



MONTHLY TREND REPORT

COVERING MIXED MIGRATION TO, THROUGH & FROM NORTH AFRICA

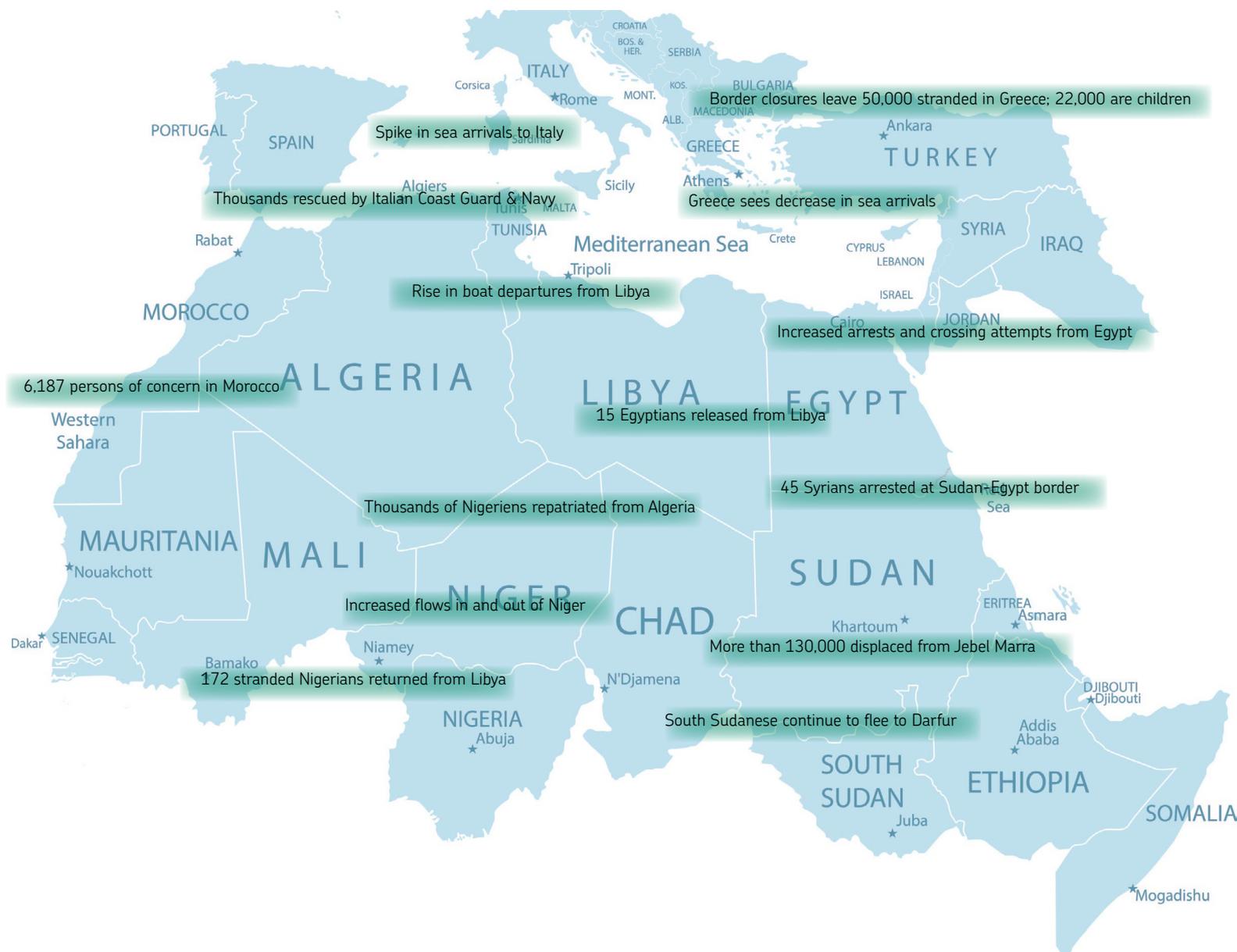
About: MHUB is the regional knowledge hub and secretariat for the North Africa Mixed Migration Task Force, comprising of DRC, IOM, OHCHR, RMMS, Save the Children, UNHCR and UNODC. It promotes a human rights-based approach to ensure the protection of people moving in mixed and complex flows to, through and from North Africa.

