

RESEARCH  
STUDY  
JULY 2019

**Investigating  
evolving profiles,  
intentions,  
experiences and  
vulnerabilities  
of people on the  
move on Central  
Mediterranean and  
Western  
Mediterranean  
Routes in 2018**



---

This report was commissioned by the Mixed Migration Hub (MHub). MHub works on behalf of the North Africa Mixed Migration Task Force consisting of DRC, IOM, OHCHR, MMC, Save the Children, UNHCR, UNICEF and UNODC. It promotes a human rights-based approach to ensuring the protection of people moving in mixed and complex flows to, through and from North Africa. MHub produces knowledge on the human rights protection issues faced by people on the move in North Africa for use by policy makers agencies, donors, public and academia, with a view to inform advocacy, policy and program development. It fosters collaborative approaches among key stakeholders and serves as the secretariat of the North Africa Mixed Migration Task Force.

MHub provides information on routes, flows and trends in mixed migratory movements in North Africa. It provides support to governments and other agencies on research on refugees and migrants, conducts in-house research and analysis, and commissions external researchers to undertake dedicated multi-country studies.

This research has been designed to inform MHub on the demographics, current paths and risks for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers entering Europe, notably via Italy and Spain via literature review, key informant interviews and field assessments.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### Research and report by Sophie Mestchersky

This report was made possible through funding by the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration of the US Department of State through IOM Egypt and the IOM Regional Office in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The views expressed **do not reflect** the Government of the United States' official policies.

The author would like to particularly thank all the key informants who accepted to contribute to this study as well as the IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix team for the data they shared as well as facilitating field research in Spain.

### Disclaimer

This research has been implemented by the consultant within the framework MHub - the knowledge hub and secretariat of the North Africa Mixed Migration Task Force (NAMMTF), with the IOM RO MENA. The views expressed in this study are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the organizations comprising the NAMMTF. Terminology used may not necessarily be consistent with the official terms used by all organizations participating in the NAMMTF. While due diligence has been taken, the MHub/NAMMTF does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this paper and accepts no responsibility for any consequence of its use.

## Executive Summary

---

This study investigates the important changes in patterns observed along migration routes across the Mediterranean since mid-2017, within the context of a very significant decline in arrivals in Europe since 2015. It aims to explore the trends on the CMR (Central Mediterranean Route) and the WMR (Western Mediterranean Route) in 2018 in order to determine whether any or some of the migratory flows have shifted from the CMR to the WMR, whether primary countries of origin have also changed and the drivers and characteristics related to these changes. Though a variety of recent studies in the field examine extensively the new patterns on the WMR and CMR, few attempts to answer this fundamental question of the existence of a so-called shift.

The research is based on an in-depth review of secondary data (publicly available datasets on demographic breakdown of arrivals to Europe, internal Flow Monitoring Surveys (FMS) data collected in Spain and Italy in 2018, as well as recent reports and press articles) combined with inputs from 20 key informants and 15 recently arrived migrants in Spain. The analysis was determined by four components critical to understanding the evolving trends on the routes: demographic characteristics of refugees and migrants traveling along the routes, motivations, intentions and experiences of refugees and migrants (including information sources), and vulnerabilities and protection concerns.

This study focuses primarily on **arrival** and **departure** points of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers crossing the Mediterranean using the CMR and WMR (i.e. Morocco, Libya, Italy and Spain). As the study focuses on recent developments on these two routes, the analysis is mostly based on **data from 2016 to 2018**.

As this study used qualitative research methods and secondary data review, the quantitative data is limited to publicly available data (with the exception of the FMS data). As a result, findings should be considered as indicative and cannot be generalized to the entire populations using these

two routes. The report, however, makes use of quotations from qualitative interviews in order to convey migrants' voices. The analysis was also challenged by severe gaps in official and publicly available data in some areas or parts of the journeys, as well as in tracking inflows, outflows and secondary movements.

### Cross Analysis

The cross analysis largely draws upon the analysis of the flow compositions from 2016 to 2018, key informant interviews (KIs) and interviews with migrants<sup>1</sup> as well as FMS data collected in Spain and Italy in 2018.

Based on the analysis of potential correlations between increases in arrivals in Spain and decreases in arrivals in Italy of certain nationalities that have showed the strongest fluctuations from 2016 to 2018 as well as variations in the absolute number of arrivals on both routes of these countries of origin, it was found that:

- Two of the common nationalities on the WMR and CMR seem to demonstrate the existence of a shift between the two routes: nationals from Mali and Guinea. In both cases, a large increase in nationals from these countries was noted in arrivals to Spain, combined with a large decrease in arrivals to Italy, while the total absolute numbers of Guinean and Malians arriving to Europe have remained similar over the same period in 2018.
- Other nationalities seem to demonstrate a partial rerouting to the WMR (Moroccans), conjugated with a general decline in arrivals via the WMR and CMR combined for Ivorians and Senegalese; and,
- Some nationalities have clearly not shifted from a route to another according to these criteria: Nigerians, Tunisians and Eritreans<sup>2</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> KIs and interviews were carried out between November 2018 and February 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Information on nationality provided in this report is based on the nationality declared by migrants and as reported by national authorities at arrival. (adjust font)

The analysis of FMS data on the country of departure of respondents versus their country of origin, as well as the length of their journey from departure to arrival country shows that:

- More than a third of respondents on the CMR spent a year or more in Libya before reaching Italy<sup>3</sup>;
- Migrants and refugees traveling via the WMR have longer migratory paths (more than 50% of those departing from Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon and Gambia travelled for more than a year before they arrived in Spain, followed by large shares of migrants departing from Guinea (37%)); and,
- Journeys on the WMR appear to be fairly segmented (whereby journeys are planned step by step) while on the CMR, approaches appear to vary according to the countries of origin and costlier. Journeys through East Africa from the Middle East and Asia (Bangladesh and Pakistan) are most often 'organized' or 'pre-paid packages' from origin to destination, whereas Central and West Africans usually travel in a more incremental manner,<sup>4</sup> as on the WMR.

Factors influencing the choice of routes can be related to political reasons and/or perceptions and expectations of migrants using the routes. The WMR appears to be perceived as safer, less expensive and relatively 'easier' by those traveling on this route, while a majority of migrants and refugees traveling on the CMR seem to rely on more established smuggling networks or favouring the route via Libya in order to find seasonal work.

According to this research, communication patterns and sources of information do not seem to differ between those traveling on the CMR and those traveling on the WMR, with a strong reliance on relatives, smugglers (for all or specific segments of the journey) and smartphones (for those who have one). The link between the use of various sources of information and decision-making is difficult to establish. Migrants and refugees using

either of these routes seem to be equally informed of the current restrictions in Libya and Italy.

## The Western Mediterranean Route

### Recent trends

While the number of arrivals in Spain doubled, the number of fatalities on the WMR quadrupled in 2018. The most represented nationalities on this route are Malians, Guineans, Ivorians and Gambians (who tend to travel via Mali).

Morocco is currently the main point of departure for people on the move traveling via the WMR, followed by Algeria.

### Flow composition

Arrivals from the most common countries of origin found on the WMR have increased in 2018 and remain relatively similar in terms of national make-up to those registered in 2017. In addition to those nationalities, agencies and NGOs had been reporting the arrival of Syrians along the WMR but the number of Syrians arriving through this route actually decreased in 2018. The largest increases on the WMR were linked to migrants and refugees originating from Guinea (tripled), Mali (the number of Malians using the WMR increased by 17 times) and Morocco (the number of Moroccans arriving in Spain more than doubled). The absolute numbers of refugees and migrants from Algeria and the Côte d'Ivoire have remained relatively stable by comparison.

## The Central Mediterranean Route

### Recent trends

Maritime arrivals in Italy dropped by 80% in 2018 (compared to 2017) as the route recorded its lowest number of arrivals since 2012. Departures from Libya, having fallen by 87% compared to 2017, accounted for the vast majority of the decline on this route.<sup>5</sup> Tunisia replaced Libya as the main country of departure for migrants on the CMR in September, October and December 2018 (in the other months it was Libya).<sup>6</sup> The sharp decrease in arrivals registered in 2018 did not translate to a similar reduction in fatalities in relative terms. The 'rate of death' on the CMR has in fact increased as

---

<sup>3</sup> A similar finding was made in the UNCHR (2019), *Desperate Journeys report* where UNHCR estimates that many of those currently in Libya are likely to have been there for a year or more.

<sup>4</sup> UNHCR/Altai (2017), *Mixed Migration Trends in Libya*

---

<sup>5</sup> Source: [Frontex](#)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.



the number of individuals who reportedly died attempting to cross the Central Mediterranean Sea in 2018 dropped at a much slower rate than arrivals in Italy over the same period. The sharp increase in rate of death at sea on the CMR is the result of a complex geopolitical situation and continuing controversy in some European countries surrounding the activities of NGO rescue vessels, which has in turn reduced search and rescue capacity in the Mediterranean. The reduction of search and rescue capacity put in place by Italy and other EU countries, through military/navy operations has also contributed to the deterioration along the CMR. Furthermore, the difficulty of finding ports for the disembarkation of rescued migrants, refugees and asylum seekers following Italy's decision to end the disembarkation in Italian ports of people rescued off the Libyan coast has rendered the situation more complex..<sup>7</sup>

Along with the sharp 2018 decrease, important changes in the demographic composition of refugees and migrants arriving in Italy were also recorded since 2016. The number of arrivals from Nigeria and other West African countries (especially from Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Senegal) and Morocco significantly decreased in 2018. Tunisians and Eritreans<sup>9</sup> were the two most represented nationalities on this route in 2018, accounting together for more than one third of all detected migrants even though the numbers for both nationalities also decreased in absolute terms. UNHCR estimates that a third of the people who arrived in Europe via the Central Mediterranean route in 2018 were likely to be in need of international protection.<sup>10</sup>

#### Countries of departure:

- The noted decrease in arrivals to Italy from Libya does not necessarily indicate a decrease in the number of migrants attempting the journey via this route but can also reflect a higher rate of unsuccessful attempts. According to IOM Libya's DTM Flow Monitoring data, the number of migrants present in Libya has in fact shown a steady increase in the last 12 months.<sup>8</sup>
- In 2018, 5,200 Tunisians arrived in Italy (and other nationalities in decrease), of which Tunisia became the top nationality of arrival on the CMR, though in absolute numbers Tunisian arrivals have decreased by 16% since 2017. None of the available evidence indicates that the increase in departures from Tunisia is related to the current restrictions in Libya. Nor does it predict that Tunisia has (or will) become a more prominent transit or departure country for sub-Saharan migrants and refugees.

#### Flow composition

---

<sup>7</sup> UNHCR (2019), *Desperate Journeys*

<sup>8</sup> Sources: IOM Libya, DTM Migrant reports round 8, 16 and 23

---

<sup>9</sup> Information on nationality provided in this report is based on the nationality declared by migrants and as reported by national authorities at arrival.

<sup>10</sup> UNHCR (2019), *Desperate Journeys*

## Conclusion

The analysis of the composition of the flows on the CMR and WMR demonstrated that there were not enough elements to conclude there was a complete shift between the two routes despite some nationalities seeming to have clearly favoured the WMR to the CMR (Guineans and Malians, as well as Moroccans, Ivorians and Senegalese to some extent) since mid-2017. The research also indicates that having access to information on the risks via one of the two routes does not seem to have a major impact on refugees and migrants' decisions-making processes: their focus appears to be centred around opportunities rather than risks.

Whether these trends on the CMR and WMR are likely to continue in 2019 will depend on a variety of factors such as:

- Security conditions in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, the Lake Chad basin, Nigeria's Middle Belt and Libya – a worsening of conditions may trigger more regional displacements and increased use of the migratory routes to Europe;
- Measures that may be put in place in Spain and Morocco;<sup>11</sup>
- Upcoming political developments in the region; and,
- the impact of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM).

The most important takeaway from this report is the confirmation the conditions of travel on both the CMR and WMR have gravely deteriorated in the last few years and the journeys have become even more perilous, as shown by the increased death rate along the CMR and increased protection concerns reported on both routes.

---

<sup>11</sup> Especially with regards to sea rescues and the possible direct return of migrants to Moroccan ports instead of Spanish ones in the near future.

[https://elpais.com/elpais/2019/02/21/inenglish/1550736538\\_089908.html](https://elpais.com/elpais/2019/02/21/inenglish/1550736538_089908.html)



# Contents

---

<u>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</u>	3
<u>CONTENTS</u>	6
<u>GLOSSARY</u>	7
<u>ACRONYMS</u>	9
<u>1. INTRODUCTION</u>	10
<u>2. METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL FRAMING</u>	13
<u>3. CROSS ANALYSIS</u>	17
3.1. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE DEMOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION OF THE FLOWS	17
3.2. EXPERIENCES AND INTENTIONS ON THE TWO ROUTES	21
<u>4. THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN ROUTE</u>	31
4.1. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS ON THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN ROUTE	31
4.2. FLOWS, NATIONALITY COMPOSITION AND VARIATIONS ON THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN ROUTE	34
<u>5. THE CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN ROUTE</u>	38
5.1. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS ON THE CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN ROUTE	38
5.2. FLOWS, NATIONALITY COMPOSITION AND VARIATIONS ON THE CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN ROUTE	43
<u>6. CONCLUSION</u>	46
<u>BIBLIOGRAPHY</u>	47
<u>ANNEX 1. INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE</u>	49



## Glossary

Key terms	Definition	Source
Asylum seeker	A person who seeks safety from persecution or serious harm in a country other than his or her own and awaits a decision on the application for refugee status under relevant international and national instruments. In case of a negative decision, the person must leave the country and may be expelled, as may any non-national in an irregular or unlawful situation, unless permission to stay is provided on humanitarian or other related grounds.	IOM Glossary on Migration
Irregular migration	Movement that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries. There is no clear or universally accepted definition of irregular migration. From the perspective of destination countries, it is entry, stay or work in a country without the necessary authorization or documents required under immigration regulations. From the perspective of the sending country, the irregularity is for example seen in cases in which a person crosses an international boundary without a valid passport or travel document or does not fulfil the administrative requirements for leaving the country. There is, however, a tendency to restrict the use of the term "illegal migration" to cases of smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons.	IOM Glossary on Migration
Mixed migration	The principal characteristics of mixed migration flows include the irregular nature of and the multiplicity of factors driving such movements, and the differentiated needs and profiles of the persons involved. Mixed flows have been defined as 'complex population movements including refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants and other migrants.' Unaccompanied minors, environmental migrants, smuggled persons, victims of trafficking and stranded migrants, among others, may also form part of a mixed flow.	IOM <sup>12</sup>
Refugee	A person who, <i>"owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinions, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country. (Art. 1(A)(2), Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, Art. 1A(2), 1951 as modified by the 1967 Protocol). In addition to the refugee definition in the 1951 Refugee Convention, Art. 1(2), 1969 Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention defines a refugee as any person compelled to leave his or her country "owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign</i>	IOM Glossary on Migration

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.mixedmigrationhub.org/member-agencies/what-mixed-migration-is/>

	<i>domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country or origin or nationality."</i>	
Smuggling	<i>« the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident."</i>	Article 3 of the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, GA/RES/55/25 of 15 November 2000.
Trafficking in Persons	<i>"the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation."</i>	Article 3, paragraph (a) of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, GA/RES/53/111 of 9 December 1998

In this report, we may use the term "**migrants and refugees**" or "those on the move" to describe the forms of migration included in the scope of the foreseen study, i.e. migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. This study does not address the situation of internally displaced persons (IDPs).

## Acronyms

---

CMR	Central Mediterranean Route
CoO	Country of Origin
CSO	Civil society organization
DCIM	Directorate for Combatting Illegal Migration
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EMR	Eastern Mediterranean Route
ETM	Emergency Transit Mechanism
EU	European Union
FMS	Flow Monitoring Survey
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IOM	International Organization for Migration
KII	Key Informant Interview
LCG	Libyan Coast Guard
MHub	Mixed Migration Hub
MMC	Mixed Migration Centre
NAMMTF	North Africa Mixed Migration Task Force
NGO	Non governmental Organization
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
SAR	Search and Rescue
SRR	Search and Rescue Region
UASC	Unaccompanied and Separated Children
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
WMR	Western Mediterranean Route

## 1. Introduction

---

Migration routes across the Mediterranean have seen important changes of patterns since mid-2017, in parallel with a very significant decline in arrivals in Europe since 2015 and 2016. Sea arrivals in Europe in 2018 totalled 117,350 compared to 172,382 in 2017, and 364,032 in 2016.<sup>13</sup> This represents **a 53 per cent decline since 2016 and a 32 per cent decline since 2017**. Additionally, until mid-2018, the majority of migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees arrived in Europe via the Central Mediterranean Route (CMR) and the Eastern Mediterranean Route (EMR) but at the end of 2018, following an increase in flows from mid-2017, the Western Mediterranean Route (WMR) registered the most arrivals.

