

2020

# THE E-2020 INITIATIVE OF 21 MALARIA- ELIMINATING COUNTRIES

2019 progress  
report



World Health  
Organization

# Foreword

## Countdown to 2020 for 21 countries

Creating a malaria-free world is a bold and important public health and sustainable development goal. It is also the vision of the *Global technical strategy for malaria 2016–2030*, which calls for the elimination of malaria in at least 10 countries by the year 2020.

In 2016, WHO identified 21 countries, spanning five regions, that could defeat malaria by 2020, considering the likelihood of elimination across key criteria. All are united by one target: to achieve zero indigenous cases of malaria within the 2020 timeline. This report charts their progress.

In 2019, significant milestones were reached. Algeria was granted an official WHO certification of malaria elimination after reporting zero indigenous cases for the fifth consecutive year. Argentina, though not an E-2020 country, was also certified malaria-free.

For the first time in 2018, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia and Timor-Leste achieved zero indigenous

cases of human malaria.<sup>1</sup> In China and El Salvador, zero indigenous cases were declared for two consecutive years (2017–2018) and, in Cabo Verde, the last confirmed indigenous case of malaria was in January 2018.

This report documents the good progress overall towards achieving the 2020 elimination milestone of the global strategy (see Table 1). However, a substantial commitment is still needed to get at least 10 countries across the finish line by the end of next year. We must focus on shared solutions. Our mandate is clear and our deadline is urgent.

Many of the challenges faced by countries are not new and they can be overcome by working together – with added resources, resolve and political commitment. WHO stands by the 21 malaria-eliminating countries as they inspire others to get to zero and create a world in which no one dies of malaria.

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**Dr Pedro Alonso**




Director, Global Malaria Programme  
World Health Organization

<sup>1</sup> Malaysia achieved zero indigenous cases of human malaria but continues to report cases of zoonotic malaria due to *P. knowlesi*.

# E-2020 initiative

## A brief overview

To meet the elimination milestone of the global strategy, at least 10 countries must report zero indigenous malaria cases by 2020. According to a WHO analysis published in 2016, 21 countries have the potential to reach this target, based on three criteria:

-  Trends in malaria case incidence between 2000 and 2014
-  Declared malaria elimination objectives of affected countries
-  Informed opinions of WHO experts in the field

Through the E-2020 initiative, WHO is working with these countries to scale up efforts to achieve elimination within the 2020 timeline. This includes a *Framework for malaria elimination*, launched by WHO in March 2017, that provides countries with an updated set of tools, activities and strategies for interrupting transmission and preventing

re-establishment of the disease. The framework also offers a clear and streamlined process for countries to obtain malaria-free certification from WHO.

To keep elimination high on both the programmatic and political agendas in E-2020 countries, WHO convened an inaugural global forum in Geneva in March 2017, bringing together malaria programme managers from the 21 countries to map progress and strategies.

This forum resulted in two new independent bodies to support countries: the Malaria Elimination Oversight Committee, which guides countries in their efforts to eliminate malaria, and the Malaria Elimination Certification Panel, tasked with verifying a country's malaria-free status.

During the second forum, hosted by Costa Rica in June 2018, Paraguay was officially certified malaria-free. Building on the success of the first two global forums, China hosted a third forum in June 2019 focused on populations at high risk of malaria.

