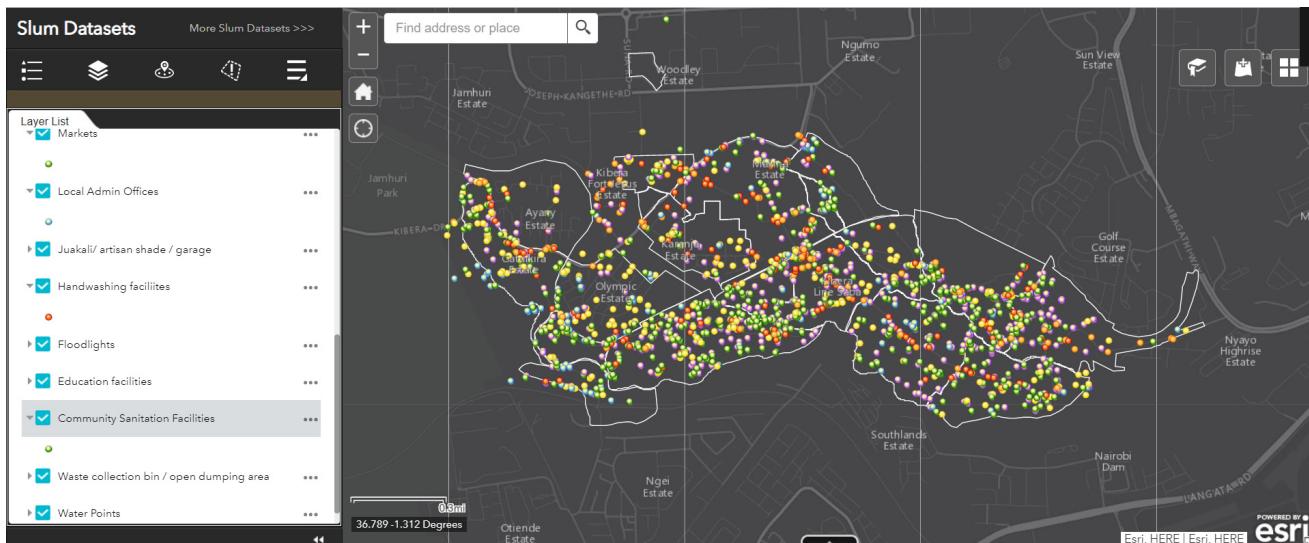
UN-Habitat has developed a survey to assess the availability of social and infrastructural facilities and services, as well as to map the multiplicity of partners working on these settlements, including their respective roles and responsibilities.

This survey, which has been piloted in 10 informal settlements in Kenya not only identifies specific entry points for new support to COVID-19 response in informal settlements, but also provides information required to improve coordination of activities of different organizations for the benefit of the most needy urban dwellers.

In Kenya, the results from the pilot survey have triggered important discussions on the need to coordinate efforts among various stakeholders such as various levels of government, the United Nations system, local communities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and donors.

Figure 2. Interactive platform and situation awareness based on facilities mapping in informal settlements in Kenya

Link to metadata:

- UN-Habitat Global Urban Indicators Database: https://data.unhabitat.org/

Data Source:

- https://data.unhabitat.org/
- https://unhabitat.citiiq.com/

The pandemic and its response present challenges and opportunities for National Statistical Systems in Asia and the Pacific

ESCAP is supporting countries as they coordinate policies and share information and experiences on addressing the unprecedented challenges at a time when high quality and trusted statistics have never been more critical.

Governments in the Asia-Pacific region are being challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic and its adverse impacts. Responses to slow the spread of the disease and mitigate its impact include social, fiscal and monetary stimulus packages with varying scale and focus. Policy coordination across countries is critical to ensure that no one is left behind, and ESCAP has developed a framework to support the socio-economic response of Asia and the Pacific. To that end, ESCAP launched a COVID-19 policy response portal to coordinate and track policies.

Policies related to statistics are included in the tracker, recognizing the importance of data and evidence in informing policy responses and evaluating and assessing them. However, just as demand for trusted data and statistics has increased due to the pandemic, the ability to produce and disseminate this data has been weakened for the same reason.

Figure 1. Snapshot of statistical policies reported in ESCAP's COVID-19 policy response portal


Figure 2. Example from Stats Café presentation (New Zealand)

In order to support National Statistical Systems, ESCAP began a "Stats Café" series which allows countries to share experiences in addressing the challenges of statistical production and dissemination at this time, and for development partners to provide technical support. Countries have presented on population and housing censuses, civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) systems, and rapid assessment surveys, as well as guidance on subnational population estimates and conducting household surveys during the COVID-19 pandemic. The following paragraphs will summarise some key points raised by countries in this initiative.