As the WMR saw an important increase over the last few years, the CMR saw a drastic drop in arrivals in 2017, a pattern that has continued well into 2019. The decrease in arrivals along the CMR does not, however, suggest that efforts to respond to existing or new protection concerns for people on the move on this route should be reduced. These changes to flows in the Mediterranean have coincided with a sharp rise in the death rate of those trying to reach Europe, while at the same time the estimated number of migrants present in Libya has not decreased; on the contrary it has increased. According to data from the Missing Migrant Project<sup>14</sup> **in 2018 one person in 35 died or went missing as they tried to reach Europe via the CMR**<sup>15</sup>, a 17%<sup>16</sup> per cent increase from 2016.<sup>17</sup>

Moreover, increased protection issues were observed on the routes themselves, with large numbers of refugees and migrants being stranded either at sea or in transit countries in extremely poor health conditions and facing grave protection risks.

### Context and objectives of the study

This research study aims to explore the trends on the CMR (Central Mediterranean Route) and the WMR (Western Mediterranean Route) in 2018 and will focus on the evolving profiles and experiences of those on the move and attempting the journey to Italy and Spain, respectively.

Indeed, seeing the drop in arrivals through the CMR and an increase along the WMR, observers and stakeholders in the field of migration have formulated the hypothesis that a fundamental change of patterns had occurred on the CMR and WMR, as a direct consequence of further restrictions on departures from Libya and on arrivals in Italy. This coupled with a greater awareness among people on the move of the dangers they may face while going through Libya. In other words, it was hypothesized that people on the move would have 'shifted' from the CMR to the WMR. **Though a variety of recent studies in the field examine extensively the new patterns on the WMR and CMR, few attempts to answer this fundamental question of the existence of a so-called shift.**

This report investigates **whether flows across other routes have been diverted to the WMR**, whether primary countries of origin have also changed and what the drivers and characteristics related to these changes are. It does not intend to explore in detail the root causes behind the variation in numbers of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees trying to reach European shores. It aims to give readers a better understanding of the experiences and intentions of those recently on the move in the manner of Carling's

---

<sup>13</sup> <https://migration.iom.int/europe?type=arrivals>

<sup>14</sup> [Missing Migrants Project](#) tracks incidents involving migrants, including refugees and asylum-seekers, who have died or gone missing in the process of migration towards an international destination. Please note that numbers quoted in other places in the report may differ when they are used in a table using the same source of data.

<sup>15</sup> Calculated as the number of fatalities recorded divided by the number of arrivals to Italy and interceptions en-route (attempts at migration including unsuccessful ones).

<sup>16</sup> GMDAC (2019), Fatal Journeys 4.

<sup>17</sup> These figures include the recorded numbers of death at sea and at EU land border. Source: UNHCR data

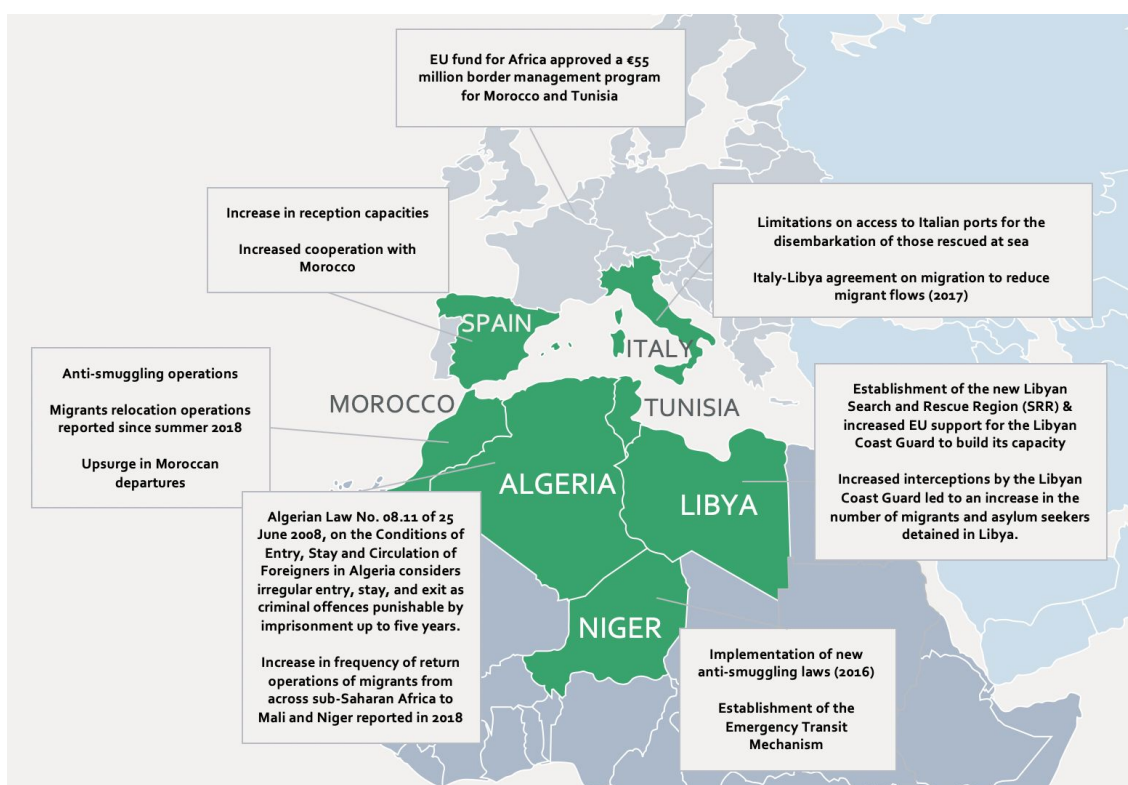
characterization of the dynamics of migration which "is embedded in social relations, imaginations of the world, economic settings and opportunities and political controls."<sup>18</sup>

**Routes are influenced by many factors;** policy changes in transit countries and countries of destination may have an impact. Migrants' perceptions of the relative dangers or ease of travel on the two routes differ and accordingly it is hard to estimate how quickly these changes impact and influence migrants' decisions or trajectories.

Public announcements about border control reinforcement can have an immediate impact on the number of arrivals, as migrants feel more pressed to attempt the crossing while they believe there is still a window of opportunity. However, smuggling networks tend to work around set patterns and pathways which may take longer to reflect the changes in policy. Thus, various complex facets may affect the dynamics of the routes.

Figure 1 provides an overview of recent developments currently impacting the routes, flows and vulnerabilities of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. It is a **non-exhaustive summary** of some of the factors influencing migration dynamics on the WMR and the CMR and highlights elements that have been most often cited by Key Informants or in recent reports as key determinants on these routes.

*Figure 1. Overview of recent developments affecting migration dynamics on the WMR and CMR*



If this overview helps contextualize some of the findings highlighted in the present report, it should be noted that this research study report is not an examination of the motive forces that generate and the factors that impede migration but focuses on flow compositions across the Mediterranean Sea. It also does not include the analysis of the current migrant population composition within countries of transit or destination (i.e. irregular migrants including those who entered regularly and overstayed) nor secondary

<sup>18</sup> Carling, J., and F. Collins, (2017), *Aspirations, Desire and Drivers of Migration*. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 909–26.

movements in Europe, although migratory intentions are investigated. Lastly, the mapping of actors, programmes and regulatory frameworks is not within the scope of this study.

This report investigates the impacts of these dynamics on the experiences and intentions of migrations on the WMR and CMR, building on qualitative insights gathered via key informant interviews, interviews with migrants who have recently arrived in Spain as well as a variety of recent assessments, data and studies<sup>19</sup> in the field:

- **Section 2** presents the methodology used for this study;
- **Section 3** provides a comparative analysis of the characteristics of the flows on the two routes. This section also attempts to answer the question of route displacement; and,
- **Section 4 and 5** focus the WMR and CMR respectively, analysing recent trends and developments on these routes as well as the flow compositions; and,
- **Section 6** summarises the lessons learnt and whether the current political climate in countries of transit and destination will further impact the shift in the near future.

---

<sup>19</sup> Please refer to the Bibliography for a complete list of references.

## 2. Methodology and Theoretical Framing

---

The assumption of a complete shift in trends on the CMR and WMR can only be confirmed or inferred via the detailed analysis of the demographics, drivers behind choices of trajectories and migrants, asylum seekers and refugees' intentions on these routes in order to answer such questions: *as Has the Moroccan sea route become more established than the Italian sea route since 2017? Do profiles and nationalities of those travelling via the WMR differ from those traveling through Libya? Or have migratory flows shifted to the Western Mediterranean route?* The present research aims to lay out these elements and draw on the available data to provide a cross analysis of these routes.

This study is based on an **in-depth review of secondary data** (publicly available datasets on demographic breakdown of arrivals to Europe, internal Flow Monitoring Surveys data collected in Spain and Italy in 2018, as well as recent reports and press articles) combined with inputs from **20 key informants** and **15 recently arrived migrants in Spain**. The methodology was designed to gain a better understanding of the drivers that lead migrants and refugees to choose one route over the other, from how they come to make a decision to their background understanding and knowledge of these routes and the specific protection issues they may face on either of the routes.

### Research scope

The primary focus of this study are the points of arrival and departure of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers crossing the Mediterranean using the CMR and WMR (i.e. Morocco, Libya, Italy and Spain). cursory investigations were also carried out in Tunisia and Algeria as well as leading to and from these arrival and departure points to better understand the main issues faced by people on the move on these routes. As the study focusses on recent developments on these two routes, the analysis is mostly based on 2016 to 2018 data.

### Conceptual framework

Hein de Haas et al<sup>20</sup> identified four 'substitution effects' which "*can limit the effectiveness of immigration and emigration restrictions: a) spatial substitution through the diversion of migration via other routes or destinations; b) categorical substitution through a reorientation towards other legal or illegal channels; c) inter-temporal substitution affecting the timing of migration in the expectation or fear of future tightening of policies; and d) reverse flow substitution if immigration restrictions interrupt circulation by discouraging return and encouraging permanent settlement, making the effect of restrictions on net migration and the growth of migrant communities ambiguous.*"<sup>21</sup>

This categorization provides a useful framework for the present analysis which in essence aims to better understand whether the change of patterns on the WMR and CMR are the results of a so-called 'substitution', and if yes, which. The cross analysis will intend to investigate to what extent these effects can explain the new patterns observed in 2018.

However, this approach also partly suggests that decisions are made at a given time and respond to circumstances in a linear way. Though our main research question can be partly addressed by the analysis of the available data on flow compositions and new developments on the CMR and WMR, it will be important to keep in mind that this data may not reflect fully the **dynamic** nature of the flows. As highlighted by Carling and Collins (2017)<sup>22</sup>, aspiration, desire and drivers of migration rely on very different emotions or rational thinking but are fully connected when it comes to trying to better understand decision making

---

<sup>20</sup> de Haas, Hein & Czaika, Mathias & Laurence Flahaux, Marie & Mahendra, Edo & Natter, Katharina & Vezzoli, Simona & Villares-Varela, Maria. (2018). *International migration: Trends, determinants and policy effects*.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid

<sup>22</sup> Carling, J., and F. Collins, (2017), *Aspirations, Desire and Drivers of Migration*. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 909–26.



processes: *"they all relate to how migration is initiated, experienced and represented."* These notions are important to acknowledge for this study as the analysis of trajectories, decisions making processes and choices of routes made during the journey to Europe should take into account the following elements:

- Migratory journeys and decision-making processes rarely follow linear paths from their country of origin to their country of destination.
- It would be simplistic to presume that *"individual migrants have complete agency over their migration decisions and can foresee future trajectories and assemble their present migration strategies accordingly."*<sup>23</sup>

As a consequence, when investigating how migrants chose or ended up using one route over another it is important to keep in mind that:

- Journeys** (especially from sub-Saharan Africa) **can take several months and even years**, hence some of the developments observed in 2018 may have had no impact on the choice of route of recently arrived migrants
- The migratory processes are rarely set in advance**, but rather on-going processes and migratory flows can be influenced by opening and blockages that can start but also end migratory pathways while migrants are already on route. We can't assume that *"migrant 'decision-making' occurs at a singular moment in time, or at least within a relatively defined period before departure that involves the gathering and assessment of available information in an objective fashion."*<sup>24</sup>

Though this study was designed to capture data related to points of arrivals and departures for those crossing the Mediterranean, it also aims to capture the dynamic motivations affecting migrants' trajectories, understand the facilitation mechanisms that are available on these routes (via literature) and the level of fragmentation of these journeys.<sup>25</sup>

## Analytical framework

The analysis was determined by **four key research themes** deemed critical to understand the evolving trends on the CMR and WMR. The following table presents these research themes and summarises the specific areas of focus chosen for each of them.

*Table 1. Analytical framework*

Themes	Areas of focus
<b>Theme 1:</b> Analysis of the characteristics of the CMR and WMR	Analysis of migration data on the two routes to provide a comparative analysis of recent trends Main routes of travel along the CMR & WMR Recent developments in transit or destination countries which may have affected mobility through these routes since early 2018. Patterns demonstrated by people on the move these routes
<b>Theme 2:</b> Flow composition and variations on the CMR and WMR	Analysis of the composition of the flows with a specific focus on countries of origin of migrants that have recently arrived in Spain and Italy
<b>Theme 3:</b>	How do migrants, refugees and asylum seekers describe and explain their motivations and intentions, and how this may have evolved

<sup>23</sup> Ibid

<sup>24</sup> Ibid

<sup>25</sup> According to Schapedonk, the trajectories migrants take are affected by three elements: the **motivation of the journey** (i.e. people's aspirations and the nature of their migration); the **facilitation of the journey**, (i.e. migrants' ability to rely on connections or existing mechanisms for parts or all the journey), the **velocity of journeys** (i.e. the pace of the journey). Schapedonk, J., (2012), *Turbulent Trajectories: African Migrants on Their Way to the European Union*, Societies 2

Motivations and intentions of migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and the sources of information they use	Main factors influencing migrants and refugees' choices of journeys The level, sources and reliability of information accessed by migrants, refugees and asylum seekers to inform their decisions pre-departure and during their journeys
Theme 4: Vulnerabilities and protection concerns of those moving through the CMR and WMR	Route-specific protection issues migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are facing <sup>26</sup>

## Sources of data

The analysis of these four components was carried out on the basis of:

1. **Migration data:** this study makes extensive use of data collected and made public by IOM,<sup>27</sup> UNHCR,<sup>28</sup> MHub,<sup>29</sup> Frontex<sup>30</sup> and the Mixed Migration Center (4Mi).<sup>31</sup>
2. The analysis of results from **Flow Monitoring Surveys** carried out in Spain and Italy in 2018 and made available by the IOM Data Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) team for this study. The dataset shared with MHub included top nationalities only, namely:
  - **Italy:** Tunisia, Eritrea<sup>32</sup>, Iraq, Sudan, Pakistan, Nigeria, Algeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, Guinea
  - **Spain:** Guinea, Morocco, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Algeria, Gambia, Senegal, Syrian Arab Rep, Mauritania, Cameroon

The sample analysed in this study is composed of 1,150 migrants and refugees who arrived in Spain and 1,023 migrants and refugees who arrived in Italy in 2017 and 2018.

3. **Secondary literature:** an in-depth review of recent reports on the migration dynamics on the CMR and WMR was carried out for this study. A complete list of references is provided in the Bibliography. This review also included a thorough review of recent press articles, especially in places where official data was more difficult to access.
4. Qualitative insights gathered via **20 key Informant interviews** and **15 in-depth interviews with migrants** carried out in Spain in February 2019:
  - Key informant respondents included the following actors: IOM Country Offices in the countries of interest for this research (i.e. Tunisia, Algeria, Spain, Italy, Libya and Morocco), MHub member agencies (such as UNHCR, MMC, UNICEF, OHCHR, UNDOC) as well as NGOs in Spain (CEPAIM Foundation, Spanish Red Cross). The main objectives of the KIIs were to a) gather views and key insights on the dynamic trends of the CMR and the WMR (new routes, demographics, evolving motivations and intentions, route-specific protection issues) and b) identify areas where cross-fertilization of data was possible.

<sup>26</sup> This study examines on the main protection risks identified by the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) with a specific focus on occurrences of: violence (torture and inhuman or degrading treatment; sexual violence and rape; deliberate killing, wounding, displacement, destitution and disappearance); coercion and exploitation (arbitrary restrictions on movement; forced recruitment, sexual exploitation and trafficking, abduction and slavery); deprivation and neglect (dispossession of assets by theft and destruction; thirst, hunger). ALNAP (2005), *An ALNAP guide for humanitarian agencies*, Overseas Development Institute, Slim H. and Bonwick A

<sup>27</sup> Displacement Tracking Matrix: <https://www.globaldtm.info/fr/> ; <http://migration.iom.int/europe/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5226>

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.mixedmigrationhub.org/#>

<sup>30</sup> <https://frontex.europa.eu/along-eu-borders/migratory-map/>

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.mixedmigration.org/>

<sup>32</sup> Information on nationality provided in this report is based on the nationality declared by migrants and as reported by national authorities at arrival.

- Recently arrived migrant in-depth interviews were facilitated by IOM Spain. They included nationals from Guinea, Senegal, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire and Tunisia and were carried out at temporary reception centres located in and around Madrid in January 2019, 15 days after the research participants' arrival in Spain on average.