Scope: This bulletin covers mixed migration trends in Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Niger, Sudan, Tunisia, Greece and Italy.

Terminology: Throughout this bulletin the terms migrant, refugee and asylum seeker are used together to cover all those comprising mixed migration flows. If the original source specifies a particular category, the relevant term will be used.

Sources: Data is drawn from a wide variety of sources, including government, civil society and media.

HIGHLIGHTS



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For updates on the Horn of Africa, visit [RMMS](#)

REGIONAL

POLICY

- **EU-Turkey Deal:** On 18 March, a landmark deal was struck between the EU and Turkey, in an attempt to regulate the movement of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers crossing the Aegean Sea. Under the agreement, which took effect on 20 March, all new irregular arrivals in Greece would be sent back to Turkey if they do not apply for asylum or if their asylum claim is rejected. For every Syrian being returned to Turkey from the Greek islands, another Syrian will be resettled to the EU from Turkey directly.
- **Deal Controversy:** The “one for one” deal has proven highly controversial and has been criticised by aid agencies as inhumane. UNHCR, Médecins Sans Frontières, the International Rescue Committee, the Norwegian Refugee Council and Save the Children all announced that they would be [suspending their activities](#) in Greece following the signing of the EU-Turkey agreement, so as to not be involved in the blanket expulsion of refugees.
- **Deal Implementation:** Widespread concern has been expressed about Greece’s capacity to effectively implement the deal while upholding asylum seekers’ rights. On 4 April, the first group of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers were [deported from Greece](#) under the EU-Turkey deal. The group of 202- the majority of Pakistani nationality- arrived at the Turkish port of Dikili in three boats. The following day, UNHCR expressed concern that 13 of those deported had not been allowed to formally register their [asylum claims](#). As the first three boats departed Greece for Turkey under the deal, IOM’s Turkey office organised the [resettlement](#) of 74 Syrian nationals from Turkey to Europe - 32 to Germany, 31 to the Netherlands and 11 to Finland.
- **Detection at Sea:** On 22 March, members of the European Parliament’s Committee on Fisheries announced that the [European Fisheries Control Agency](#) (EFCA) will provide support to EU authorities to detect vessels carrying migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

BORDERS AND ROUTES

The routes used by refugees, migrants and asylum seekers continue to shift in response to a series of border closures and policy changes within the EU.

- **North Africa:** Libya and Egypt have seen a spike in attempted crossings to Italy, likely resulting from the EU-Turkey deal deterring arrivals into Greece. IOM has also reported that an increasing number of Syrians are finding alternative routes through Mauritania and Mali. Meanwhile the number of migrants leaving Niger continues to rise; media reports note that thousands are journeying from [Agadez](#) across the Sahara and on to Libya.
- **Western Balkans Route:** Prior to the signing of the EU-Turkey deal, the popular Western Balkans route which provided passage for people moving from Greece to Northern Europe was effectively closed off. On 9 March, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Croatia and Slovenia announced the closure of their borders, effectively [shutting down the Western Balkans route](#). With the EU-Turkey deal pending, on 15 March between 2,000 and 5,000 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers stationed in Idomeni, Greece attempted to [cross the border](#) into Macedonia. However, they were stopped by police and most were returned to Greece the following day.
- **Eastern Balkans Route:** On 10 March, Turkey ratified an [agreement](#) with Bulgaria and Greece enhancing cooperation to combat irregular activities- including irregular migration- and facilitating the legitimate movement of people and goods. The agreement aims to enhance regional border cooperation and increase authorities’ abilities to combat serious crimes occurring at the common borders.
- **Smuggling Routes:** According to *The Guardian*, following the EU-Turkey deal, smugglers have begun to re-advertise [trips between Turkey and Italy](#), indicating an increased demand for alternative routes in light of new restrictions imposed by the deal. Additionally, Turkish police detained 20 people in an [anti-smuggling](#) operation. The suspected smugglers - citizens of Turkey, Syria and Iraq - were believed to have smuggled people across the Aegean Sea.
- **New routes:** Italy has raised fears that the closure of the Balkan route will prompt thousands of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers to reopen an old [smugglers’ pathway](#) from Albania across the Adriatic Sea to Apulia in Southern Italy. This sea route was previously used in the 1990s by thousands of Albanian migrants.