Thailand and Australia presented on conducting rapid assessment surveys on the impact of COVID-19. Thailand divided the surveys into social and economic impact. However, due to social distancing and budgetary constraints, the surveys were online and self-administered, raising questions of representativity. To address this, Thailand is planning a further telephone-based survey. The survey results are made publicly available through a dashboard, infographics and

press releases, as well as directly to government officials. Australia described the rapid business and household surveys introduced because of the pandemic, emphasizing that new demands meant that other activities were paused. These surveys were conducted every two or three weeks, with release within the following one or two weeks. Each cycle collected information on different topics and linked to other official statistics released concurrently. Infographics were created on the results and disseminated through social media.
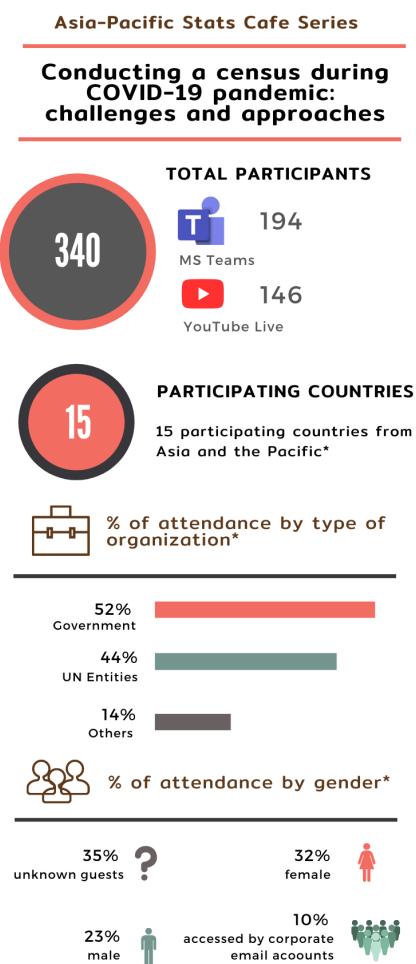
The current pandemic is disrupting CRVS systems all over the world, but well-functioning systems are more essential than ever. Malaysia described how during the lockdown, civil registration was not considered an essential function and therefore a backlog ensued, impacting the statistics which could be produced over this timeframe. In contrast, in New Zealand, civil registration was deemed an essential service, with a mass fatality response team to handle a potential sharp increase in death registration which was fortunately not required. The New Zealand experience highlighted how characterizing civil registration as an essential service facilitated speedily available administrative data. Georgia also underlined the importance of digitalizing registration services which allowed them to provide remote on-line services during their lockdown.

The COVID-19 pandemic threatens the successful conduct of censuses in many countries through delays, interruptions or complete cancellation of census projects. Many countries in the Asia-Pacific region have a census planned for 2020 or 2021 covering nearly 4 billion people, more than half the world's population.

Singapore explained how, with its rich administrative data, a register-based census was conducted, supplemented with surveys. Although field operations were scaled down, the high uptake of online data collection meant that data remained of high quality although there was a still a significant minority which required follow-up to ensure representative coverage.

In the Philippines, the postponement of the census has had significant consequences for field operations, especially

Figure 3. Participation statistics from a recent Stats Cafe

around recruitment, procurement and training. The greatest challenge facing Indonesia is a budget cut of 70% This has meant that the outputs have had to be adjusted and reduced. Additionally, both the Philippines and Indonesia described finding creative solutions to ensure the postponed census can still take place, especially given the ongoing pandemic, such as applying alternative data collection methods and technologies.
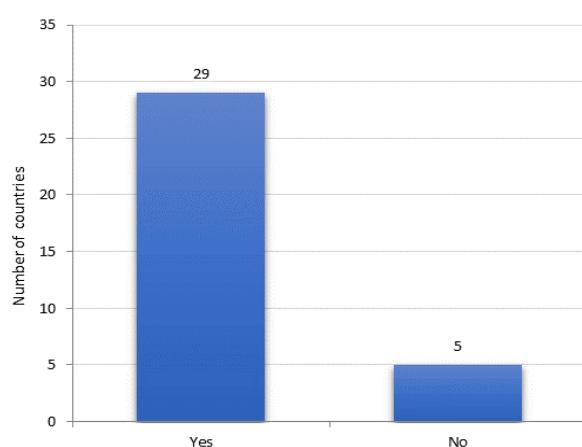
Sources:
- https://www.unescap.org/covid19/policy-responses
- https://unescap.org/announcement/asia-pacific-stats-cafe-series