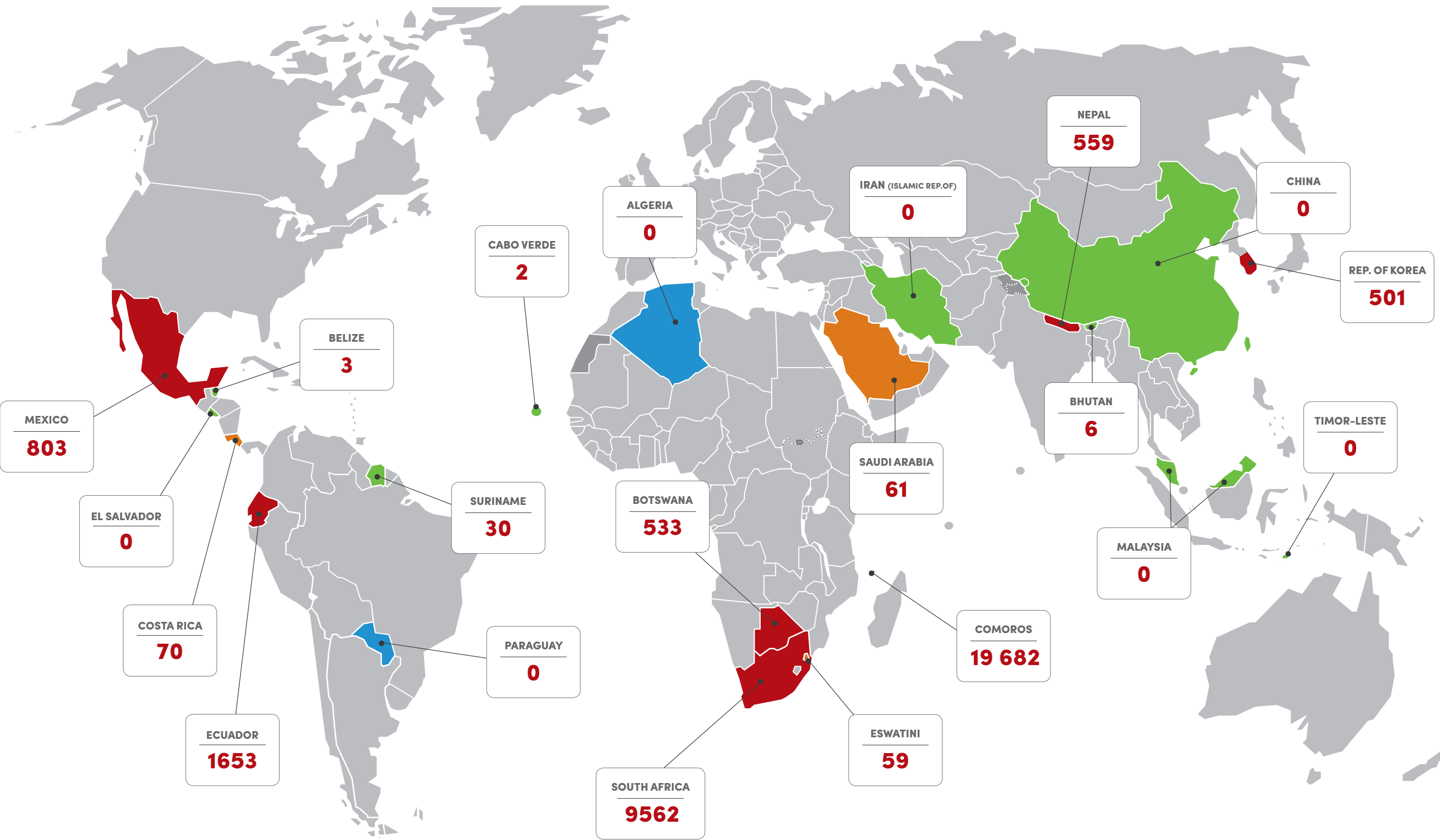
**Table 1. Goals of the *Global technical strategy for malaria 2016–2030***

Vision – A world free of malaria

GOALS	MILESTONES		TARGETS
	2020	2025	2030
1. Reduce malaria mortality rates globally compared with 2015	At least 40%	At least 75%	At least 90%
2. Reduce malaria case incidence globally compared with 2015	At least 40%	At least 75%	At least 90%
3. Eliminate malaria from countries in which malaria was transmitted in 2015	At least 10 countries	At least 20 countries	At least 35 countries
4. Prevent re-establishment of malaria in all countries that are malaria-free	Re-establishment prevented	Re-establishment prevented	Re-establishment prevented

# E-2020 countries

Snapshot of indigenous malaria cases in 2018\*



\* Preliminary figures for 2018 (Source: national malaria control programme reports); final figures will be published in the *World malaria report 2019*.

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of WHO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted and dashed lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement.