ALGERIA

Algerians in the Balkans

- Between 8 October 2015 and 29 March 2016, IOM field staff interviewed 79 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers of Algerian nationality on the move through the Balkans. [Survey findings](#) published on 31 March indicated

that the majority of these Algerians (86%) left their country for economic reasons and intended to migrate to France (41%) or Germany (37%). 77% of respondents reported having paid between USD 1,000 and USD 5,000 for the journey.

EGYPT

Mediterranean Crossing Attempts

- According to Egyptian police, on 25 March, 20 individuals (14 Egyptians and 6 Sudanese) were [arrested](#) while attempting to cross the Mediterranean to Italy. On 31 March, Egyptian border guards [recovered the bodies](#) of nine individuals believed to have drowned trying to cross the Mediterranean into Europe. On 1 April, the Egyptian Coast Guard foiled an attempted crossing from Edco City to Italy. The 14 Egyptian nationals on board were arrested after having allegedly paid smugglers [30,000 Egyptian Pounds](#) for the journey. It was reported on 7 April that another boat was intercepted by the Egyptian Navy at Rashid City, also bound for Italy. The [14 Egyptian nationals](#) on board aged between 12 and 20 years were arrested.

Ministry however denied ISIS involvement and claimed the individuals were detained for illegal migration. This claim refuted by the workers' family members, who insisted the group had entered Libya legally to work in the real estate sector.

Egyptians Released from Libya

- On 16 March, 15 Egyptian nationals reportedly kidnapped by ISIS forces in Libya were [released](#). The Egyptian Foreign

Detention of Syrians

- 45 Syrians who were attempting to cross the Egypt-Sudan border were [apprehended](#) by Red Sea border guards on 14 March. The group had been abandoned by smugglers at the border and lost their way in the eastern desert near Marsa Alam, Egypt.

Returns from Syria

- According to Egypt's acting ambassador to Syria, the Egyptian delegation and IOM coordinated the [return](#) of seven Egyptian nationals from Damascus on 8 March.

LIBYA

Increased Boat Departures

- The month of March saw a [spike in departures](#) from Libya. Between 15 and 17 March, an estimated 3,100 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers were rescued from small rubber dinghies in international waters near Libya. Three bodies were found during the rescue operations. Italian officials attribute the surge in crossings from Libya to good weather conditions. On 27 March, the Libyan Coast Guard intercepted a further [three dinghies](#) carrying 600 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers – all reportedly African – off the coast of Sabratha.

months in detention centres, most of whom had been apprehended as they were trying to cross to Europe.

Nigerian Returnees

- On 10 March, IOM facilitated the return of [172 stranded](#) Nigerian migrants, refugees and asylum seekers (including six women) from Libya. 142 of the group had spent

Fleeing Abuse in Libya

- An increasing number of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are leaving Libya due to [police and militia abuse](#). Some African migrants reported having been beaten and forced to work without pay, among other forms of mistreatment.

Combating Illegal Migration

- This month, members of the Libyan Coast Guard, Ministry of Defence and the Directorate for Combating Illegal Migration participated in a three-day [training](#) on identifying vulnerable migrants and combating human trafficking in Tunis, organised by IOM Libya.