Maintaining civil registration and vital statistics during the COVID-19 pandemic in Africa

Emergencies like the current COVID-19 pandemic are disruptive for the provision of civil registration services, especially in Africa where the capacity of most systems are weak. The current pandemic has shown the vulnerabilities of the civil registration systems at a time when CRVS services are most required.
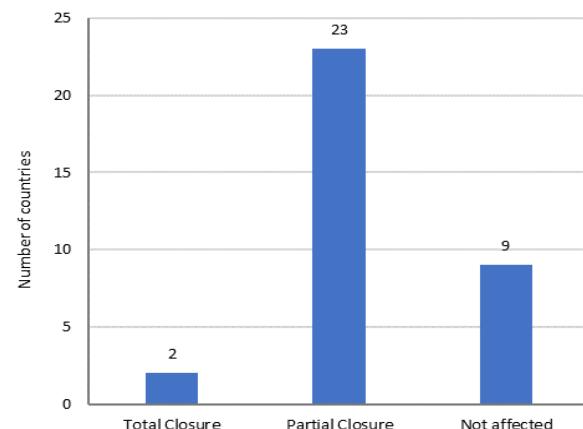
Figure 1. Is civil registration an essential service?


Figure 2. Impact of COVID-19 on civil registration authorities

Civil registration systems generate data that are critical for monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the African Union Agenda 2063 and other developmental frameworks. Data generated from civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) systems are the preferred source of data for the measurement of over 65 SDG indicators.

Member States, through their commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, aim to solve the lack of legal identity by achieving universal birth registration coverage. This commitment is outlined in Sustainable Development (SDG) indicator 16.9.1 "Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age". Achieving universal birth registration is catalytic for achieving at least 10 of the 17 SDGs, including no poverty, zero hunger, good health and wellbeing, quality education, decent work and economic growth, peace justice and strong institutions. SDG Target 17.19 aims to support statistical capacity-building in countries and is measured by indicator

17.19.2 "Proportion of countries that (a) have conducted at least one population and housing census in the last 10 years; and (b) have achieved 100 per cent birth registration and 80 per cent death registration." The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) has placed high priority in building and strengthening civil registration systems in Africa, which are critical for achieving human rights, for supporting administrative actions, and for producing vital statistics.

It is imperative that during emergencies such COVID-!9, civil registration systems continue to function as they fulfil critical functions. A rapid assessment conducted by ECA showed that 29 out of the 34 countries consider CRVS as an essential service. Nevertheless, only 9 countries reported that CRVS was not affected by the pandemic, while 23 countries reported partial closures and 2 countries totally closed down registration offices.

In an effort to mitigate the impact the pandemic on CRVS
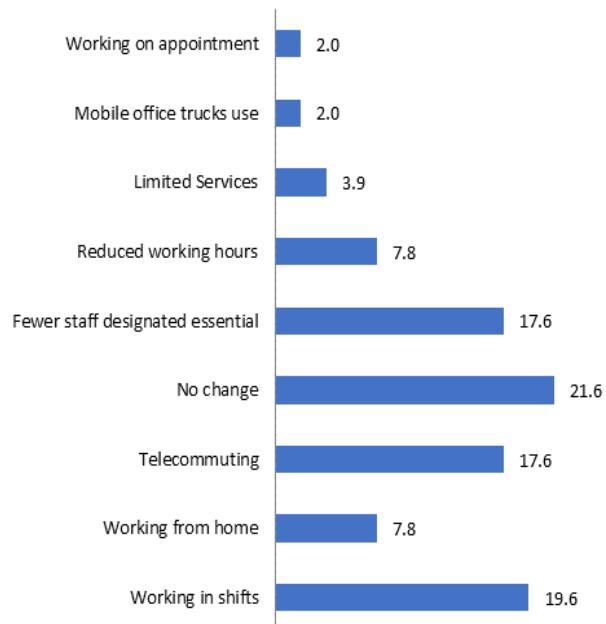
operations, a number of working arrangements have been implemented in African countries to ensure continuity. These arrangements include (a) working in shifts or a rotational basis where only part of the staff are expected to be present, (b) working online from home (telecommuting) for those whose functions can be performed remotely, (c) limiting office presence to staff deemed critical or essential, (d) reducing working hours, (e) restricting the workload to birth and death registration, (f) using mobile offices, and (g) working by appointment only.

Recommendations for CRVS continuity in Africa

- Countries should establish disaster resilient civil registration systems in Africa that can continue to function under precarious circumstances.