The **in-depth interviews with migrants** lasted about an hour each and aimed to investigate further the following elements:<sup>33</sup>

- **Profiles:** country of origin, age, gender, main problems encountered in country of origin, factors of vulnerability in home country, etc.
- **Motivations, intentions and expectations:** why the informants chose the WMR, how the informants envisaged the next steps (timeframe and points of entry), final country of destination and why, perceived level of risks of these routes.
- **Route-specific protection issues** that research participants faced on the route: details on the trip from the beginning until they arrived in their current location, recourse to smugglers, specific issues with authorities encountered on the route (detention, refoulement,...), whether they accessed some form of assistance along the way, etc.
- **Level, sources and reliability of information** accessed to pre-departure and during the journey

## Challenges & limitations

**Firstly**, as this study used qualitative research methods and secondary data review, the quantitative data is almost exclusively limited to publicly available data (with the exception of the FMS data). As a consequence, **qualitative findings and citations should be considered as indicative and cannot be generalised to the entire populations using these two routes**. The report however makes use of quotations from qualitative interviews in order to convey migrants' voices and experiences.

**Secondly**, carrying out research in the region is also made more challenging by severe gaps in official and publicly available data in some of areas or parts of the journeys, as well as for tracking inflows, outflows and secondary movements. Although news sources were used when such data was not available,<sup>34</sup> these gaps in official data may introduce a bias in the analyses of flows which focus on areas where more reliable data is available.

**Thirdly**, statistics collected and potentially used in the report may sometimes be subject to controversy:

- Throughout this report the number of deaths/disappearances is best understood as a minimum estimate of the true number, as there is a lot of evidence that many shipwrecks go unrecorded. For example, data on deaths at sea is notoriously difficult to collect, and there are often discrepancies in data collected by different actors; hence representing various data sets (such as IOM Missing Migrants Project & UNHCR Operational portal) might be helpful in some cases.
- In places where multiannual comparisons were needed (such as data on flows), the study relied on sources that could provide the same data over the same periods of time on the two routes. The numbers may therefore slightly differ from those found in different sources.<sup>35</sup>
- Frontex data derive from data on "illegal border detection" via the Central and Eastern Mediterranean routes. Frontex notes on its website that "illegal border crossings at the external borders may be attempted several times by the same person." The use of Frontex data has often been questioned on these grounds.

<sup>33</sup> Please refer to Annex 1 for an overview of the interview questionnaire

<sup>34</sup> The recourse to news sources when official data is not available is also included in the methodology of the Missing Migrant Project.

<sup>35</sup> When numbers are based on UHCR data sources, please note that as of 2017, many numbers are rounded off in UNHCR reports.

### 3. Cross Analysis

This section draws a comparative analysis of the characteristics of the flows on the two routes. It is based on findings of the analysis of both routes done via literature review, KIs and interviews with migrants<sup>36</sup> as well as FMS data collected in Spain and Italy in 2018.

#### 3.1. Comparative analysis of the demographic composition of the flows

The analysis of the most common countries of origin of refugees and migrants who arrived in Italy and Spain from 2016 to 2018 shows that:<sup>37</sup>

- A majority of the most common nationalities of refugee and migrant arrivals in Spain have increased in 2018 but they remain relatively similar to those registered in 2017. The largest increases on the WMR can mainly be attributed to important increases in migrants from Morocco, Mali, Guinea and Gambia. The cross analysis therefore pays particular attention to variations in the numbers of migrants originating from these countries.
- The CMR registered **large decreases in absolute numbers** as well as in relative shares of migrants from nationalities that have traditionally been part of the top ranking nationalities of arrivals to Italy in the last few years, namely: Nigeria, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Senegal and Morocco, with Tunisians and Eritreans<sup>38</sup> being the two most represented nationalities arriving via the CMR in Italy in 2018 (despite an important decrease in absolute numbers as well).

This section investigates whether the cross analysis of these developments provides more insight on these patterns. It focuses on **countries of origin that have showed the strongest fluctuations from 2016 to 2018**.

The following graph and table present a comparison of nationalities of arrivals over time on both routes since 2016. It demonstrates that some countries of origin have changed in volumes over this period, while others have remained relatively stable in volumes, though they may have shifted from a route to another.

Table 2 Comparison of top nationalities of arrival from 2016 to 2018 on both routes (CMR and WMR)<sup>39</sup>

Country of Origin	2016	2017	2018
Algeria ↑	2,394	5,100	6,900
Côte d'Ivoire ↓	14,307	13,300	5,500
Guinea	15,978	13,700	14,160
Mali ↑	10,010	9,717	13,168
Morocco ↑	963	11,500	13,800
Nigeria ↓	37,551	18,100	1,250
Senegal ↓	10,327	6,000	2,100
The Gambia. ↓	12,930	2,700	4,150
Tunisia	unknown	6,100	5,250

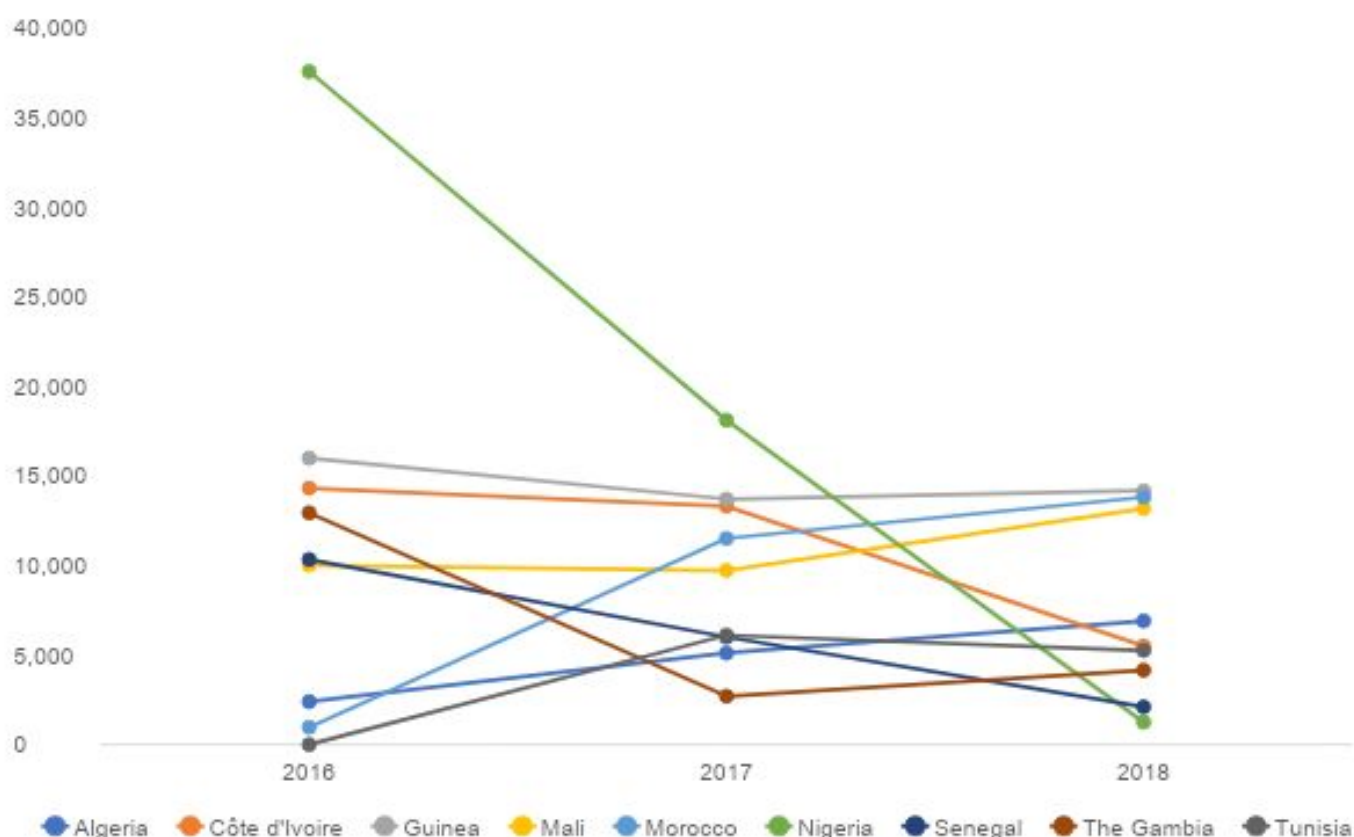
<sup>36</sup> Please refer to Section 4 and 5 for more details

<sup>37</sup> Please refer to Section 4 and 5 for more details

<sup>38</sup> Information on nationality provided in this report is based on the nationality declared by migrants and as reported by national authorities at arrival.

<sup>39</sup> 'Top nationalities' are those that represent more than 2 or 3% of the total flows over this period of time. Data sources: UNHCR Refugees & Migrants arrivals to Europe in 2018 (Mediterranean), UNHCR, Refugees & migrants arrivals to Europe in 2017; UNHCR (2016), *Desperate Journeys*

Graph 1. Comparison of top nationalities of arrival from 2016 to 2018 both routes (CMR and WMR)<sup>40</sup>



Three indicators are taken into account in order to determine whether nationals from specific countries of origin have re-routed their journeys from the CMR to the WMR. It is possible to conclude there has been a 'shift', if:

- There is a **clear correlation between increases in arrivals in Spain** of a certain nationality on the WMR and **decreases in arrivals in Italy** of the same nationality;
- The **total absolute number of arrivals** of a certain nationals in **Spain and Italy** combined are of the same order of magnitude over the last three years<sup>41</sup>; and,
- There are indications that the previous most common nationalities of migrants and refugees arriving in Italy in 2018 have **diverted their routes earlier on the CMR**. In other words, observations on the decrease in arrivals of certain nationalities in Italy do not suffice to determine whether these nationalities have shifted routes. Many refugees and migrants are reportedly still stranded in Libya. The analysis is therefore not only based on inflows to Italy but also to Libya.<sup>42</sup>

Based on these criteria, the first observation to be made is that two of the common nationalities on the WMR and CMR seem to demonstrate the existence of a shift between the two routes: nationals from Mali and Guinea.

<sup>40</sup> Data sources: UNHCR Refugees & Migrants arrivals to Europe in 2018 (Mediterranean), UNHCR, Refugees & migrants arrivals to Europe in 2017; UNHCR (2016), *Desperate Journeys*

<sup>41</sup> As shown by graph 1 and table 2

<sup>42</sup> Please refer to Section 5. Central Mediterranean Route, for more details

### Mali

A very large increase in Malian arrivals in Spain was recorded in 2018. The numbers went from 600 arrivals in 2017 to 10,250, accounting for 16 per cent of the total arrivals to Spain in 2018.

The opposite trend can be observed in terms of arrivals of Malian nationals in Italy with a 29 per cent decline in arrivals in 2019 and an 88 per cent decline in 2018. The total numbers of Malians arriving in Europe have not declined over the same period (despite slight fluctuations and a 23 per cent decrease in 2017).

*Table 3. Malians arriving in Europe via the WMR & CMR 2016-2018<sup>43</sup>*

Mali	2016	2017	2018
Arrivals in Spain	unknown <sup>44</sup>	600	10,250
Arrivals in Italy	10,010	7,100	900
Total	10,010	7,700	11,150

### Guinea

Arrivals of Guinean nationals in Italy dropped by 27 per cent between 2016 and 2017, and by 92 per cent between 2017 and 2018 (from 9,700 to 810), which is 10 points more than the overall decrease in arrivals to Italy. In parallel, Guinean arrivals in Spain have increased by 52 per cent between 2016 and 2017 and more than tripled between 2017 and 2018 (from 4,000 to 13,000). Additionally, Guinean nationals were no longer listed among the main nationalities of arrival in Libya in 2018<sup>45</sup> and the total numbers of Guinean arrivals to Europe have remained similar over the same period.

*Table 4. Guineans arriving in Europe via the WMR & CMR 2016-2018<sup>46</sup>*

Guinea	2016	2017	2018
Arrivals in Spain	2,633	4,000	13,350
Arrivals in Italy	13,345	9,700	810
Total	15,978	13,700	14,160

**Other nationalities seem to demonstrate a partial rerouting** to the WMR: Moroccans, Ivorians and Senegalese. In the case of Ivorians and Senegalese, the data however mostly demonstrates a general decline in arrivals via the WMR and CMR combined.

### Morocco

While in 2017 the number of Moroccans arriving in Europe was almost equally split between the CMR and the WMR, in 2018 the number of Moroccans arriving in Italy decreased by more than 90 per cent while it more than doubled in Spain. This finding indicates that although using the CMR still appeared as an option for many Moroccans in 2017, the large majority of them chose to travel via the WMR instead in 2018.

*Table 5 Moroccans arriving in Europe via the WMR & CMR 2016-2018<sup>47</sup>*

Morocco	2016	2017	2018
Arrivals in Spain	963	5,500	13,000
Arrivals in Italy	unknown	6,000	800
Total (CMR & WMR)	963	11,500	13,800

<sup>43</sup> Data sources: UNHCR Refugees & Migrants arrivals to Europe in 2018 (Mediterranean), UNHCR, Refugees & migrants arrivals to Europe in 2017; UNHCR (2016), *Desperate Journeys*

<sup>44</sup> 'Unknown' in these instances means that data on arrivals for this data point is unavailable in the UNHCR dataset used for analysis. This applies to all usage of 'unknown' in the tables that follow.

<sup>45</sup> Sources: IOM Libya, DTM Migrant reports round 8, 16 and 23. Please refer to Section 5.1.2. for more details

<sup>46</sup> Data sources: UNHCR Refugees & Migrants arrivals to Europe in 2018 (Mediterranean), UNHCR, Refugees & migrants arrivals to Europe in 2017; UNHCR (2016), *Desperate Journeys*

<sup>47</sup> Ibid

### Côte d'Ivoire

The number of Ivorians arriving in Italy decreased by 23 per cent in 2017 and by 88 per cent in 2018. Meanwhile, arrivals to Spain doubled between 2016 and 2017 and increased by 16 per cent between 2017 and 2018.

These findings may suggest there may have been a partial rerouting of Ivorians towards the WMR. It is worth noting there has been a **general decline in Ivorian arrivals to Europe** over the last three (3) years.

*Table 6. Ivorians arriving in Europe via the WMR & CMR 2016-2018<sup>48</sup>*

Côte d'Ivoire	2016	2017	2018
Arrivals in Spain	1,911	3,800	4,400
Arrivals in Italy	12,396	9,500	1,100
Total (CMR & WMR)	14,307	13,300	5,500

### Senegal

The number of arrivals in Italy of Senegalese migrants and refugees decreased by 42 per cent in 2017 (from 10,327 in 2016 to 6,000 in 2017) and by more than 90 per cent in 2018 (600 arrivals) on the CMR.

On the Western Mediterranean Route, Senegalese nationals went from representing less than 1 per cent of arrivals in Spain in 2017 (i.e. less than 200 migrants and refugees) to around 3 per cent in 2018 (2,100 Senegalese were recorded in 2018). Though this represents relatively significant increase in shares on the WMR (and potentially a partial shift), the much broader finding is that there was a **large decrease in Senegalese arrivals** to Europe since 2016, with just over 2,000 arrivals in total (via the WMR & CMR) in 2018 vs 10,327 in 2016.<sup>49</sup>

*Table 7. Senegalese arriving in Europe via the WMR & CMR 2016-2018<sup>50</sup>*

Senegal	2016	2017	2018
Arrivals in Spain	unknown	unknown	2,100
Arrivals in Italy	10,327	6,000	unknown
Total est. (CMR & WMR)	10,327	6,000	2,100

**Lastly, some nationalities have clearly not shifted** from a route to another according to the above-mentioned criteria:

- **Nigerians:** though the number of Nigerians arriving in Italy has decreased by more than 90 per cent between 2017 and 2018, they do not appear to have deviated their route towards the WMR. Nigerians also remained amongst the top nationalities of arrival in Libya, though the share of those coming to find work and those planning to continue their journey towards Italy (but are currently detained in Libya) is difficult to determine.<sup>51</sup>
- **Tunisians:** despite a 14 per cent decrease in arrivals, Tunisians are currently the most represented nationality of arrival in Italy. However, as further shown in the FMS (Table 9), large shares of these arrivals may be attributed to departures from Tunisia.
- **Eritreans:** In 2018, there was a recorded a 54 per cent decrease in the number of maritime arrivals of Eritreans<sup>52</sup> in Italy. This decrease is lower than the decrease in that of the total flow into Italy and they remain amongst the highest share of refugee and migrants leaving the coasts of Libya. According to key informants interviewed for this study, Eritreans usually have very long migration paths on the CMR and

<sup>48</sup> Data sources: UNHCR Refugees & Migrants arrivals to Europe in 2018 (Mediterranean), UNHCR, Refugees & migrants arrivals to Europe in 2017; UNHCR (2016), *Desperate Journeys*

<sup>49</sup> Ibid

<sup>50</sup> Ibid

<sup>51</sup> Source: IOM Libya, DTM Migrant reports round 8, 16 and 23. As noted in the Flow Monitoring reports, due to the high mobility of migrants, it is possible that a migrant is counted at more than one flow monitoring point within the reporting period, hence the observed arrivals / departures should be treated as **an indication of the volume of movement in different parts of the country**, not as total arrivals and departures to Libya.

<sup>52</sup> Information on nationality provided in this report is based on the nationality declared by migrants and as reported by national authorities at arrival.



many of them may have left their country of origin more than a year ago. It is therefore difficult to assess at the moment if future Eritrean migrants will be adapting their routes due to restrictions in Libya and Italy and shifting to the WMR.