MOROCCO

Moroccans on the Balkan Route

- Between 8 October 2015 and 29 March 2016, IOM field staff interviewed 432 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers of Moroccan nationality on the move through the Balkans. [Survey results](#) released on 31 March found that the majority of these Moroccans (93%) left their country for economic reasons. Many intended to migrate to Italy (27%) or Germany (24%). 88% of respondents reported having paid between USD 1,000 and USD 5,000 for the journey.

asylum seekers. The majority of the refugee population are Syrian (68%) and Yemeni (11%). Of the asylum seeker population, the majority are nationals of Cameroon (21%), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (17%) and Ivory Coast (16%).

Refugees and Asylum Seekers

- According to UNHCR, as of March there are [6,187 persons of concern](#) in Morocco, including 4,277 refugees and 1,910

Training on Migrant Smuggling

- UNODC held a 3-day training workshop on investigating migrant smuggling for 24 officers of the Royal Gendarmerie and National Security of Morocco. The training included a session on protection and assistance needs of smuggled migrants.

Large Numbers Moving Through Niger

- The number of people moving through Niger continues to rise this month. [Data collected](#) by IOM during March found the number of incoming migrants, refugees and asylum seekers to Niger reached 4,912 – a 230% increase from February’s figures. The outgoing numbers also grew, with 8,372 people departing in March, an 85% increase from the previous month. IOM data collected at [Arlit and Séguédine](#) found that 45% of those passing through were heading towards Libya, while 22% were moving towards Algeria or the mines of the Nigerien desert. In a recent report on Agadez, the BBC reported that in the last year, over 100,000 are estimated to have crossed the Sahara from Agadez. Smugglers are reportedly paid up to USD 250 per person to carry passengers across the desert.

Opening of Agadez Migrant Information Office

- Due to the large numbers moving through Agadez every day, IOM Niger announced the opening of a [migrant information office](#) in Agadez. The office will serve as an information hub for West African migrants, refugees and asylum seekers traveling to Libya, Algeria and Europe. It will also provide counseling to potential migrants and those in transit, as well as returnees.

Counter-Trafficking Training

- In attempt to prevent trafficking from Agadez, the National Agency Against Human Trafficking (NAHT) and IOM organised two [counter-trafficking](#) trainings in March for border agents in Agadez.

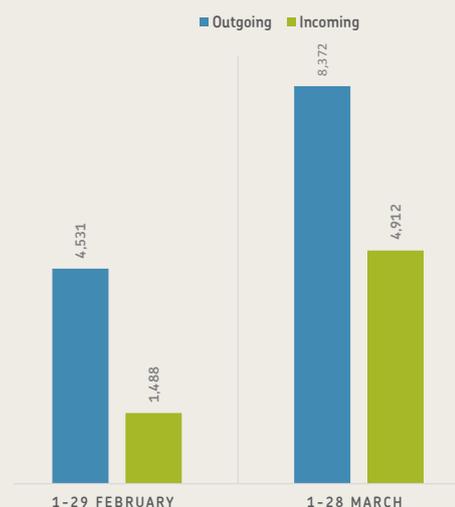
Returned Nigeriens

- On 14 March, 9,273 Nigeriens arrived at the IOM transit centre in Agadez. The group, which included more than 3,100 minors, were [repatriated](#) from Algeria under an agreement between Algerian and Nigerien authorities to repatriate irregular migrants.

Nigerian Refugees

- UNHCR reports that as of 8 March, there were 138,321 [refugees from Nigeria](#) residing in Niger.

Niger: Outgoing and Incoming Flows



SUDAN

Displacement Continues in Darfur

- The numbers of displaced people from the Jebel Marra area in Darfur continues to rise, as the crisis enters its third month. More than 130,000 civilians were [displaced](#) in March due to [ongoing hostilities](#) between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Abdul Wahid faction of the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA/AW). While North Darfur hosts the majority of those displaced (approx. 114,500 people), more than 56,000 IDPs in Central and South Darfur have been unable to receive humanitarian aid as the government authorities have continued to deny humanitarian access to the area.