- Civil registration systems should make temporary changes to registration processes. For example, through revision of existing standard operating procedures, rules regarding who can notify civil registrars of births and deaths can be expanded and waivers for persons who may not have the documents that are required for registration can be introduced.

- While peaks are to be expected especially for death registration during the pandemic, significant backlogs in birth and marriage registration need to be addressed.

- The vital statistics function needs to be maintained to enable production of timely, accurate and disaggregated small area data for administrative and statistical use. It is essential to integrate civil registration data with other key population datasets e.g. physical addresses and migration data (through a population register) to facilitate communication between governments and the population.

- Automated methods of data collection that reduce face-face interactions should be used. More generally, the use of digital technology, mobile phones and tablets will

Figure 3. Changes in working arrangements (percentage)
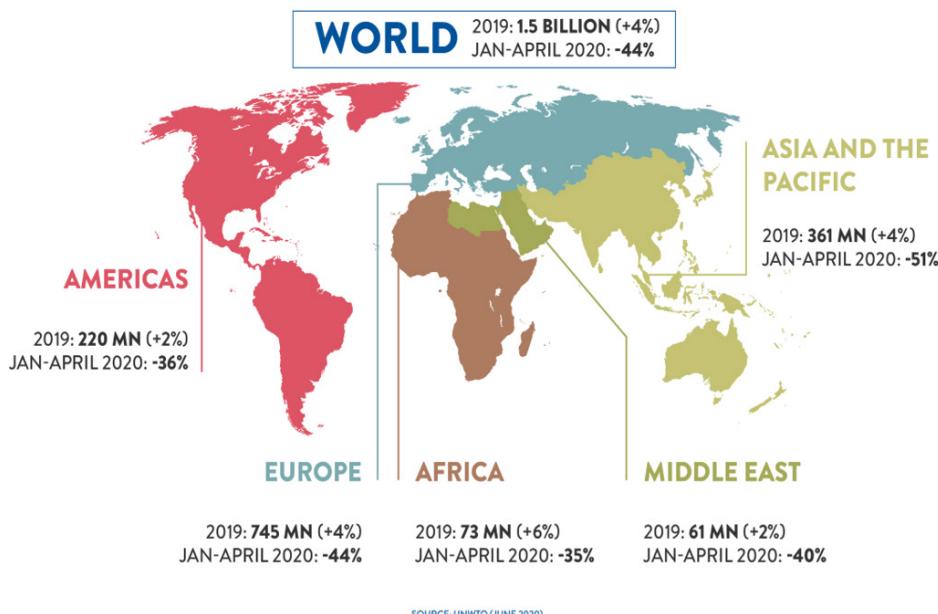

accelerate the improvement of CRVS systems and the achievement of legal identity for all on the continent.

- Pandemics such as COVID-19 may actually accelerate the implementation of online and automated systems of registration. If the CRVS systems already offers services remotely, those services should be augmented, and the public should be encouraged to use online registration.

- Privacy and confidentiality of individuals should be maintained. Particular attention should be paid to those groups which may already face discrimination such as hard to reach or marginalized communities (e.g. ethnic and language minorities, refugees and migrants).

The impact of COVID-19 on tourism statistics

The COVID-19 pandemic is not only impacting the tourism sector in all regions of the world, but also causing challenges in the sphere of collecting tourism statistics. Statistical activities for collecting tourism data are being temporarily affected. At the same time, the tourism sector is changing and, with it, the associated statistical needs for monitoring tourism activities.

Figure 1. Tourist arrivals

Source: UNWTO (June 2020).

Defining tourism

Tourism is an economic, social and cultural phenomenon related to people who move to places outside their usual place of residence. These persons, referred to as visitors, include both tourists and excursionists. Tourism comprises the activities of visitors, undertaken by those who are travelling for holiday, leisure and recreation as well for business, health, education or any other purpose with the exception of employment by an entity resident in the destination country. As an economic sector, tourism comprises numerous industries: accommodation for visitors, food and beverage serving activities, passenger transport (air, road, railway, water, equipment rental), travel agencies and other reservation services as well as cultural, sports and recreational events.

Impact on tourism arrivals

The map above illustrates the extraordinary impact that COVID-19 is having on tourism in the world. Inbound tourist arrivals were down 44 per cent in the first four months of 2020,

with a staggering 97 per cent decline in April. This translated into a loss of US$ 195 billion from inbound tourism.

Impact on statistical activities and recommendations

A recent survey conducted among national statistical offices and national tourism administrations reveals that the main sources for data on tourism are heavily impacted by COVID-19 measures (figure 2). Closures of borders, movement restrictions and lockdowns have resulted in cancellations or postponements of the main surveys, with border surveys being the most affected (70%), followed by household surveys (40%) and accommodation surveys (30%). Conversely, the role of administrative sources has been reinforced: 20 per cent of countries reported using administrative data sources to temporarily fill gaps created by the cancellation or postponement of surveys.