### 3.2. Experiences and intentions on the two routes

Findings in this section derive from the analysis of both routes (Section 4 and 5) as well as on the results of a round of **flow monitoring surveys carried out by IOM field staff in Spain and Italy between July and October 2018**, shared with MHub by the IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) in February 2019. The analysis specifically focuses on:

- the intended destination countries;
- the length of the journeys;
- the main routes travelled;
- incidents during the journeys; and,
- cost of the journeys.

As a reminder, the **sample** analysed in this section is composed of 1,150 migrants and refugees who arrived in Spain and 1,023 migrants and refugees who arrived in Italy in 2017 and 2018.<sup>53</sup> The demographic breakdown of the sample is as follows:

- **WMR:** the sample of those surveyed in Spain is composed of 89 per cent male respondents and 11 per cent female respondents. Main countries of origins of the respondents were: Guinea (33% of the total sample), Mali (22%) and Côte d'Ivoire (15%).<sup>54</sup>
- **CMR:** 1,023 migrants and refugees were interviewed in Italy and 84 per cent of them were men, 16 per cent were women. Main countries of origins of the respondents were: Pakistan (23% of the total sample), Nigeria (22%), Eritrea (16%) and Côte d'Ivoire (8%).

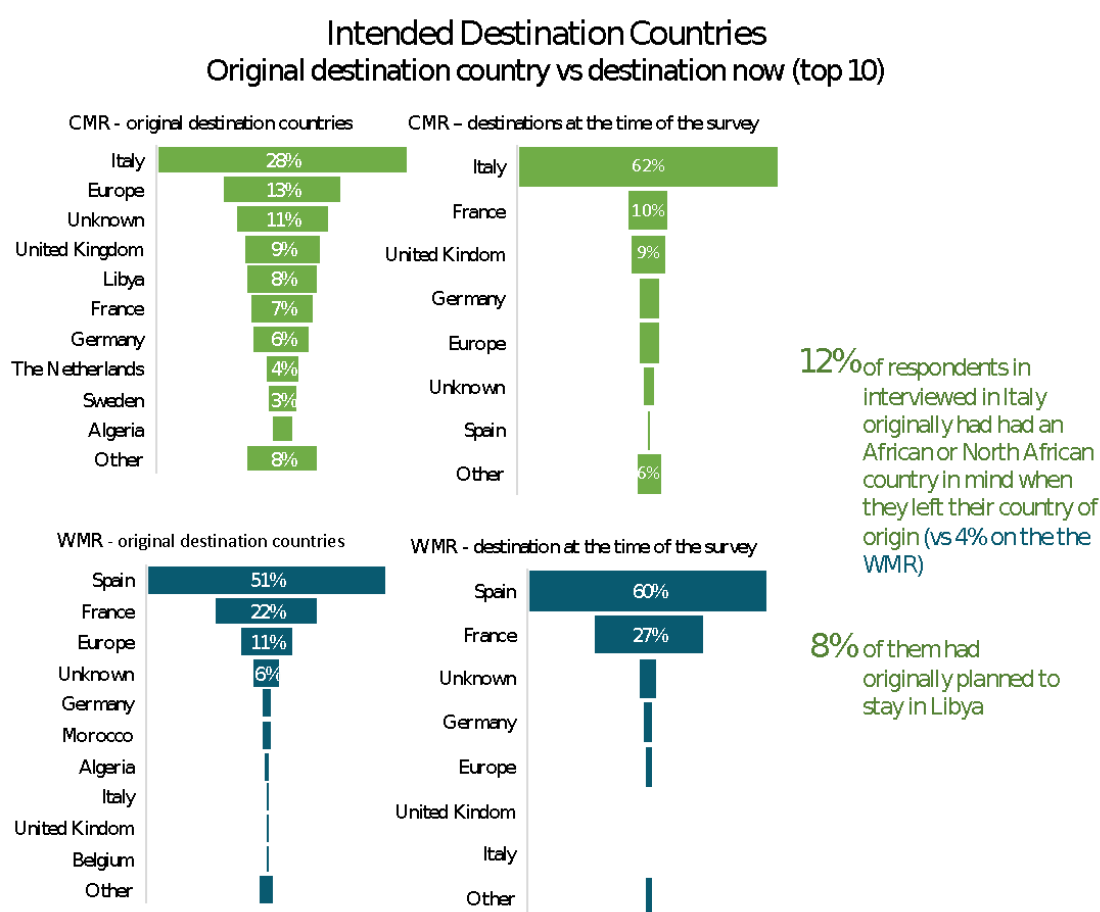
---

<sup>53</sup> As described in Section 2. Methodology, the dataset shared with MHub included top nationalities only, namely:

- Italy: Tunisia, Eritrea, Iraq, Sudan, Pakistan, Nigeria, Algeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, Guinea
- Spain: Guinea, Morocco, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Algeria, Gambia, Senegal, Syrian Arab Rep, Mauritania, Cameroon

<sup>54</sup> Followed by Cameroon (7%), Senegal (7%), Morocco (5%), Algeria (4%)

Figure 2. FMS Analysis – Countries of destination



The analysis of the intended destination countries when the respondents started their journeys and when they were surveyed (Figure 2) shows that the **large majority of them already intended to go to Europe** when they started the journey. However, more than **1 out of 10 respondents on the CMR had initially planned to settle in an African or North African country** (especially Libya). Additionally, 11 per cent of those on the WMR and 6 per cent of those on the CMR had no specific destination in mind when they started the journey.

It should be noted that responses to questions on intended destinations may be subjective and subject to change over the course of the journey. They are **only indicative of the intention at a certain point of the journey**, at the beginning of the journey in the country of origin and on intended European destination once already in Italy/Spain.

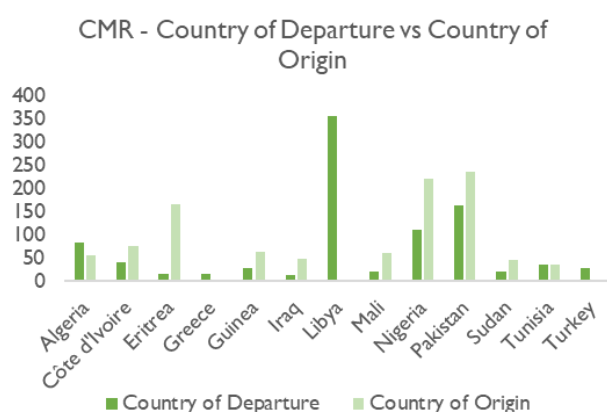
The following figure (Figure 3) shows the country of departure of the respondents versus their country of origin, as well as the length of their journey from departure to arrival country. The DTM defines 'country of departure' as either the country of origin or another country where the migrant has spent one year or more. Therefore, for all those who have a different country of origin and departure (i.e. who spent more than a year in transit country), DTM has not recorded the part of the journey before the departure country. This infographic demonstrates that:

- more than a third of respondents on the CMR spent a year or more in Libya before reaching Italy<sup>55</sup>; and,
- migrants and refugees traveling via the WMR have longer migratory paths.

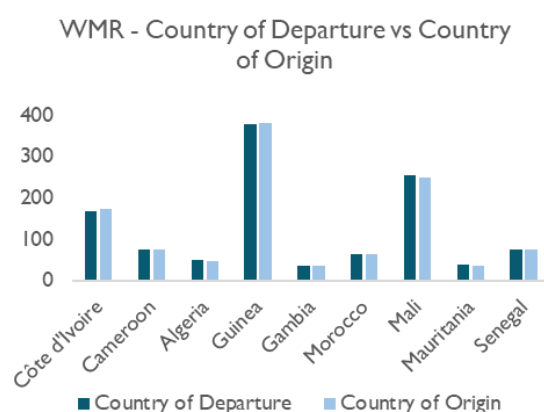
<sup>55</sup> A similar finding was made in the UNCHR (2019), *Desperate Journeys* report where UNHCR estimates that many of those currently in Libya are likely to have been there for a year or more

Figure 3. FMS Analysis – Country of Departure and length of journey

### Country of Departure vs Country of Origin



35% of the respondents interviewed in Italy departed from Libya, indicating they stayed a year or more in this country during their journey. Of those who indicated Libya as their country of departure, **40% were Eritreans** and **29% were Nigerians**.



Almost all the respondents interviewed in Spain on the WMR have indicated the same country of departure and country of origin. The subsequent analysis regarding the length of journey is therefore more likely to capture their entire journey.

### Length of Journey

45% of those traveling on the CMR did not spend time in transit – this may be driven by important shares of migrants having departed from Libya as well as Tunisians and Eritreans in the sample.

**Respondents surveyed in Spain had longer migratory paths:** 37% of them reported having travelled for more than a year before reaching Europe.





























**> 50%** of those departing from Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon and Gambia travelled for **more than a year** before they arrived in Spain, followed by large shares of migrants departing from Guinea (37%).

The total length of the journey depends on the method of transport used,<sup>56</sup> whether migrants have been working or facing violence or kidnapping on the route, as well as the time they spent waiting to cross the Mediterranean. The following table shows data gathered via a limited number of interviews with migrants on the WMR to illustrate this finding.

<sup>56</sup> On the WMR, the FMS data shows that travelling by land across the Sahara Desert passing through Mauritania, Mali or Niger to reach the North of Africa, is clearly associated with longer journeys and a higher number of transited countries.

Table 8. Overview of the various length of journeys and transportation means used by the sub-Saharan migrants interviewed for this study (examples)

Country of origin	Length of journey	Method of Transport means
Senegal	3 months (incl. 2 in Nador)	   
Senegal	5.5 months (in Nador exclusively)	  
Senegal	4 months (in Nador exclusively)	  
Mali	6 months	   
Guinea	Approx. 6 months	   
Guinea	Approx. 2 years	   
Côte d'Ivoire	11 months	   

## Routes travelled

The FMS also investigated the main routes of travel. In an open-ended question, respondents were asked to list the countries they had crossed – the level of details provided in those responses vary, making it difficult to carry out a precise comparative analysis. Table 9 therefore focuses on: a) the journey descriptions that were mentioned by more than 1 per cent of the respondents (i.e. 71% of the sample interviewed in Spain and 76% of those interviewed in Italy); and b) the last transit countries before crossing the Mediterranean Sea, the country before last (on the WMR). Additionally, survey participants were asked about their first, second, third, fourth, etc. country of transit. A majority of the sample did not indicate more than two countries of transit. The analysis of responses to these questions is also presented in subsequent tables 10 and 11.

Table 9. Main routes travelled

CMR	WMR
<p><b>65%</b> of those surveyed in Italy mentioned having been through Libya during their journey<sup>57</sup></p> <p><b>3%</b> of those surveyed Italy mentioned having left from Tunisia<sup>58</sup></p>	<p><b>99%</b> of respondents interviewed in Spain left from the Moroccan coasts</p> <p><b>52%</b> travelled through Algeria – a large majority of them then travelled directly to Morocco from there but some appear to have privileged the route via Mauritania to enter Morocco</p>

<sup>57</sup> Though it should be noted that large numbers of respondents provided incomplete answers in this sample so the numbers are likely to be higher.

<sup>58</sup> Tunisians represent 4 per cent of the total sample of respondents interviewed in Italy. This indicates that the large majority of those having left from Tunisia were Tunisians and that some Tunisians left from Libya.

	<p><b>8%</b> went through Mauritania, most often just before reaching Morocco</p> <p><b>78%</b> 78% of those departing from Algeria were Algerian nationals</p>
--	---

Table 10. Main transit countries on the CMR<sup>59</sup>

Rank	Transit country 1	% of respondents in Italy <sup>60</sup>	Transit country 2	% of respondents in Italy	Transit country 3	% of respondents in Italy
1	Iran	13%	Libya	16%	Libya	5%
2	Niger	11%	Turkey*	14%		
3	Libya	5%	Niger	3%		
4	Mali	3%	Algeria	2%		
5	Turkey	3%	Greece*	2%		
6	Algeria	2%				
7	Sudan	2%				
	None	45%	None	58%	None	85%

\* In total, 2 per cent of those arriving in Italy departed from Greece or Turkey and important numbers transited through Turkey during their journey in this sample. This demonstrates how difficult it is to perfectly distinguish the EMR and CMR for some nationalities.

Table 11. Main transit countries on the WMR<sup>61</sup>

Rank	Transit country 1	% of respondents in Spain <sup>62</sup>	Transit country 2	% of respondents in Spain	Transit country 3	% of respondents in Spain	Transit country 4	% of respondents in Spain
1	Mali	28%	Morocco	25%	Morocco	30%	Morocco	17%
2	Morocco	26%	Algeria	24%	Algeria	12%	Algeria	4%
3	Algeria	12%	Mauritania	7%	Mauritania	2%		
4	Senegal	7%	Niger	7%	Niger	2%		
5	Mauritania	6%	Mali	3%				
6	Nigeria	6%						
7	Niger	2%						
8	Burkina Faso	2%						
	None	8%	None	29%	None	50%	None	76%

As shown in Tables 10 and 11 and confirmed by interviews with key informants and migrants, journeys on the WMR appear to be fairly segmented. Refugees and migrants rely on information gathered via other people on the move or smugglers (for specific segments only) and plan their journeys in a step-by-step manner.

Additional qualitative insight gathered via this small number of qualitative interviews showed that West African research participants interviewed in Spain usually had a destination and a general route in mind when they left countries of origin, but no set plans on how to reach their target. They mostly adjusted their strategies in response to situations they face or on the basis information they receive from other migrants.

<sup>59</sup> 93 per cent of the sample did not indicate a fourth country of transit.

<sup>60</sup> Selected non-European countries who gathered more than 1 per cent of responses.

<sup>61</sup> 91 per cent of the sample did not indicate a fifth country of transit.

<sup>62</sup> Selected non-European countries who gathered more than 1% of responses.

The following quote illustrates this approach:

*"Nobody helped me until I reached Nador. I managed on my own and with other migrants (Guineans, Ivorians, Burkinabe). I also spoke with friends by WhatsApp and Messenger to find out about the situation in other countries."*

(Mali, Male, 33 years old)

*Box 2. Examples of journey descriptions<sup>63</sup>*

**Abdul's journey (Guinean, 19 years old)**

*"I went through Mali by car with other Guineans, with a Malian driver. We just crossed the country without stopping. I then stayed for a year and a half in Algeria, working to save money. I was working in the fields for an Algerian employer and living with the house personnel. I wasn't always paid but I was free to go when I wanted."*

*When I left my employer, I walked for 2 days to reach the border with Morocco. We crossed the border by night, though it was very dangerous as there was a lot of police. We found cars to bring us to Rabat where I stayed with others in a private house, until the owner came back, and we had to escape. We then took a bus to Nador. They dropped us off before the city, close to the forest where all the migrants stay waiting for the boat."*

*We had to leave the camp every morning around 4am in case the police would raid it and take all our belongings, which was very frequent. At some point, the smuggler told me it was my turn to leave, we crossed the sea on a zodiac with 51 persons, without life jackets."*

**Mohammed's journey (Malian, 33 years old)**

*"My first stop was in Gao, where I stayed for 4 months ~~where I stayed~~ at my uncle's home because I had no other place to stay at the time. He was killed by a stray bullet not very long after I left."*

***I had first planned to go to Algeria,** but I spoke to friends there who told me the situation was very bad for Africans in that country, so I decided to go to Mauritania instead."*

*I stayed there for 4 weeks. I worked a little, dates picking, but there is so much racism against Africans in Mauritania that it was very unsafe."*

*I then left Mauritania for Morocco, where I first spent 2 weeks living in the streets in Nador as **I had no money to pay for a place in the forest and no plans.***

*After these first weeks, I met a Moroccan who offered to help me. He found a boat for me to cross the sea two weeks later and did not ask me for any money – he was just a very good person and I was lucky to meet him."*

<sup>63</sup> The names of the research participants have been changed in this report.

On the **CMR**, approaches appear to vary according to the countries of origin however, where journeys through East Africa from the Middle East and Asia (Bangladesh and Pakistan) are most often 'organized' or 'pre-paid packages' from origin to destination whereas Central and West Africans usually travel in a more segmented manner,<sup>64</sup> as on the WMR. Following the evolving situation in Libya, smuggling routes and transit hubs within Libya have evolved since 2013. According to a recent study, deep-rooted networks do not appear to have changed in the last year and the Tripoli and Bani Waleed hubs were still functioning well in 2018.<sup>65</sup> New hubs appeared in the East of the country due to; (a) the rise of coast guard controls along the western coast; and (b) the Eastern region becoming more accessible since its stabilisation in 2017. The smuggling and trafficking business is largely dominated by armed groups in Libya.<sup>66</sup>

### Factors influencing the choice of routes

Key informants interviewed for this study put forward a variety of factors to explain the increase noted on the WMR. Gaps in border enforcement capacity,<sup>67</sup> as illustrated in the finding made by Carling & Collins (2017) regarding the impact of perceived openings or blockages on migratory flows.<sup>68</sup>

Additional factors which appear to influence the choice of one route over another according to migrants interviewed for this study and recent reports are the following:

- **WMR:** According to research participants interviewed for this study, those traveling on the WMR chose this route because it appeared to be safer, less expensive and perceived as relatively 'easier.' However, they stated they often lacked information on the realities they might be facing *en-route* (especially traveling via Mali, Algeria and Morocco). They were usually informed of the current restrictions in Libya and Italy, however.
- **CMR:** According to recent reports,<sup>69</sup> those traveling on the **CMR** seem to be almost equally informed of the dangers they might face in Libya and Italy but relied on more established smuggling networks. A recent REACH assessment<sup>70</sup> conducted in five (5) locations in Libya via 75 in-depth semi structured interviews with refugees and migrants also found that: "*As respondents were well aware of the risks they would face in Libya, only a small minority of refugees and migrants interviewed reported having changed their mind over their stay in Libya once they reached the country. (...) This did not change between individuals interviewed who had planned to reach Libya for work and those who intended to transit to Italy.*" Other reasons to travel on the CMR were put forward by key informants interviewed for this study. Those are further analysed in Section 5 and include:
  - the **absence of rule of law** in parts of Libya;
  - the presence of **well-established smuggling networks** which continue to operate despite the restrictions; and,
  - traditionally **seasonal migrants** looking for work in Libya and ending up continuing their journey towards Europe due to the worsening security conditions in Libya.