Crisis in Darfur Camps

- Camps in North Darfur are struggling to cope with the large numbers of new arrivals from Jebel Marra. [Water and sanitary services](#) are stretched thin, and there is a lack of healthcare and medicine available, giving rise to an outbreak of conjunctivitis among children. In North Darfur’s Sortony camp, which holds around 70,000 people displaced from Jebel Marra, [tensions](#) continue

to rise between militiamen and the camp residents. The militiamen are attempting to extort the residents, threatening to cut off water supplies if they do not pay around USD 65,000.

South Sudanese flee to Darfur

- Tens of thousands of South Sudanese from the Bhar el Ghazar region of South Sudan [continue to flee](#) into the Darfur region of Sudan due to conflict and food shortages. An estimated 48,000 people have arrived since late January– at a rate of more than 500 people per day– and are now in a dire humanitarian emergency.

Hearing on Migration and Refugees

- Sudan’s National Assembly in late March held a [hearing](#) on migration and refugees, which was attended by representatives of various government agencies. In conclusion, the External Affairs committee called for a national migration strategy in order to address the country’s migration challenges.

TUNISIA

Anti-Trafficking Law

- Tunisia is seeking to prepare a [national law](#) to combat trafficking. The Assembly of People’s Representatives Committee on Rights and Freedoms is considering measures to establish stricter punishments for traffickers. Undocumented migrants, unaccompanied minors,

refugees, asylum seekers and rejected asylum seekers are at high risk of being trafficked into forced labor, domestic servitude and sexual exploitation, with 67 cases reported between 2012 and 2015. Young Tunisians desperate for work are also at risk of trafficking.

Decrease in Arrivals

- March saw the arrival of 26,971 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers by sea to Greece. This represents a 52.7% decrease in arrivals from February, in which there were a total 57,066 sea arrivals. This decrease in arrivals to Greece was to be expected following the EU-Turkey deal. Of the newly detected arrivals* in March, the majority were from Syria (51%); Afghanistan (21%); Iraq (9%); Pakistan (7%); Iran (3%) and Albania (3%). Despite the EU-Turkey deal, some migrants, refugees and asylum seekers still continued to attempt crossing the Aegean Sea. On 27 March, Turkish Coast Guard stopped [five boats](#) heading for Lesbos; the majority of the passengers were members of Myanmar's Rohingya. On 6 April, the Turkish Coast Guard apprehended a further [60 people](#) attempting to cross to Greece.

Deaths at the Greece/Macedonia Border

- On 14 March, three [Afghan refugees](#) drowned in Suva Reka river in attempts to reach Macedonia from Greece. 23 others were rescued and transferred to a local refugee camp.

Deaths at Sea

- IOM data indicates that 45 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers have [died along the Eastern Mediterranean route](#) during the month of March. 46 people died on the same route last month. On 10 March, [five](#) Afghan migrants, refugees and asylum seekers drowned off the Turkish coast on their way to Lesbos; nine others were rescued and brought to shore, although one died upon arrival. On 14 March, eight people were reported missing in the Aegean Sea after their boat sank due to rough weather conditions. A rescue operation was launched by the Hellenic Coast Guard.

Stranded Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers

- Border closures along the Balkan route have left approximately 50,000 people [stranded in Greece](#), unable to move north towards Western Europe. Many are now pinning their hopes on relocation under the European Union relocation programme. Given the sharp spike in numbers in following the Balkans closures, Greece announced it would expedite the creation of reception facilities for approximately 30,000 people.

Unaccompanied and Separated Children

- UNICEF reported that there are more than [22,000](#) migrant and refugee children stranded in Greece. 2,000 of these are unaccompanied or separated children (UASC). In the first quarter of 2016, 1,156 UASC were registered in Greece - a 300% increase compared to the same period in 2015.