To ensure international comparability and data consistency, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is
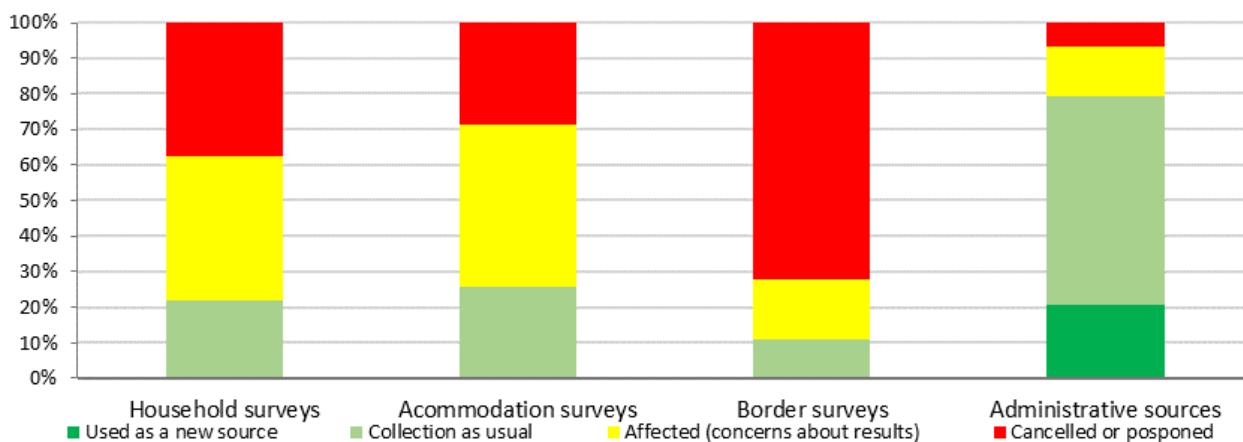
preparing guidance to clarify the use of existing international standards and recommendations for collecting tourism statistics in the context of COVID-19. Situations such as quarantine periods for visitors, travel to second homes for confinement, accommodation establishments converted into hospitals or isolation centers and visitors´ expenditure on (mandatory) tests are new to tourism statistics and require careful consideration by countries when compiling data.

More data needs for the tourism sector

The pandemic is also a reminder that sustainability in tourism means not only a healthy natural environment for visitors and all to enjoy, but also economic opportunities and social benefits for communities. The impact of crises such as the current pandemic, and mitigation and recovery efforts, are intertwined with the sector's sustainability. With this in mind, UNWTO is advancing a statistical framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism (MST) that enables the derivation of key indicators for monitoring the impact of COVID-19 on tourism as well as the effect of recovery efforts.

Figure 2. Effect of COVID-19 on the collection of tourism surveys and administrative sources*
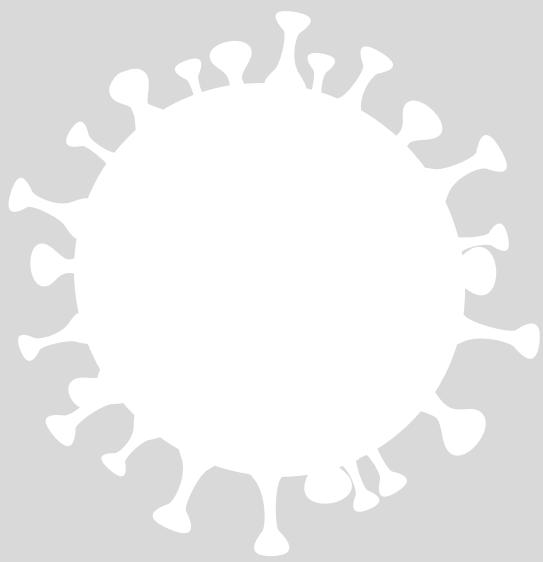

*Results based on data reported by 74 countries from April to June 2020.

Link to metadata:
- International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008
- International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008 Compilation Guide
- https://www.unwto.org/methodology
- Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism: https://www.unwto.org/Measuring-Sustainability-Tourism

Sources:
- UNWTO statistical database available through the UNWTO E-library and Dashboard: https://www.e-unwto.org/
- https://www.unwto.org/unwto-tourism-dashboard
- UNWTO COVID-19 webpage: https://www.unwto.org/tourism-covid-19