It should be noted, however, that only a **few respondents in the FMS sample stated having received the assistance of a smuggler** to organise their journey (2% of respondents on the CMR and 1% on the WMR).<sup>71</sup>

<sup>64</sup> UNHCR/Altai (2017), *Mixed Migration Trends in Libya*

<sup>65</sup> REACH (2018), *Mixed migration routes and dynamics in Libya: The impact of EU migration measures on mixed migration in Libya*

<sup>66</sup> UNHCR/Altai (2017), *Mixed Migration Trends in Libya*

<sup>67</sup> This was confirmed by key informants working in the field of border enforcement capacity building.

<sup>68</sup> Carling, J., and F. Collins, (2017), *Aspirations, Desire and Drivers of Migration*. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 909–26.

<sup>69</sup> Such as: IMPACT (2019), *Mixed migration routes and dynamics in Libya, May-December 2018*; UNHCR (2019), *Desperate Journeys*; UNHCR/Altai (2017), *Mixed Migration Trends in Libya*; REACH (2018), *Mixed migration routes and dynamics in Libya: The impact of EU migration measures on mixed migration in Libya*

<sup>70</sup> REACH (2018), *Mixed migration routes and dynamics in Libya: The impact of EU migration measures on mixed migration in Libya*

<sup>71</sup> This contradicts the findings reported in Section 4 and 5 and reiterated above which demonstrate important differences in conditions of travel for East and West Africans: according to these findings and the continued presence of large migration hubs in Libya, we would have expected to find higher rates of respondents having relied on smuggling networks to organise their journey



One of the important findings from this research is that **smuggling networks are not shifting from one route to another**. They may be diversifying their strategies in order to adapt to new restrictions or security conditions (such as in Libya) but they do not appear to 're-route.' According to the literature review, this is related to the fact that these well-established networks have crucial spill over economic and political benefits at local, state and regional levels, particularly in places of origin and transit.<sup>72</sup>

*Box 1. WMR: qualitative insight on Tunisians' choice of route from 7 in-depth interviews with Tunisian migrants in Spain (January 2019)*

Though they do not represent an important part of the flow on the WMR (less than 1% of arrivals in Spain), the drivers behind the choice of route to reach Europe of the **Tunisian** research participants interviewed for this study seemed to be more directly related to the current restrictions in Italy and Libya. They chose to fly to Morocco and reach Spain by land for the following reasons:

- It was safer than crossing the Mediterranean by boat from Tunisia: *"A lot of Tunisians die going to Italy – there are no comparisons, this is a better route"; "I have friends who died crossing from Tunisia to Italy"; "there are less risks via Melilla because you don't need to cross the sea and deal with dishonest smugglers."*
- Awareness of the risks of going through Libya: *"those who go to Libya are detained and many of them die."*
- Perceived dangers in Italy for Tunisian migrants: *"the journey via Italy is too dangerous. There's a chance you pay for the journey but never arrive there or get sent back immediately."*

on the CMR. However, the fact that few relied on the assistance of a smuggler confirms that journeys are becoming more 'improvised' as a result of the lack of coordinated responses at a regional level.

<sup>72</sup> Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime (2017), *Integrated Responses to Human Smuggling*

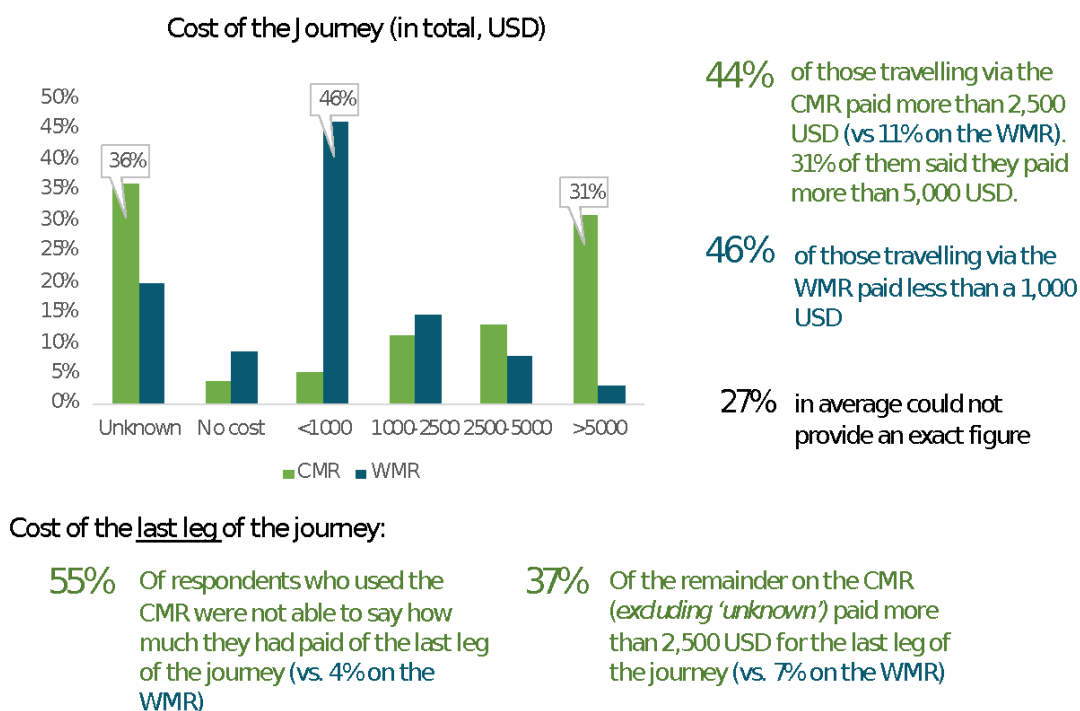
*from the Horn of Africa to Europe*; MMC (2019), *Taking root. The complex economics of the global smuggling economy*

- we can reference also *Turning the Tide on the Niger Libya Mali triangle – very interesting and providing insights into the transnational dynamics of irregular migration as well as these networks' interaction with local, national and regional political and economic dynamics* [https://www.clingendael.org/pub/2017/turning\\_the\\_tide/](https://www.clingendael.org/pub/2017/turning_the_tide/)

## Cost of the journey

Figure 4 analyses the cost of the total journey on the WMR and the CMR, as well as the cost of the last leg of the journey. The findings outlined in the figure show that traveling on the CMR appears to be costlier than on the WMR, though large proportions of respondents from the FMS were not able to provide an exact figure for the cost of their entire journey.

Figure 4. Cost of the journey (total & last leg only)



Costs can fluctuate based on factors including nationalities, the socio-economic profile of the refugee or migrant, the desired destination, the level of service required and the smuggling network.<sup>73</sup> They also depend on the type of journey undertaken by migrants and refugees (organised/pre-paid journeys vs segmented journeys) and the countries they went through. For instance, IOM's DTM<sup>74</sup> found that "migration cost reported by migrants transiting through Niger was higher than the cost reported by those who travelled through Mali and Algeria. 79% of migrants who departed Burkina-Faso and entered Libya through Niger reported spending more than USD 1,000 while among those who travelled through Mali and then Algeria before reaching Libya only 59% reported spending more than 1,000 USD." The cost of travel for those opting from 'pre-paid packages' are reported to be significantly higher, up to 5,000 USD.

## Incidents during the Journey

Unsurprisingly, a higher share of migrants and refugees on the CMR experienced problems during their journeys than on the WMR. They reported around 37% more incidents from the list provided in the survey than those on the WMR, with **robbery and running into financial problems being the most common issues** respondents from both routes have faced.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>73</sup> MMC (2019), *Taking root. The complex economics of the global smuggling economy*, and UNHCR/Altai (2017), *Mixed Migration Trends in Libya*

<sup>74</sup> Source: IOM Libya, DTM Migrant reports round 23

<sup>75</sup> The list of potential incidents provided in the survey included: robbery during the journey; stolen documents health problem; no shelter; financial problems; and, other.

Furthermore, 27% of those on the CMR reported having experienced additional problems than those listed in the survey: half of these respondents reported having **experienced food and water shortages**, most often while crossing deserts (especially in Libya).

*Graph 2. Incidents during the journey*



### Communication patterns and sources of information

According to this research, **communication patterns and sources of information do not seem to differ between those traveling on the CMR and those traveling on the WMR**, with still a strong reliance on relatives, smugglers and smartphones (for those who have one).

Indeed, most West African research participants interviewed for this study had little information on the exact modalities to follow in each transit country and relied heavily on information gathered via their families and friends before departure. They made use of messaging applications, such as WhatsApp or Messenger, to communicate with other migrants already based in the EU or on the route as well as YouTube videos of migrants sharing their experiences, and Google Maps, once en-route. This finding is confirmed by data collected by 4Mi monitors between 1 July and December 2018 via interviews with 2,353 refugees and respondents in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso<sup>76</sup> which demonstrated that **the primary information source shifted during migration** with other migrants and refugees becoming the first source of information (60% of women vs. 58% of men) followed by friends and family in the country of destination (53% of women vs. 47% of men) and phone calls to others further ahead on migration routes (48% of women vs. 41% of men). Another MMC article analysing the results of a survey carried out in 2018 along seven major migration routes in Africa and Asia with 10,060 respondents<sup>77</sup> found, however, that **smugglers** remained the most important source to access information while on the move (with more than 50% of them having a smartphone with them). The article concludes that *"many people on the move, both before and during migration, still rely on more traditional sources and means of communication."*

Nevertheless, the link between the use of various sources of information and decision-making is difficult to establish. According to the above-mentioned survey,<sup>78</sup> social media does not play a major role in influencing people's decision to migrate: *"On average, across all surveyed migration routes, only 7% of respondents say social media influenced their decision to migrate."* The only notable difference which is also noted in this survey is that refugees and migrants from West Africa are less dependent on information received by smugglers on route as they benefit from the ECOWAS free movement during the journey.

<sup>76</sup> MMC West Africa (2019), *4Mi Snapshot - Access to information of refugees and migrants on the move in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso*

<sup>77</sup> For more details, consult: [MMC \(2019\), Hype or hope? Evidence on use of smartphones & social media in mixed migration](#)

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

## 4. The Western Mediterranean Route

This section provides an overview of the recent developments on the WMR and well as the demographic characteristics of recent migrants, refugees and asylum seekers using the Western Mediterranean Route.

### 4.1. Recent developments on the Western Mediterranean Route

#### 4.1.1. Trends overview

The route most commonly used by migrants and refugees in 2018 was from North Africa to Spain, known as the Western Mediterranean Route. Some reportedly crossed the Strait of Gibraltar or the Alboran Sea in inflatable boats while others crossed into the Spanish autonomous cities in Northern Morocco, either by climbing the high surrounding fences or passing undetected through border crossing points.

Though this study focusses on development on the WMR since 2016, it should be noted that the Western Mediterranean Route has always existed and has a history of traffic fluctuations. An increase was registered along the route in 2014-2015, reflecting higher numbers of Syrians and land crossings, but the route saw a decrease in flows in 2016. Significant increases began again in 2017 where flows were up by almost 50% from 2016, and later doubled in 2018, as shown in Table 13. The main departure point for people on the move traveling via the WMR is Morocco and the main arrival points are located in the South of Spain (Andalusia), though an increase in departures from Algeria was also noted as of 2017.<sup>79</sup>

Table 13. Sea and land arrivals in Spain and fatalities recorded on the (2016-2018)<sup>80</sup>

Year	Numbers	Death and missing at sea on the WMR	Demographic breakdown
2018	65,400 (incl. 6,800 land arrivals)	811	12% children 11% women 77% men
2017	28,300 (incl. 6,200 land arrivals)	209	14% children 9% women 77% men
2016	14,100 (incl. 5,932 land arrivals)	88	13% children 10% women 77% men

As outlined in Section 1. Introduction and Section 3.2. Experiences and intentions on the two routes, key informants attributed this increase to recent developments in transit countries and an evolution in migrant and refugees' perceptions of the WMR.

<sup>79</sup> The number of departures from Algeria went from less than 200 migrants and refugees using this route in 2016 to over 5,000 in 2017 and 2018. Sources: UNHCR Refugees & Migrants arrivals to Europe in 2018 (Mediterranean), UNHCR, Refugees & migrants arrivals to Europe in 2017; UNHCR (2016), *Desperate Journeys*

<sup>80</sup> Sources: UNHCR Refugees & Migrants arrivals to Europe in 2018 (Mediterranean), UNHCR, Refugees & migrants arrivals to Europe in 2017; UNHCR (2016), *Desperate Journeys*

The most represented nationalities on this route are Malians, Guineans, Ivorians and Gambians (who tend to travel via Mali). This trend seems to set to continue in 2019 as drivers of displacement and migratory movements towards Europe remain unchanged for a majority of those taking the journey via the WMR in 2019 and security conditions are deteriorating in parts of Mali,<sup>81</sup> the Liptako-Gourma region (the border regions of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger) and the Lake Chad Basin.

While the number of arrivals in Spain doubled, the **number of fatalities on the WMR quadrupled in 2018**, possibly as a result of new smuggling practices that encourage vessels to depart regardless of weather conditions.<sup>82</sup> Departures appeared to be less seasonal in 2018, with more crossings occurring during the winter months making the journeys more perilous. Fatalities recorded in the Western Mediterranean in 2018 represent 36% of the total deaths in the Mediterranean (vs 7% of the total in 2017).<sup>83</sup>

As shown in table 13, the **demographic composition** of the flow remains similar to previous years in terms of arrivals of women and children. It was found that 81% of the children that arrived in Spain in 2018 were unaccompanied and separated children (UASC).<sup>84</sup> In absolute numbers, this accounts for 6,331 UASC arrivals via the WMR in 2018.<sup>85</sup>

#### 4.1.2. Recent developments in transit countries on the Western Mediterranean Route

As this study is centred around departure and arrival points across the Mediterranean Sea (with cursory investigations on countries crossed just before the departure points), this subsection particularly focuses on recent developments (2017-2018) affecting the journeys on the WMR in **Morocco** and **Algeria**. It is based on insights from key informants and migrants interviewed for this study as well as secondary data. As a reminder, the 15 in-depth interviews with migrants included nationals from Guinea, Senegal, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire and Tunisia. The following table shows the routes followed by West African migrants interviewed for this study. Though it should be considered as indicative only given the limited size of the sample, it reflects the findings made via the FMS data analysed in Section 3.2. Routes travelled showing that the main transit countries on the WMR were Mali, Morocco, Algeria, Senegal and Mauritania (Table 11).

*Table 14. Routes followed by migrants originating from sub-Saharan Africa interviewed for this study*

Country of origin	Route
Senegal	Senegal – Mauritania – Morocco – Spain (Motril)
Senegal	Senegal – Morocco (Casablanca – Nador) – Spain (Motril)
Senegal	Senegal – Morocco (Casablanca – Nador) – Spain (Motril)
Mali	Mali – Mauritania – Morocco – Spain
Guinea	Guinea – Mali – Algeria – Morocco – Spain
Guinea	Guinea – Mali – Algeria – Morocco – Spain

<sup>81</sup> 6,973 migrants refugees and asylum seekers reached Spain via the WMR in January, February and March 2019 - a 41 per cent increase from the same period in 2017. Source: UNHCR SPAIN Weekly snapshot - Week 13 (25 - 31 Mar 2019)

<sup>82</sup> UNHCR (2018), *Desperate Journeys*; I. Alexander, *Forty-seven people died crossing the Mediterranean in a wooden boat last month. This is their story*, [15 March 2018](https://www.unhcr.org/press/2018/3/15-march-2018)

<sup>83</sup> UNHCR Refugees & Migrants arrivals to Europe in 2018 (Mediterranean)

<sup>84</sup>

<https://migration.iom.int/reports/europe-%E2%80%94-refugee-and-migrant-children-europe-overview-trends-january-%E2%80%94-december-2018?close=true>

<sup>85</sup> Data on UASC for 2017 not available in comparable sources of data at the time of the study.

## Morocco

Morocco is currently the **main departure point** for people on the move traveling via the WMR. In the absence of flow monitoring mechanisms, it remains challenging to get accurate data on inflows and outflows in Morocco. Current estimates are largely based on ad-hoc communications by the Moroccan government regarding interceptions as well as data collected in Spain, or by international agencies based in Morocco and local CSOs. None of these actors seem to be able to provide an estimate of the number of refugees and migrants currently at departures points in Morocco.