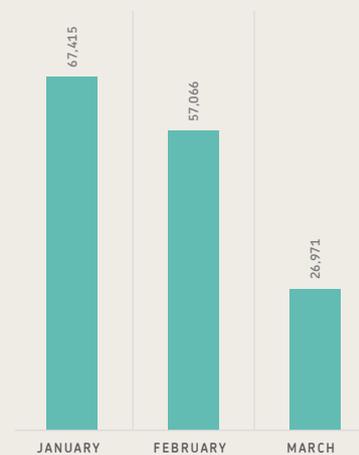
Return Requests

- [694 people](#) requested assisted voluntary return (AVR) services from IOM in Greece during the month of March. The majority of those assisted (479 people) were of Moroccan and Iranian nationality.

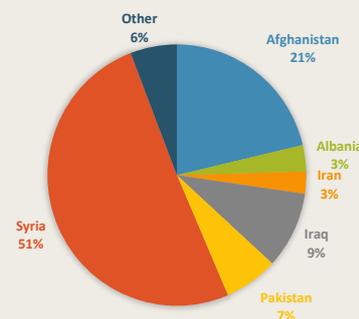
Poor Camp Conditions

- According to Human Rights Watch, thousands of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers stranded at the Athens port of Piraeus are living in [unsafe and unsanitary](#) conditions, and fights break out frequently due to rising tensions and deteriorating conditions. At Idomeni camp, Greek authorities [evacuated](#) thousands of people after two were diagnosed with Hepatitis A. Infections are spreading in camps due to overcrowding and poor hygiene. At the same camp, two men attempted to set themselves [on fire](#) on 22 March in protest of the Macedonian border closure.

Arrivals by Sea, Greece:
January - March 2016



Newly Detected* Migrants, Refugees & Asylum Seekers,
Main Countries of Origin January - March 2016



*Includes new arrivals and those that have been recently identified by Hellenic Police.

Increase in Arrivals

- March saw a 152.8% increase in arrivals by sea to Italy, with 9,676 arrivals for the month, compared to 3,828 in February. The rise in numbers along this route also saw a

[spike in deaths](#), with 246 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers dying on the Central Mediterranean route during March, compared with just seven in February.

Rescues at Sea

- There were a number of incidents during the month - [600 people](#) were rescued by the Italian Coast Guard and Navy on 18 March; [1,482 people](#) were rescued by the Italian Coast Guard off the coast of Libya on 27-28 March; the Italian Coast Guard reported on 29 March that 1,569 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers had been rescued in [11 different operations](#) in the Strait of Sicily; and on 30 March, the Italian Coast Guard and Navy rescued [1,361 people](#) from boats and rubber dinghies in the southern Mediterranean. Naval guards reported that one boat had sunk and dozens of passengers were feared missing.

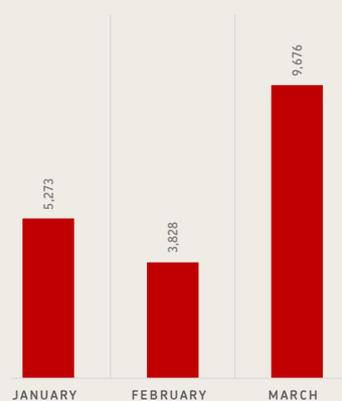
Concerns Over Italy's Hosting Capacity

- As the weather improves and numbers arriving in Italy increase while Greece's arrivals decline, questions are emerging over Italy's [capacity](#) to house the growing number of arrivals. Reportedly, there are large numbers of migrants in Libya ready to make the crossing in the coming months. With the EU's distribution system for refugees not being implemented effectively, and the closing of borders in countries along migrant routes, Italy may be forced to continue to house the majority of people landing on its shores. It has been forced to rapidly expand its reception centre capacity from 29,000 in 2014 to 106,000 currently.