# Elimination progress

Country	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 <sup>b</sup>	↕ ↔ ↓ <sup>c</sup>	2020 <sup>d</sup>
<b>Africa</b>											
Algeria	1	1	55	8	0	0	0	0	0	↔	●
Botswana <sup>a</sup>	1 046	432	193	456	1 346	326	716	1 900	533	↓	●
Cabo Verde	47	7	1	22	26	7	48	423	2	↓	●
Comoros	36 538	24 856	49 840	53 156	2 203	1 300	1 066	2 274	19 682	↑	●
Eswatini	268	549	562	962	711	157	350	724	59	↓	●
South Africa	8 060	9 866	5 629	8 645	11 705	555	4 323	22 061	9 562	↓	●
<b>Americas</b>											
Belize	150	72	33	20	19	9	4	7	3	↓	●
Costa Rica	110	10	6	0	0	0	4	12	70	↑	●
Ecuador	1 888	1 219	544	368	242	618	1 191	1 275	1 653	↑	●
El Salvador	19	9	13	6	6	2	12	0	0	↔	●
Mexico	1 226	1 124	833	495	656	517	551	736	803	↑	●
Paraguay	18	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	↔	●
Suriname	1 712	771	356	729	401	81	76	40	30	↓	●
<b>Eastern Mediterranean</b>											
Iran <sup>(Islamic Republic of)</sup>	1 847	1 632	756	479	358	167	81	57	0	↓	●
Saudi Arabia	29	69	82	34	30	83	272	177	61	↓	●
<b>South-East Asia</b>											
Bhutan	436	194	82	15	19	34	15	11	6	↓	●
Nepal <sup>a</sup>	3 894	3 414	2 092	1 974	832	591	507	623	559	↓	●
Timor-Leste <sup>a</sup>	48 137	19 739	5 211	1 025	342	80	94	16	0	↓	●
<b>Western Pacific</b>											
China	4 990	3 367	244	86	56	39	3	0	0	↔	●
Malaysia	5 194	3 954	3 662	2 921	3 147	242	266	85	0	↓	●
Republic of Korea	1 267	505	394	383	557	627	602	436	501	↑	●

Annual totals may differ from the *World malaria report 2018*, as countries are allowed to update figures published in the report on an ongoing basis.

a Data provided for all years are the unadjusted case counts reported by the national malaria control programmes.

b Preliminary data for 2018 (Source: national malaria control programme reports); final figures will be published in the *World malaria report 2019*.

c Change in indigenous malaria cases between 2017 and 2018.

d ● on track, less than 51 indigenous cases    ● somewhat off track, between 51 and 166 indigenous cases    ● off track, more than 166 indigenous cases    ● certified malaria-free by WHO

These thresholds are based on an analysis in the *World malaria report 2018* that indicated that out of 17 countries that successfully eliminated malaria 75% had fewer than 51 indigenous cases and 95% had fewer than 166 indigenous cases two years before reaching zero.

# Country highlights

## Africa



### Algeria awarded malaria-free WHO certification

In May 2019, Algeria became the third country in Africa to be officially recognized as malaria-free, after Morocco in 2010 and Mauritius in 1973.

Algeria's path to becoming malaria-free has a long history, starting with French physician Dr Charles Louis Alphonse Laveran's 1880 discovery of the malaria parasite, for which he won a Nobel Prize in 1907. By the 1960s, malaria had become Algeria's primary health challenge, with an estimated 80 000 cases reported each year.

In 1977, after the completion of the Algerian segment of the Trans-Saharan Highway that linked Algeria to sub-Saharan Africa, population movement in neighbouring malaria-endemic countries spurred higher transmission in Algeria's southern provinces.

This resulted in several malaria outbreaks in border areas. Between 1977 and 2008, the annual number of malaria cases rose from zero to an average of 250.

Algeria's subsequent success in beating the disease is primarily due to a well-trained health workforce, coupled with free healthcare, allowing for effective prevention measures, early diagnosis and treatment of all malaria cases, and a rapid response to disease outbreaks. Algeria has always fully funded its budget for malaria elimination through domestic financing.

In 2013, the country reported its last indigenous case. Thanks to its malaria-free status, Algeria is expected to benefit from a growth in tourism and development in the southern provinces.



### Cabo Verde: Targeted spraying to stop transmission

Until the late 1950s, Cabo Verde reported between 5000 and 15 000 malaria cases per year. Since then, the island nation has twice achieved malaria elimination, primarily through the use of indoor residual spraying (IRS) of homes with insecticides, although lapses in vector control led to resurgences of the disease.