On 17 January 2019, the Moroccan Ministry of Interior announced that it had prevented 89,000 separate attempts at irregular crossing from Morocco in 2018 (a 37% increase from 2017 according to the Ministry) and dismantled 229 migrant trafficking networks.<sup>86</sup> As stated in this press release, 80% of migrants prevented from making the crossing were non-Moroccan nationals and 5,608 of them eventually opted to voluntarily return to their countries of origin.

Morocco has traditionally been a country of **transit, origin and destination** for refugees and migrants.<sup>87</sup> IOM estimates that most arrivals are regular migrants<sup>88</sup> entering under Morocco's agreements with ECOWAS countries, although new visa restrictions have been imposed on nationals from Mali, Guinea and Congo-Brazzaville in November 2018.<sup>89</sup>

As a result of the increases in outflows and increased international pressure to control them, **Moroccan authorities have adopted various strategies over the years.** These include the implementation of a new asylum and migration policy in 2013, two campaigns of regularization in 2014 and 2016 for migrants having resided in Morocco for five years or more, and the launch of an anti-smuggling operation in August 2018.<sup>90</sup> In addition, important relocation operations of refugees and migrants (or 'éloignements' / 'removals') staying around known departure points (such as Nador, Tangiers and Tetuan) were reported by various sources since the summer 2018.<sup>91</sup> These claims have been largely substantiated by migrants interviewed for this study and all of those who stayed in such camps during their journey.

<sup>86</sup> Mixed Migration Hub, Trend Bulletin, January 2019 ; <https://www.voanews.com/a/morocco-foils-89-000-illegal-migration-attempts-in-2018-interior-ministry-reports/4747825.html>

<sup>87</sup> Though it may be a destination country 'by default', some informants were of the view that it would be more accurate to refer to 'long term transits' for those settling for longer periods of time in Morocco as many of them seem to retain the hope of someday crossing over to Europe

<sup>88</sup> Source KII IOM Morocco

<sup>89</sup> <http://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20181101-maroc-impose-restrictions-voyage-ressortissants-trois-pays-africains-visas>

<sup>90</sup>

<https://www.france24.com/en/20180830-morocco-targets-migrant-smuggling-mafia>

<sup>91</sup> Examples of sources:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/11/morocco-spotlight-treatment-african-migrants-181115081201093.html>;

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/09/morocco-relentless-crackdown-on-thousands-of-sub-saharan-migrants-and-refugees-is-unlawful/>;

<https://reliefweb.int/report/morocco/morocco-relentless-crackdown-thousands-sub-saharan-migrants-and-refugees-unlawful>



---

## Algeria

Algeria has historically seen a steady influx of sub-Saharan migrants. In the absence of official data, according to news sources,<sup>92</sup> human rights groups estimate some 100,000 have entered the country in recent years. Since the summer of 2014, Algeria has faced a growing dilemma regarding irregular migrants crossing the southern and eastern borders, despite the government's "closed door" policy.<sup>93</sup> Information on flows and numbers in Algeria remain a challenge to gather and analysts rely on press articles to find estimates. However, various observers have noted an increase in departures from the Algerian coast towards Spain and Sardinia since April 2018, although absolute numbers remain low and, as discussed in Section 3, regard mainly departures from Tunisians.

Algeria can be considered a **long-term transit country** and a **destination country**. This said, there is not enough evidence to conclude that all individuals spending time in Algeria and using the WMR have chosen Europe as their destination. Elements that may have had an impact on increases in outflows from and transits via Algeria are:

- The more difficult conditions for migrants and refugees currently staying and working in Algeria;<sup>94</sup> and,
- The increased migration controls in Niger (since 2016) which have led more migrants and refugees to transit via Algeria to join the WMR route.

Different nationalities have a different history in relation to Algeria. It has been a **destination country** for Malians and Nigeriens seeking economic opportunities in the construction or services sectors (i.e. circular migration flows, especially in Southern locations around Tamanrasset) for a long time. However, opportunities to stay and work in safe conditions have recently deteriorated for four main reasons:

1. The **adoption of a new law in 2008**<sup>95</sup> which governs foreign nationals' conditions of entry, stay and circulation, and treats irregular migration as a criminal offense punishable by up to five years in prison and expulsion from the country.
2. The **2014 bilateral agreement between Algeria and Niger** to repatriate Nigeriens from Algeria to Niger.<sup>96</sup>
3. **An increase in the frequency of return operations.**<sup>97</sup>
4. Reports of **rising xenophobia and violence** towards West Africans from parts of the Algerian population in the context of falling oil prices, high unemployment and inflation.<sup>98</sup>

**Algeria has also gained importance as a country of transit** for those joining the WMR over the last year, with reports of a shift from the Niger-Libya corridor, to routes west of this axis, including through Niger towards Algeria, and through Gao in

---

<sup>92</sup> Example :

<https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/14297/unhcr-concerned-over-missing-arab-refugees-near-algeria>

<sup>93</sup> Mixed Migration Hub, Trend Bulletin, January 2019; <https://thearabdailynews.com/2019/01/30/algeria-migration-policy-national-security-concerns-vs-humanitarian-morality/>

<sup>94</sup> For more details on the current climate for migrants and refugees in Algeria, please refer to the Mixed Migration Center's recent thematic focus on arrests and expulsions from Algeria: MMC (2019), *Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: West Africa (Q1)*

---

<sup>95</sup> Law No. 08-1 -

[https://www.joradp.dz/JO2000/2008/036/F\\_Pag.htm](https://www.joradp.dz/JO2000/2008/036/F_Pag.htm)

<sup>96</sup>

<https://www.jeuneafrique.com/mag/382672/societe/algerie-niger-migration-expulsions-collaboration/>;

<sup>97</sup> Examples of sources:

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23114&LangID=E>;

<https://reliefweb.int/report/algeria/unhcr-appeals-access-refugees-algeria-niger-border-enar>; Amnesty International (2018),

*Forced to leave: Stories of injustice against migrants in Algeria*

<sup>98</sup> For more details on the current climate for migrants and refugees in Algeria, please refer to the Mixed Migration Center's recent thematic focus on Algeria: MMC (2019), *Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: West Africa (Q1)*



Mali.<sup>99</sup> This appears to be a direct result of increased restrictions in Niger and Libya but, according to key informants, it is too early to qualify as a 'new trend' which will grow, as the route via Mali and Algeria is known to be more perilous and restricted by refugees and migrants. This comment is substantiated by key informants interviewed during this study.

---

<sup>99</sup> Clingendael (2018), *Caught in the middle: A human rights and peace-building approach to migration governance in the Sahel*



## 4.2. Flows, nationality composition and variations on the Western Mediterranean Route

Section 3 showed a comparative analysis of the most common countries of origin on the WMR and CMR to help better understand if part of the growth registered on the WMR in 2018 is related to a so-called 'shift' from the CMR to the WMR. This subsection intends to provide further details on the composition and volume of the flow on the WMR from 2016 to 2018.

Most of the increases on the WMR, recorded in 2018, were linked to refugees and migrants originating from sub-Saharan countries. However, towards the end of year, the number of Moroccan nationals on this route also began to increase.

*Table 15. Most common countries of origin entering into Spain by land and sea (2016-2018)<sup>100</sup>*

Rank	2018			2017			2016		
	CoO	Number	% of total flow	CoO	Number	% of total flow <sup>101</sup>	CoO	Number	% <sup>102</sup>
1	Guinea	13,350	20%	Morocco	5,500	19%	Guinea	2,633	19%
2	Morocco	13,000	20%	Algeria	5,100	18%	Algeria	2,394	17%
3	Mali	10,250	16%	Guinea	4,000	14%	Syrian Arab Rep.	1,927	14%
	Algeria	5,700	9%	Cote d'Ivoire	3,800	13%	Côte d'Ivoire	1,911	14%
4	Côte d'Ivoire	4,400	7%	The Gambia	2,700	9%	Cameroon	1,070	8%
5	The Gambia	4,150	6%	Syrian Arab Rep.	2,200	10%	The Gambia	1,001	7%
7	Senegal	2,100	3%	Cameroon	900	3%	Morocco	963	7%
8	Syrian Arab Rep.	1,600	2%	Mali	600	2%	Burkina Faso	444	3%
9	Cameroon	1,550	1%	Guinea Bissau	600	1%	Mauritania	229	2%
10	Other	9,300	14%	Other	3,249	11%	Other	1,338	10%

The most relevant findings that can be drawn from the analysis of the flow composition of the WMR in 2017 and 2018 and feed into the cross analysis, are:

- Apart from nationals from the Syrian Arab Republic, all the **most common countries of origin** found on the WMR have increased in 2018 but **remain relatively similar in terms of national make-up** to those registered in 2017 (although the Senegalese were not part of the top 9 nationalities in 2017).
- The largest increases on the WMR were linked to migrants and refugees originating from **Guinea** (tripled), **Mali** (the number of Malians using the WMR increased by 17 times) and **Morocco** (more than doubled). The **number of Moroccan arrivals in Spain increased by over 1,200%** between 2016 and 2018.

<sup>100</sup> Sources: UNHCR Refugees & Migrants arrivals to Europe in 2018 (Mediterranean), UNHCR, Refugees & migrants arrivals to Europe in 2017; UNHCR (2016), *Desperate Journeys*

<sup>101</sup> Researcher's own calculation based on the UNHCR data

<sup>102</sup> Researcher's own calculation based on data in UNHCR's Spain Arrivals Dashboard January - December 2016

- In some cases, increases noted from particular countries of origin are **proportionate to the increase of all arrivals** (the relative proportion of Moroccans and Cameroonians within the flow in 2018 is equivalent to that of 2017) while the relative shares of Malians and Guineans within the flow have increased by 14 per cent<sup>103</sup> and 6 per cent, respectively.
- The absolute numbers of refugees and migrants from Algeria and the Côte d'Ivoire have remained relatively stable by comparison (with increases of 11% and 15% respectively when all the other nationalities, with the exception of Syrians, have increased by a minimum of 45%), but their relative share % for Ivorians within the flow has decreased from 18% to 9% for Algerians and from 13% to 7% for Ivorian (between 2017 and 2018).

**The case of Algerians:** according to key informants it is hard to establish if Algerians who crossed to Spain from Morocco chose this route because it seemed 'easier' (using Morocco as a preferred transit country) or because they were already established in Morocco and made the decision to migrate towards Europe while there. Algerians can travel to Turkey without a visa and can enter Greece, as irregular migrants, and subsequently via the Balkans towards Easter Europe.

According to UNCHR's 2019 Desperate Journeys report,<sup>104</sup> around **ten percent of those who arrived in Spain** via the WMR in 2018 were potentially in **need of international protection**. Protection concerns appear to be the same amongst migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, regardless of the route used – according to key informants - they arrive with the same 'traumas' and experience the same levels of violence, fear, risks for their lives on the journey.<sup>105</sup>

Additionally, there was a wide consensus amongst key informants interviewed for this research that the **conditions of the journeys on the WMR have severely deteriorated in the last 12 months**, as migrants and refugees are arriving in Spain with increased physical and psychological traumas. As described by a Spanish CSO:

*"The conditions of the journeys for sub-Saharan migrants are more difficult than they used to be. (...) And they arrive with more traumas than before; they are more affected by their journey".*

Interview Spanish CSO, January 2019

As respondents met for the research, each had a different story to share. As such, it is difficult to attribute the increased vulnerabilities to one specific location, issue, or experience. Data collected by IOM Spain in 2018<sup>106</sup> shows that **41% of all migrants interviewed in Spain reported to have suffered some sort of physical violence** during their journey (42% of men and 30% of women) and nearly half (48%) indicated having at least one direct experience related to human trafficking, exploitation or abuse while traveling on the WMR.

The migrants, interviewed in January 2019 in Spain, had also faced the additional hardship of travelling in the colder winter months. They mostly spoke of their apprehension about police raids, the lack of sleep, the fear of being sent to another city in the South of Morocco, and a general feeling of exhaustion during that period. As explained by CSOs,

*"One day, three Moroccans assaulted me, beat me and took my money and my phone. This happens to many migrants. Sometimes the police also evacuates the camp in order to steal our money and phones"*  
Senegalese man, 23 years old

<sup>103</sup> i.e. (I don't think one starts with i.e. -to say, "For example," Malians represented 16% of the total flow on the WMR in 2018 against 2% in 2017

<sup>104</sup> UNHCR (2019), *Desperate Journeys: Refugees and migrants arriving in Europe and at Europe's borders*

<sup>105</sup> KII UNHCR & CSOs in Spain (February 2019)

<sup>106</sup> Flow Monitoring Survey 2018

migrants became increasingly more vulnerable the longer they spent in transit.

*Box 3. The journey of a young Guinean on the WMR*

### **The story of Mohammed, 19 year old Guinean**

Mohammed comes from Conakry. He left school after the 11<sup>th</sup> grade. His parents passed away and he was living with his grandmother (*"she's very old and couldn't do anything to help me or protect me. I was always worried and always hungry"*).

He saved money to travel to Europe, intending to reach France where he thought he could maybe study but above all, feel safer. He left on his own, mainly relying on **Google Maps** with no clear ideas on the route he'd take when he started the journey. He gathered additional information during the journey either through other migrants he met, friends that were already traveling in other countries (via WhatsApp or Facebook? Messenger) and the smugglers he dealt with for specific parts of the journey.

Mohammed knew it was a risky journey before leaving but felt he had no choice but to attempt it. He first went to Mali and then chose to pass through Algeria, though he knew it was a dangerous place for sub-Saharan Africans - he thought Niger and Libya would be even riskier choices. His journey lasted around six (6) months. He travelled by bus, pick-up trucks, car and by foot, depending on the segments, but mostly in very poor conditions: *"In Algeria we first went to Bordj Badji and then I travelled in the boot of a car with other migrants for a day until Adrar. I was very scared because many people die that way, as there is no air. I kept thinking: "I don't want to die this way""*.

Mohammed faced various mistreatments during the journey such as extortion, stolen money, smugglers taking him to other destinations than what they promised, threats and insults as well as witnessed many acts of extreme violence against sub-Saharan migrants, especially in Algeria.

He entered Morocco via the mountains, at night, after walking for days without food nor water, until he reached Oujda. His time in the Nador mountains was also very traumatic and tiresome: *"Nador was very hard, I was very discouraged and at the time I was again regretting having started the trip"*.

He did not have precise plans for the rest of his journey within Europe yet, at the time of the interview.

Interview carried out in Spain in January 2019

## 5. The Central Mediterranean Route

The Central Mediterranean Route (CMR) has been the most active and most dangerous route for people trying to reach Europe in recent years. The majority of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers on this route travelled through Libya and its well-established smuggling networks. In 2016, as many as 181,400 refugees and migrants arrived in Italy<sup>107</sup> – the highest number ever recorded in Italy.

The CMR, and especially conditions in Libya, have been thoroughly investigated and monitored over the last years. Therefore, analyses from this section rely on an in-depth review of recent reports, migration data as well as inputs from key informants in order to contextualise findings made on the flow composition on the CMR in Section 3. Cross Analysis).

### 5.1. Recent developments on the Central Mediterranean Route

#### 5.1.1. Trends overview

Maritime arrivals in Italy **dropped by 80% in 2018** (compared to 2017) as the route recorded its lowest number of migrants since 2012. This is the development of a trend that started in mid-2017 (which recorded a 34% decrease in 2017 compared to 2016).<sup>108</sup> Departures from Libya, having fallen by 87 % compared to 2017, accounted for the vast majority of the decline on this route.<sup>109</sup> Tunisia replaced Libya as the main country of departure for migrants on the CMR in September, October and December 2018 (in the other months it was Libya). Table 16 provides an overview of maritime arrivals in Italy for the years considered in this study on recent developments on the route.

Table 16. Maritime arrivals in Italy and fatalities recorded on the CMR (2016-2018)<sup>110</sup>

Year	Number of arrivals in Italy	Dead or missing at sea on the CMR	Demographic breakdown
2018	23,400	1,312	18% children 10% women 72% men
2017	119,400	2,874	13% children 11% women 74% men
2016	181,400	4,248	15% children 13% women 71% men

The sharp decrease in arrivals registered in 2018 did not translate to a similar reduction in fatalities. Indeed, although the absolute number of fatalities decreased by 44 per cent in 2018, the 'rate of death' on the CMR has in fact increased as the number of individuals who reportedly died attempting to cross the Central Mediterranean Sea in 2018 dropped at a much slower rate than arrivals in Italy over the same period. Fatalities recorded in the Central Mediterranean account for **56 per cent of the dead and missing on all Mediterranean sea arrivals**.<sup>111</sup> The sharp increase in rate of death at sea on the CMR is the result of a

<sup>107</sup> Source: UNHCR (2019), *Refugees and migrants arrivals to Europe in 2018 (Mediterranean)*

<sup>108</sup> UNHCR, Italy, Sea arrivals dashboard, January-Dec 2017 & <https://migration.iom.int/europe?type=arrivals>

<sup>109</sup> Source: [Frontex](#)

<sup>110</sup> Sources: UNHCR Refugees & Migrants arrivals to Europe in 2018 (Mediterranean), UNHCR, Refugees & migrants arrivals to Europe in 2017; UNHCR (2016), *Desperate Journeys*

<sup>111</sup> UNHCR, Refugees & Migrants arrivals to Europe in 2018.

complex geopolitical situation and continuing controversy in some European countries surrounding the activities of NGO rescue vessels, which has in turn reduced search and rescue capacity in the Mediterranean. The reduction of search and rescue capacity put in place by Italy and other EU countries, through military/navy operations has also contributed to the deterioration of conditions along the CMR. Furthermore, the difficulty of finding ports for the disembarkation of rescued migrants, refugees and asylum seekers following Italy's decision to end the disembarkation in Italian ports of people rescued off the Libyan coast has rendered the situation more complex.<sup>112</sup> Following the Libyan coast guards' greater role in rescues in the SRR (despite their limited capacity) and other coordination challenges within this zone, including a lack of response to calls on some occasions, and lack of coordination with NGOs available to assist, crossing the central Mediterranean became increasingly dangerous for refugees and migrants. Estimates on missing and dead migrants are based on retrieved bodies and on information provided by rescued migrants. Less presence in the Mediterranean by SAR vessels of (EU navy and operations and NGOs) makes higher the possibility that shipwrecks with no survivors go unnoticed.