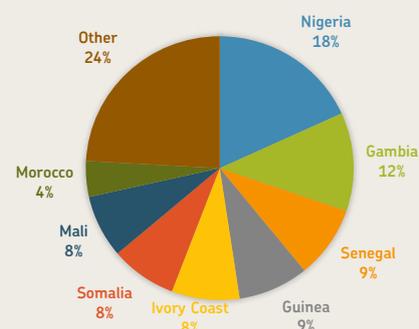
EU Relocations

- Between 8 and 30 March, 519 individuals were [relocated](#) from Italy to other European countries as a part of the EU relocation programme.

Arrivals by Sea, Italy
January - March 2016



Arrivals by Sea to Italy, Main Countries of Origin
January-March 2016



RESEARCH OF INTEREST

Situation of Migrants in Transit - OHCHR

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) launched a study of migrants in transit, giving recommendations to address protection gaps for this vulnerable population.

Human Trafficking and Other Exploitative Practices Prevalence Indication Survey - IOM

IOM has released the results of its trafficking survey, based on interviews with 2,385 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers between December 2015 and March 2016.

Atlas of Environmental Migration - IOM and Sciences Po Paris

IOM and the Paris Institute of Political Studies launched the French edition of this atlas, which explores the relationship between migration and the environment. The English edition is due to be released in June.

Unpacking a Rapidly Changing Scenario: Migration Flows, Routes and Trajectories Across the Mediterranean - MEDMIG

The MEDMIG project examines the journeys, motivations and aspirations of refugees and migrants in Italy, Greece, Turkey and Malta.

Inside the Migrant Smuggling Trade: Escapes Start at €1,000 - Wall Street Journal

A reporter interviews smugglers and their clients in Greece.

Comparative Regional Protection Frameworks for Refugees: Norms and Norm Entrepreneurs - Susan Kneebone

This article compares and analyses the strengths and limits of the European, Latin American and Southeast Asian regional approaches to refugee protection.

Migration Policy Practice: Vol. VI, Number 1 - Migration Policy Practice

The latest edition includes pieces on new migration and development strategies, migration and IT connectivity, and migration trends in the Arab region.

Wrong Counts and Closing Doors: The Reception of Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Europe - Asylum Information Database (AIDA)

This thematic report documents asylum procedures and reception systems across 20 different European countries.

Refugee/Migrant Crisis in Europe: Scenarios - ACAPS

The Assessment Capacities Project (ACAPS) outlines possible developments in transit countries over the next six months and the humanitarian implications.

Egyptian Unaccompanied Migrant Children: A Case Study on Irregular Migration - IOM

A case study of unaccompanied Egyptian children migrating to Europe.

Risk Analysis for 2016 - Frontex

This report from Europe's border agency analyses key risks and creates scenarios to form a basis for annual monitoring.

MULTI-MEDIA OF INTEREST

Refugees Attempt Perilous Greece-Macedonia Crossing - Al Jazeera

Photo essay covering the events of 15 to 16 March, as migrants, refugees and asylum seekers attempt to cross the closed Greece-Macedonia border.

The Micro-Politics of Mobility and Immobility - International Migration Institute

International migration scholar Jørgen Carling discusses the politics of the individual and the role of power relations in mobility and immobility.

Instagram: Open Society Foundations - Emily Macinnes

Photographer Emily Macinnes shared photos and stories of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers stranded in Idomeni, Greece.

Kids Crossing Borders, Alone - The Center for Investigative Reporting

This podcast episode tells the stories of children crossing borders alone.

Which Countries Treat Children Like Children? - The Bureau of Investigative Journalism

An interactive that displays how different European countries treat unaccompanied minors seeking asylum.

How Migrants and Refugees are Being Welcomed in One Tiny Italian Village - PBS

The small Italian village of Riace has been revitalized due to its open-door policy.

Mediterranean Refugees and Host Communities Action Program - CMI

An online knowledge database that offers evidence-based analysis and solutions in Mediterranean refugee-hosting countries.