Cabo Verde was back on track to achieve elimination by 2020 when, in 2017, the country reported 423 indigenous infections in the capital city of Praia, located on the southern coast of Santiago island. Twenty-three malaria cases were imported from several African countries and one case of *P. vivax* was imported from Brazil.

The archipelago's malaria control programme combines rapid diagnostics and quick treatment of all confirmed cases, as well as preventive measures, including vector control with IRS and larval source management. All confirmed malaria cases are treated, with at least three days of hospitalization.

After the 2017 epidemic was detected, Cabo Verde targeted its vector control efforts to affected neighbourhoods by interviewing people with confirmed malaria and geolocating the site where they were most likely infected. These targeted actions stopped the epidemic in its tracks and interrupted transmission. As a result, Cabo Verde has been malaria-free since January 2018.

# Americas



## **El Salvador: A small country with mighty malaria ambitions**

El Salvador's malaria elimination programme is supported by three pillars: strong political engagement backed by sustained domestic financing; a multisectoral national strategic plan that is data-driven; and ongoing education about malaria for everyone – from clinicians to community members.

With zero reported indigenous malaria cases since 2017, El Salvador is on the path to achieving an official malaria-free certification by WHO. This small country has made great strides by ensuring that all malaria cases are treated and reported.

As early as 1990, El Salvador introduced an electronic malaria information system to allow for the targeting of malaria interventions to specific geographies and populations. The country is also working to ensure all of its cases are 100% verified and confirmed through quality diagnostic testing.

As a neighbour of malaria-endemic Guatemala and Honduras, El Salvador is strengthening malaria surveillance along international borders. This includes developing a strategy for detecting suspected malaria cases among immigrants who may already be working in the country.

# Eastern Mediterranean



## **Islamic Republic of Iran: Leaving no one behind**

Thanks to the Islamic Republic of Iran's malaria programme, the reported number of indigenous malaria cases dropped to zero in 2018 compared to more than 1800 in 2010. Underpinning this success is strong political will, socio-economic development in endemic areas, and the resolve to leave no one behind; everyone has access to free primary healthcare, which includes the control and treatment of communicable diseases like malaria.

Significant cross-border movement, including migrant workers coming from high-burden malaria neighbouring countries Afghanistan and Pakistan, contributes to imported cases in the Islamic Republic

of Iran. In response, the country has set up malaria diagnosis posts at border areas to offer services to people who show symptoms of the disease.

Volunteers are critical to controlling malaria in Iran. They help reduce the number of malaria cases in the region as they have been trained in using rapid diagnostic tests and can follow patients to ensure they take all prescribed malaria treatments.

With strong community and national commitment, the Islamic Republic of Iran is poised to seek the WHO certification of malaria-free status by 2021.

# South-East Asia



## Timor-Leste: Matching tactics to transmission type

The malaria landscape in the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste has dramatically improved over the past 10 years, from a high of 223 002 cases in 2006, to 95 cases in 2016, to zero cases in 2018. This is a remarkable achievement for a country that only came into existence in 2000.

Altogether, 30 cases were reported in 2017 throughout the country and all were investigated. Most of the indigenous cases in 2017 were reported in Oecusse region, an exclave surrounded by Indonesia's West Timor. To interrupt transmission, health workers focused on border regions, attacking malaria through intensive vector control and surveillance.

Timor-Leste owes its success, in part, to the rapid scale-up of quality diagnosis as well as malaria treatment in remote areas, aided by community volunteers and other health staff. Insecticide-treated nets (ITNs) and indoor spraying of insecticides are

the main vector control methods employed. The Ministry of Health provides universal access to ITNs.

Community mobilization is an integral part of Timor-Leste's national malaria strategy. The use of "edutainment" – education through entertainment such as songs, drama and games – helps health staff, households and schools fight malaria. Efforts are especially targeted at high risk populations engaged in slash-and-burn agriculture as well as fishing. Regular training for health workers on malaria diagnosis and treatment protocol is intended to inform and empower malaria staff at every level of the health system.

In line with its *National Strategic Plan for Malaria Elimination 2017-2021*, Timor-Leste aims to achieve malaria-free certification from WHO by 2023. With zero indigenous malaria cases since July 2017, the country is well placed to reach this target ahead of schedule.

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[https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5\\_25180](https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_25180)