Both the decrease in arrivals and increase in rate of death are likely to continue throughout 2019. In 2019 (to 31/03) the number of arrivals to Italy reached 524 compared with 6,296 in the corresponding period in 2018.<sup>113</sup> Exceptionally high number of fatalities were reported over this short period, where 164 migrants and refugees were reported dead or missing (to 31 March 2019). When asked how to explain the important decreases registered in arrivals in Italy, key informants mentioned a number of interlinked factors, namely:

- The **Italy-Libya agreements** allowing migrants to be returned to Libyan territory and reinforcing the capacity of Libyan coast guards;<sup>114</sup>
- The **establishment of the Libyan Search and Rescue Region (SRR)** and legitimization of the coordination of rescues by the Libyan Joint Rescue Coordination Center in this area (June 2018), preventing non-governmental rescue organizations to perform rescues;<sup>115</sup> and,
- The implementation of a law criminalizing trafficking and smuggling in human beings in Niger: the **2015 Law Against the Illicit Smuggling of Migrants** ('Law 2015- 036'),<sup>116</sup> which effectively made it harder for non-Nigerien nationals to travel north of Agadez.<sup>117</sup>

Some key informants also formulated the assumption that fewer migrants choose to use the CMR due to increased levels of awareness of the grave protection risks they may face in Libya. If one-off testimonies seem to support this assumption, there is **no hard evidence that this is the case for the majority of those who aspire to migrate to Europe**, as we will see later on in this section.

In terms of the demographic composition of the flow, **higher proportions of children** have been noticed amongst arrivals in Italy compared to arrivals in Spain, 83% (or 3,536) of them being UASCs.<sup>118</sup>

### 5.1.2. Recent developments in countries of transit or departure on the Central Mediterranean Route

This subsection particularly focuses on recent trends and developments affecting the journeys on the CMR in **Libya, Tunisia and Niger** since 2016.

<sup>112</sup> UNHCR (2019), *Desperate Journeys*

<sup>113</sup> UNCHR Italy weekly snapshot - 31 Mar 2019

<sup>114</sup> [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-17-1882\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-17-1882_en.htm)

<sup>115</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/euitalylibya-disputes-over-rescues-put-lives-risk>

<sup>116</sup> République du Niger, 'Loi 2015-36 Relative au Trafic Illicite de Migrants'

<sup>117</sup> XChange (2019), *Niger Report (Part One) - Agadez: voices from a historical transit hub*

<sup>118</sup> UNHCR (2016), *Desperate Journeys*, p. 8



---

## Libya

Libya has been the main country of departure for migrants and refugees arriving in Italy by sea for several years and has accounted for 90% of arrivals in Italy in 2016, 91% in 2017 - although this trend decreased to 56% in 2018.<sup>119</sup> Refugees and migrants from East Africa tend to reach the country from the southeast (via Sudan), while refugees and migrants from West Africa arrive in Libya via Niger, Chad and Algeria.

**A decrease in arrivals in Italy from Libya does not necessarily indicate a decrease in the number of migrants attempting the journey via this route** but can also reflect a higher rate of unsuccessful attempts. As highlighted by a senior IOM Libya official, *"less people travelling to Europe or taking boats does not mean that there are less migrants. It means the opposite. They are stranded."*<sup>120</sup> A comparative analysis of the inflows to Libya may shed more light on these trends.

According to IOM Libya's DTM Mobility Tracking data, **the number of migrants present in Libya has increased from 621,709 in December 2017 to 641,398 in May 2019**, although the past 12 months have seen a gradual decrease from the peak observed in February 2018 when 704,112 migrants were tracked to be present in Libya.<sup>121</sup> Looking more specifically at **migration flows to and within Libya** over similar periods, the latest DTM data capturing the estimated number of arrivals in various regions in Libya only showed a 21% decrease between December 2018 and November-December 2017 (888 daily arrivals vs 704 daily arrivals over the same period in 2017).<sup>122</sup>

---

<sup>119</sup> UNHCR (2019), *Desperate Journeys*

<sup>120</sup>

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/jul/18/libya-migrant-centres-close-to-breaking-point-spike-new-arrivals>

<sup>121</sup> Sources: IOM Libya, DTM Migrant reports round 8, 16 and 23

<sup>122</sup> As noted in the Flow Monitoring report, due to the high mobility of migrants, it is possible that a migrant is counted at more than one flow monitoring point within the reporting period, hence the observed arrivals / departures should be treated as **an indication of the volume of movement in different parts of the country**, not as total arrivals and departures to Libya.

Though these figures do not necessarily correspond to the total numbers migrant arrivals in Libya over these periods,<sup>123</sup> they indicate a general tendency: **the volume of departures from Libya significantly decreased, the volume of arrivals to Libya did not follow this pattern to the same extent.**<sup>124</sup> An assessment carried out by REACH in March-April 2018<sup>125</sup> found that **migration routes to and within Libya have diversified** since early 2017 concurrent with a multiplication of smuggling hubs along the eastern coast of the country. According to the report: *"In the face of increased coastguard controls along the Libyan coast, the numbers of refugees and migrants held for long periods of time with limited freedom of movement in warehouses and unsafe accommodations along the coast have increased."*

Though the presence of such high numbers of refugees and migrants in Libya remains one of the most alarming trends on this route (due to the implication in terms of protection concerns<sup>126</sup>), according a key informant interviewed for this study,<sup>127</sup> the analysis of inflows to Libya must surpass the sole prism of risks and vulnerabilities to take into account migrants' agency and the 'opportunity perspective.' Libya has been an attractive destination for migrants from North and West Africa coming to find work in agriculture or construction for a long period of time. DTM Flow Monitoring Survey data for 2017 and 2018 confirms that a large segment of the migrant population in Libya intend to remain there with 59% of 72,629 migrants interviewed during that period in Libya saying they intend to remain there compared to 17% of respondents who said their intended final

---

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> In the absence of flow monitoring mechanisms in neighbouring countries (namely, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, Sudan and Morocco), it remains difficult to provide precise estimates of the outflow from Libya.

<sup>125</sup> REACH (2018), *Mixed migration routes and dynamics in Libya: The impact of EU migration measures on mixed migration in Libya*

<sup>126</sup> OHCHR (2018), *"Report on the human rights situation of migrants and refugees in Libya"*

<sup>127</sup> KII MMC (February 2019)

destination was Italy (followed by 6.8% and 3.7% who said their intended final destinations were France and Germany respectively).

Parts of the arrivals to Libya and increases in migrant population in Libya may also be attributed to longstanding mechanisms of **circular migration** (especially for Chadians, Sudanese and Nigeriens) or long-term transits, with many sub-Saharan refugees and migrants working there to fund a future trip to Italy, even since the civil war started. The current political climate and absence of rule of law in many parts of Libya may be perceived as providing more prospects for irregular migrants to find work than in other countries with stronger controls from the police and authorities and higher risks of deportation.

Recent occurrences of seasonal migration were reported in Murzuq,<sup>128</sup> Aljufra (where availability of job opportunities in agriculture and other manual labour sectors was reported to be good, according to the Libya DTM team), Tobruk (providing labour opportunities for Egyptian migrants), and Sebha (which was reported as being one of the most dynamic migrant destination and transit points). Meanwhile, in places like Al Kufra increased enforcement of control by the local authorities triggered the departure of some migrants.<sup>129</sup>

**The main nationalities of arrivals in Libya** (recorded by the IOM Libya DTM team in recent Migrant reports<sup>130</sup>) have **not varied overall between 2017 and 2018**. There are still high numbers of nationals from Egypt, Niger, Sudan, Nigeria and Somalia entering Libya. This said, small differences with regards to the nationalities of arrival can be noted. In 2018, nationals from Ghana, Guinea, Tunisia and Ethiopia are no longer listed as main nationalities of arrival while those from Burkina-Faso, Bangladesh and Mauritania now appear to be amongst the main nationalities of arrival.

---

<sup>128</sup> Nigerien migrants were reportedly travelling to Libya after the cultivation season in Niger had ended, as job opportunities were expected to be better in Libya (IOM Libya, DTM Migrant reports round 23).

<sup>129</sup> Source: IOM Libya, DTM Migrant reports round 8, 16 and 23

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

As for the continued flows of migrants **transiting to Libya**, key informants indicated that these may be due to:

- a) a lack of information on policy changes;
- b) according to a recent study, *"albeit the severe protection risks and increasingly more limited economic opportunities refugees and migrants face in Libya, reasons for migration to Libya of newly arrived individuals had not changed, as the situation in countries of origin reportedly had not improved (...) respondents still felt that Libya remained the most attractive destination for refugees and migrants in the region, both to work and to transit to Italy;*<sup>131</sup> and,
- c) the **lasting presence of large and dynamic smuggling networks.**

It should be highlighted once more that most of the protections concerns for migrants and refugees traveling on the CMR occur in Libya. Potential risks of arbitrary detention, kidnapping, abuse, torture and slavery are causing grave concerns amongst development and humanitarian actors. A variety of governmental and non-governmental organisations such the [OHCHR](#), [IOM](#), UNHCR and [Oxfam](#) released press statements or reports highlighting the evolving situation for migrants crossing Libya and the Mediterranean since 2017. OHCHR states that migrants and refugees crossing Libya are subjected to *"unimaginable horrors"*.<sup>132</sup>

---

<sup>131</sup> Source: IMPACT (2019), *Mixed migration routes and dynamics in Libya, May-December 2018*

<sup>132</sup>

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24037&LangID=E>

---

## Tunisia

In 2018, with 5,200 Tunisians having arrived in Italy Tunisia became the top nationality of arrival on the CMR though in absolute numbers Tunisian arrivals have decreased by 16% since 2017. Most refugees and migrants departing from Tunisia embarked from Zarzis, followed by Sfax and Kerkennah, normally reaching the island of Lampedusa. By way of reaction to these rising numbers the European Union pledged to provide financial support to Tunisia to help them improve their border management in August 2018.<sup>133</sup>

None of the available evidence indicates that the increase in departures from Tunisia is related to the current restrictions in Libya. Nor does it predict that Tunisia has (or will) become more a prominent transit country for sub-Saharan migrants and refugees, for the following reasons:

- Departures from Tunisia are almost exclusively of Tunisian nationals (as demonstrated in Section 3);
- There is no official evidence that large numbers of sub-Saharan migrants going through Libya are crossing the border from Libya to Tunisia according to key informants, not even in the most recent months or since the escalation of conflict to take Tripoli that has indeed caused high figures of internal displacement; and,
- In a recent assessment carried out by REACH in Tunisia with sub-Saharan African respondents, only a minority wanted to go to Europe.<sup>134</sup> This demonstrates that Tunisia has not yet become a new transit hub for migration to Europe a consequence of a re-rerouting from Libya, according to the report.

The 2017 increase in the numbers of young Tunisians migrating (compared to 2016) appears to be related to internal socio-economic instability, disappointments with the promised democratic

transition and the rising unemployment rate, which in 2017 among youth, reached 36%.

Tunisia has also traditionally been a **country of destination** for sub-Saharan Africans (particularly Ivorians), who benefit from a visa free entry scheme and for those wanting to access better educational opportunities.

They however face high penalties if they overstay their visas – according to the above-mentioned REACH study, these penalties could be one of the primary reasons behind irregular journeys via boat to Europe for sub-Saharanans.<sup>135</sup>

Amongst respondents, most intended to reach Tunisia when they started the journey, only a few came with the intention to transit to Europe or elsewhere in the region. According to the report: *"Those who came to Tunisia with the intention to transit to Europe had either: (1) previously transited through Libya to reach Europe from there and then crossed into Tunisia, (2) had tried to reach Libya from Tunisia to then leave via boat to Italy but did not succeed, or (3) intended to apply for a European visa from Tunisia."*<sup>136</sup>

According to key informants in Tunisia, migrants that are in Tunisia are usually well informed of the conditions in Libya and know it's best to avoid it.<sup>137</sup>

---

<sup>133</sup> [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-18-4366\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-18-4366_en.pdf)

<sup>134</sup> REACH (2018), *Tunisia, country of destination and transit for sub-Saharan African migrants*

<sup>135</sup> REACH (2018), *Tunisia, country of destination and transit for sub-Saharan African migrants*

<sup>136</sup> Ibid

<sup>137</sup> Interviews with IOM Tunisia, December 2018

---

## Niger

A large majority of refugees and migrants arrived in Libya from Niger over the period under review in this study.<sup>138</sup> Though the decreases in arrivals in Italy are not necessarily correlated to decreases in arrivals in Libya (as we saw above), it is likely that recent developments in Niger had an impact on the number of arrivals to Italy for some nationalities, such as Nigerians.

Several key informants mentioned it might be too early to estimate the precise impact of the enforcement of Law 2015-036's (which has resulted in a wave of arrests of smugglers and confiscation of their vehicles) on Mediterranean migratory flows in general, but IOM reported a significant decrease in the number of migrants passing through observation points since 2017.<sup>139</sup>

More recently (March 2019), IOM Niger notes that *"the decrease in flows is possibly linked to the upsurge of insecurity in the northern part of Libya, but also to increasing number in attacks by armed groups in the area around the border between Chad, Niger and Libya, which is a 'no man's land'."*

According to a report about the city of Agadez, a major transit hub for many years, migrants who still undertake the journey face prices that are up to five times higher than a year ago and human rights abuses have become more frequent in the Agadez ghettos where migrants stay.<sup>140</sup>

More migrants are being abandoned in the desert, as smugglers have resorted to routes less travelled. Moreover, the report notes that *"given the migration industry's economic importance to the*

*region, the EU-supported policies have had detrimental consequences for the Agadez population."*<sup>141</sup>

---

<sup>138</sup> DTM Libya

<sup>139</sup> Source: IOM DTM, Flow Monitoring Surveys; <https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/ar/node/100043947>

<sup>140</sup> Molenaar, F. (2018), *Migration policies and development: The dilemma of Agadez*. Great Insights Magazine - Volume 7, Issue 1.

---

<sup>141</sup> For more details on recent developments in Niger, please refer to the following study: XChange (2019), *Niger Report (Part One) - Agadez: voices from a historical transit hub*

## 5.2. Flows, nationality composition and variations on the Central Mediterranean Route

Along with the sharp 2018 decrease, important changes in the demographic composition of refugees and migrants arriving in Italy were also recorded since 2016, as illustrated in table 17.

Table 17. Most common countries of origin of refugees and migrants' arrivals in Italy (2016-2018)<sup>142</sup>

2018				2017			2016		
Rank	CoO	Number	%	CoO	Number	%	CoO	Number	%
1	Tunisia	5,250	22%	Nigeria	18,100	15%	Nigeria	37,551	21%
2	Eritrea <sup>143</sup>	3,200	14%	Guinea	9,700	8%	Eritrea	20,718	11%
3	Iraq	1,750	7%	Cote d'Ivoire	9,500	8%	Guinea	13,345	7%
4	Sudan	1,600	7%	Bangladesh	9,000	8%	Côte d'Ivoire	12,396	7%
5	Pakistan	1,600	7%	Mali	7,100	6%	The Gambia	11,929	7%
6	Nigeria	1,250	5%	Eritrea	7,000	6%	Senegal	10,327	6%
7	Algeria	1,200	5%	Sudan	6,200	5%	Mali	10,010	6%
8	Côte d'Ivoire	1,100	5%	Tunisia	6,100	5%	Sudan	9,327	5%
9	Mali	900	4%	Morocco	6,000	5%	Bangladesh	8,131	4%
10	Guinea	810	4%	Senegal	6,000	5%	Somalia	7,281	4%
11	Other	4,740	20%	Other	34,700	29%	Other	40,385	22%

Relevant findings that can be drawn from the analysis of the flow composition on the CMR in 2017 and 2018 and feed into the cross analysis of recent developments on the WMR and the CMR (Section 3), are the following:

- The numbers of arrivals from **Nigeria** and other **West African countries** (especially from Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Senegal) and **Morocco significantly decreased** in 2018;
- This trend began in 2017, when the number of Nigerian arrivals had more than halved compared to 2016.
- The number of Senegalese arrivals decreased by 40%, and arrivals from Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea and Mali decreased by 23%, 27% and 29% respectively. Senegalese, Ivorian, Guinean and Malian arrivals also dropped as a proportion of arrivals in Italy by 87% to 92%;
- **Tunisians** and **Eritreans**<sup>144</sup> were the two most represented nationalities on this route in 2018, together accounting for more than one third of all detected migrants even though the **numbers for both**

<sup>142</sup> Sources: UNHCR Refugees & Migrants arrivals to Europe in 2018 (Mediterranean), UNHCR, Refugees & migrants arrivals to Europe in 2017; UNHCR (2016), *Desperate Journeys*

<sup>143</sup> Information on nationality provided in this report is based on the nationality declared by migrants and as reported by national authorities at arrival.

<sup>144</sup> Information on nationality provided in this report is based on the nationality declared by migrants and as reported by national authorities at arrival.

**nationalities also decreased in absolute terms.** Proportionally there were more Tunisians than in 2017, representing 22% of sea arrivals, compared to 5% in 2017.

UNHCR estimates that a third of the people who arrived in Europe via the Central Mediterranean route in 2018 were likely to be in need of international protection.<sup>145</sup>

The CMR is (and has been in the past several years) the most dangerous route for migrants trying to reach Europe. If 2018 saw an increase in rate of death across the Mediterranean, it is estimated that many others died on their way across the desert and in detention centres.

According to UNHCR, among the 15,976 migrants and refugees who were rescued in the territorial waters of Libya in 2018, 85% were disembarked in Libya,<sup>146</sup> where they faced detention in appalling conditions (including limited access to food and outbreaks of disease at some facilities, along with several deaths).<sup>147</sup>

OHCHR found that **29,000** migrants and refugees, including women and children, were **intercepted or rescued** by the LCG and **transferred to detention centres** in Libya run by the Libyan Directorate for Combatting Illegal Migration (DCIM) between January 2017 and September 2018. They estimate **6,800 migrants and refugees were in detention** in western Libya, including some **3,700** asylum-seekers or refugees as of 18 September 2018.<sup>148</sup> UNHCR and IOM have taken strong stances to express that Libya should not be designated as a place of safety for the purpose of disembarkation at several occasions.<sup>149</sup> According to the 2018 OHCHR report on the human rights situation of migrants and refugees in Libya,<sup>150</sup> protection challenges in Libya stem from the following factors:

- The proliferation of armed groups in control of large swathes of Libya's territory, borders, and key installations;
- A climate of lawlessness provides fertile ground for trafficking and smuggling;
- Weak institutions, including the justice system;
- The absence of vetting processes when incorporating armed groups into State institutions;
- The failure to address racial discrimination and xenophobia especially against Sub-Saharan African migrants and refugees; and,
- The "*near total impunity*" for human rights violations and abuses.

Human rights violations and abuses against refugees and migrants in Libya reported by UNHCR and OHCHR include:<sup>151</sup>

- Unlawful killings – right to life;
- Arbitrary arrest and detention;
- Torture and other ill-treatment;
- Inadequate detention conditions;
- Rape and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence; and,
- Slavery and forced labour, extortion, exploitation and trafficking.

---

<sup>145</sup> UNHCR (2019), *Desperate Journeys*

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> UNHCR (2019), *Desperate Journeys*. As pointed out in the report: "This is in stark contrast to the first half of the year, when 54% of those rescued in what became the Libyan SRR were disembarked in Europe."

<sup>148</sup> OHCHR (2018), "*Desperate and Dangerous: Report on the human rights situation of migrants and refugees in Libya*"

<sup>149</sup> [IOM Statement](#): Protecting Migrants in Libya Must be Our Primary Focus (April 2019); UNHCR, UNHCR Position on Returns to Libya - Update II, September 2018

<sup>150</sup> OHCHR (2018), "*Desperate and Dangerous: Report on the human rights situation of migrants and refugees in Libya*"

<sup>151</sup> UNHCR (2019), *Desperate Journeys*; OHCHR (2018), "*Desperate and Dangerous: Report on the human rights situation of migrants and refugees in Libya*"



There were however a few recent developments to respond to this grave crisis:

- As of February 2019, 2,491 persons had been evacuated to Niger for repatriation to their home countries as part of the **Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM)** since November 2017;<sup>152</sup>
- A **Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP)**<sup>153</sup> was launched in Tripoli by the UN, its aid partners and the interim Government of Libya to facilitate urgent life-saving assistance to around 550,000 individuals affected by the conflict in Libya in 2019; and,
- A **Gathering and Departure Facility (GDF)** for vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers was opened in Tripoli in December 2018.<sup>154</sup>

Key informants reported less protection concerns in **Tunisia**. The most reported challenge for sub-Saharan migrants interviewed in Tunisia for the REACH study was access to legal documentation and the inability to legally stay in the country in the longer term.<sup>155</sup>

---

<sup>152</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/niger/niger-country-operation-update-february-2019>

<sup>153</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/libya/2019-libya-humanitarian-response-plan-january-december-2019>

<sup>154</sup> Managed by UNHCR, partner LibAid and the Libyan Ministry of Interior. So far in 2019, 580 refugees have been evacuated through the GDF (April 2019) <https://reliefweb.int/report/libya/unhcr-update-libya-19-april-2019>

<sup>155</sup> REACH (2018), *Tunisia, country of transit and destination for sub-Saharan African migrants*

## 6. Conclusion

---

The analysis of the composition of the flows on the CMR and WMR demonstrated that there weren't enough elements to conclude to a complete shift between the two routes despite some nationalities seeming to have clearly favoured the WMR to the CMR (Guineans and Malians, as well as Moroccans, Ivorians and Senegalese to some extent) since mid-2017. However, the various trends summarized in this report derive from many different factors which have had an impact on human mobility in the region, such as the changes in policies, approaches to migration management and socioeconomic conditions in transit or departure countries, and precise links are difficult to establish. What is clear is that old and new smuggling networks carry on operating along the two routes, and it is still too early to determine the long-term impact of the new policies put in place in the region.

It also stems from the research that having access to information on the risks via one of the two routes does not seem to have major impacts on refugees and migrants' decisions-making processes: their focus appears to be centred around opportunities rather than risks.

The most important takeaway from this report is the confirmation the **conditions of travel on both the CMR and WMR have gravely deteriorated** in the last few years and the journeys have become even more perilous. The CMR should remain the main focus of concerns in this respect, and especially the situation of those within and departing from Libya, as the situation in this country remains full of uncertainties. This said, the testimonies gathered from those who had recently travelled via the WMR should also raise alarms and call for immediate and coordinated responses.

Though this report was more focused on general trends and flows and could not dive into the specifics of the demographic composition of the flows, the increase in UASC and women on the routes would also deserve a more in-depth examination. Another trend which is not discussed thoroughly in this study but was reported widely by key informants is the increased difficulties migration actors face in accessing accurate data on human mobility in the region (with some countries having adopted a more restrictive approach to media coverage and data sharing on the issue) as well as on fatalities.

Whether these trends on the CMR and WMR are likely to continue in 2019 will depend on the policy on a variety of factors such as:

- The security conditions in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, the Lake Chad basin, Nigeria's Middle Belt and Libya – a deterioration of the conditions may trigger more regional displacements and increased use of the migratory routes to Europe;
- Measures that may be put in place in Spain and Morocco
- Upcoming political developments in Algeria; and,
- The impact of the GCM.

Most observers formulate the prediction that they are bound to continue as the drivers of displacements have remained the same or even deteriorated in most of the main countries of origin of the refugees and migrants attempting to cross the Mediterranean.

## Bibliography

---

### Selected Key References

- Amnesty International (2018), *Forced to leave: Stories of injustice against migrants in Algeria*
- Carling, J., and F. Collins, (2017), *Aspirations, Desire and Drivers of Migration*. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 909–26
- Clingendael (2018), *Caught in the middle: A human rights and peace-building approach to migration governance in the Sahel*
- de Haas, Hein & Czaika, Mathias & Laurence Flahaux, Marie & Mahendra, Edo & Natter, Katharina & Vezzoli, Simona & Villares-Varela, Maria. (2018). *International migration: Trends, determinants and policy effects*.
- European Commission (2017a), *Migration on the Central Mediterranean Route: Managing Flows, Saving Lives*
- European Union (2017), *European Union Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment from the Horn of Africa to Europe*
- Frontex Risk Analysis: 2018 & 2019
- Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime (2017), *Integrated Responses to Human Smuggling*
- I. Alexander, *Forty-seven people died crossing the Mediterranean in a wooden boat last month. This is their story*, [15 March 2018](#)
- IMPACT (2019), *Mixed migration routes and dynamics in Libya, May-December 2018*
- IOM (August 2018), *Mixed Migration Flows in The Mediterranean - Compilation of Available Data and Information*
- IOM/Altai (2013), *Mixed Migration: Libya at the Crossroads - Mapping of Migration Routes from Africa to Europe and Drivers of Migration in Post-revolution Libya*
- IOM/Altai (2015), *Migration Trends Across the Mediterranean: Connecting the Dots, for IOM*
- IOM/Altai (2017), *Mixed Migration Trends in Libya: Changing Dynamics and Protection Challenges*
- IRC (2017), *Pushing the boundaries- Insights into the EU's response to mixed migration on the Central Mediterranean Route*
- Lindsey, Ursula (2017), *Studying new forms of migration in Morocco*
- Liska Wittenberg (2017), *Managing Mixed Migration: The Central Mediterranean Route to Europe*, New York: International Peace Institute, April 2017.
- Mhub (2017), *Youth on the Move*
- MHub (2018), *The Central Mediterranean Route: the deadliest migration route*
- Mhub, Country briefs (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia)
- Mhub, Monthly Trend Bulletins (2018 and 2019)
- Migration Policy Institute (2017), *European leaders pursue migration deals with north African countries*
- Mixed Migration Center (2018) *Young and on the move in West Africa*
- Mixed Migration Center (2018), *Protection concerns of people on the move across West Africa and Libya*
- Mixed Migration Center (2018), *The "Shift" to the Western Mediterranean Migration Route: Myth or Reality?*
- Mixed Migration Center (2019), *Hype or hope? Evidence on use of smartphones & social media in mixed migration*

Mixed Migration Center (2019), *Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: West Africa (Q1)*

Mixed Migration Center (2019), *Taking root. The complex economics of the global smuggling economy*, and UNHCR/Altai (2017), *Mixed Migration Trends in Libya*

Mixed Migration Center West Africa (2019), *4Mi Snapshot - Access to information of refugees and migrants on the move in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso*

Molenaar, F. (2018), *Migration policies and development: The dilemma of Agadez*. Great Insights Magazine - Volume 7, Issue 1.

OHCHR (2018), *Desperate and Dangerous: Report on the human rights situation of migrants and refugees in Libya*

REACH/Mercy Corps (2018), *Tunisia, country of transit and destination for sub-Saharan African migrants*

REACH/UNHCR (2018), *Mixed migration routes and dynamics in Libya: The impact of EU migration measures on mixed migration in Libya*.

RMMS (2017), *Mixed Migration in West Africa Data, Routes and Vulnerabilities of People on the move*

Schapedonk, J., (2012), *Turbulent Trajectories: African Migrants on Their Way to the European Union*, Societies 2

UNDOC (2018), *Global study on smuggling of migrant*

UNHCR (2019), *Desperate Journeys: Refugees and migrants arriving in Europe and at Europe's borders*

UNHCR (Jan-Aug 2018), *Desperate Journeys: Refugees and migrants arriving in Europe*

UNHCR (Jan-Sept 2017), *Desperate Journeys: Refugees and migrants arriving in Europe*

Warwick (2017), *Crossing the Mediterranean Sea by Boat: Mapping and Documenting Migratory Journeys and Experiences*, Final Project Report, 4 May 2017 V. Squire, A. Dimitriadi, N. Perkowski, M. Pisani, D. Stevens, N. Vaughan-Williams

WODC (2016), *Raising awareness, changing behavior?*

World Bank (June 2018), *Asylum seekers in the European Union*

XChange (2019), *Niger Report (Part One) - Agadez: voices from a historical transit hub*

## Key data

Displacement Tracking Matrix: <https://www.globaldtm.info/fr/>

Flow Monitoring Surveys in Spain and Italy (2018)

Frontex : <https://frontex.europa.eu/along-eu-borders/migratory-map/>

IOM: <http://migration.iom.int/europe/>

Mixed Migration Center: <http://www.mixedmigration.org>

Mixed Migration Hub: <http://www.mixedmigrationhub.org>

Open Migration: <http://openmigration.org/en/infographics/#all>

UNHCR: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5226>

## Annex 1. Interview questionnaire

---

### Introduction

Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_.

I am an independent researcher. I work on behalf of the International Organization for Migration. Its primary purpose is to uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

I am conducting interviews to understand the experience of persons displaced in this area. There is no right or wrong answer, I would like to know about your life and what you think and remember. The survey will take around forty minutes of your time.

We are not here to provide humanitarian assistance at this time or help or assist you with anything related to your migration status. Your answers may not directly benefit you, but they will help organizations to better programme humanitarian responses for those who undertake such journeys. Please note that this interview is not related or connected to your possible claims with the authorities.

We will not keep record of your name, any information shared is anonymous and totally confidential. None of your answers will be shared with anyone else and it will not be possible to personally identify your answers. We do not believe that this survey puts you at risk; however, there may be risk that we are unaware of.

If you do not understand a question, please ask me to explain it to you. It is important that we have some privacy for our conversation. You are free to stop at any time during the interview. If a question makes you uncomfortable, we will skip the question and go to the next question. You are not obliged to answer any question, and you can stop at any moment you like.

Are you willing to participate? Participant confirms: yes / no.

<b>Respondent</b>	
<b>Interview location</b>	
<b>Contact details</b>	
<b>Date of interview</b>	
<b>Profile</b>	

Choose category according to answers given in questionnaire:

*Regular Worker, Irregular Worker, Asylum Seeker, Refugee (status determined by ?), In transit*

<b>I. Respondent profile</b>
1. Age
2. Gender
3. Country of origin
4. Region and city/ village of origin
5. Native language
6. What is your marital status?
7. Do you have children?
8. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
<b>II. Displacement profile</b>
9. How long have you been living here/in this location? How long ago did you arrive in the country?
10. How did you enter this country? Transportation means? Official border post?
11. Did you seek asylum? Do you want to ask asylum in another country?
12. Where were you just before? For how long?
13. When did you leave your country of origin?
14. Why did you leave?
15. Please share your story: Story at the origin / Which country were you aiming for at first?
16. Did you consider other options than leaving? Please explain
17. Why did you decide to go where you are now?
18. Do you think it has become easier or harder for migrants to make the journey to Morocco/Spain? Has it influenced your decision to go take this route?
<b>III. Journey</b>
19. How long was your trip from beginning until you arrived in your current location? (number of days or months)
20. Who did you leave with?
21. What were your sources of information when you were planning your journey / about the transit countries? Which of these were the most reliable?
22. Before you left, did you hear about potential risks/dangers associated to irregular migration, how and what did you know about it?
23. Who helped you organize your journey and how?
24. What did they tell you about the journey?
25. Why did you decide on this route?
26. List all the mode of transport you used in Morocco.
27. Please detail your itinerary
28. If you made a stop for more than a month: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please explain why you stopped</li> <li>• The location (region/ village)</li> <li>• The duration of your stay</li> </ul>
29. How much did you pay for the journey so far?
30. Could you tell me more about your experiences during the trip and had you expected the types of things you encountered?
31. Did you face any of the following mistreatment along the route? (answer choices: I have been detained. If yes by whom; I have been beaten. If yes, by whom; Abducted against my will; Asked for more money than originally agreed; Abandoned in the middle of nowhere; Abandoned in the desert; Deported; Refoulement; Extortion; Forced recruitment; Money Stolen; Taken my money but did not take me for the trip; Beaten; Threatened / Insulted; Left without water)
32. How long would you like to stay in Spain?
33. If staying in Spain, do you know where you would like to settle?
34. If in transit, where would you like to go? Why this country in particular?
35. Where do you live here?
36. With whom?
37. Do you have enough money to meet your expenses?

38. Have you worked since you arrived in Spain?
39. Do you deal with your own finance or does someone take care of this for you? If the latter, who?
40. If you are looking for a job and don't have one, what kind of difficulties do you face?
41. What are the main problems migrants like you face in Spain today? How do you think life in Spain has changed for migrants in the past year?
42. What are the main challenges that you face personally now? What is the most urgent type of support you need at the moment?
43. Have you received any support for these issues while in Spain? If yes, what kind of support have you received?
44. From whom did you receive support since your arrival?
45. Are you aware of other support mechanisms available in (your location) in Spain? Which one(s)
46. Do you feel people who are migrants from other countries have accessed to the services you are deprived of or treated differently?
47. How would you rate your quality of life compared to that of your previous location: much better, somewhat better, about the same, somewhat worse, much worse?
48. How often do you interact with other migrants from your country of origin that are currently traveling as well? How do you interact with other migrants taking the journey?
49. What types of information do you exchange with them?
50. (now & before during the journey)
51. How often do you interact with your community back in your country of origin?
52. How do you currently get information about the current situation in the region you fled?
53. How do you currently get information about the current situation in the region you are aiming for?
54. Are you aware of any risks in the journey to Europe?
55. What types of knowledge/information do you share or feel is important for you to share with others attempting the journey?
56. Do you know how much it costs to go to Europe? If yes, how much
57. Do you think you will be able to build a good life in Europe? Why?
58. Do you know other migrants like yourself who were able to go to Europe and build a good life there?



**Investigating evolving profiles, intentions,  
experiences and vulnerabilities of people  
on the move on Central Mediterranean and  
Western Mediterranean Routes in 2018**

RESEARCH  
STUDY  
JULY 2019

