



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, MMC, Save the Children, UNHCR, UNICEF 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.

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.

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

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

HIGHLIGHTS

Nearly 7,000 people's housing security is affected by the ending of EU funded programme

Refugees and asylum seekers attempting to cross into Cyprus

Morocco's remittance inflows rank second in the region

AU-EU-UN task force meets to discuss situation in Libya



REGIONAL

UNHCR chief addresses UN security council

- The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, [addressed](#) the UN Security Council on 9 April in a strongly worded speech about the current environment surrounding forced displacement. Mr. Grandi stated that conflicts are the main drivers of large-scale displacement and that the international community's current peace-building responses to conflict are fragmented and address only the symptoms of conflicts rather than their causes. Mr. Grandi also leveled a damning critique of the current political and media discourse surrounding human mobility, saying that in over three decades as an international civil servant, he has "never seen such toxicity, such poisonous language in politics, media and social media," surrounding refugees and migrants. Then, speaking about the term 'refugee crisis', he called upon the security council to question what that term actually means, saying, "It is a crisis for a mother with her children fleeing gang violence; it is a crisis for a teenager who wants to flee from war, human rights violations, forced conscription; it is crisis for governments in countries with few resources that, every day, open their borders to thousands. For them, it is a crisis."

Refugees and asylum seekers attempting to cross into Cyprus

- Cypriot authorities have [announced](#) that dozens of refugees and asylum seekers have been attempting to cross from the Turkish-controlled side of the island to the Greek side. The announcement was made on 23 April when 37 refugees and asylum seekers crossed from the northern Turkish-controlled part of the island to the Greek side and made their way to Nicosia and the town of Morphou. According to UNHCR, refugees and asylum seekers [arrive](#) on the island via the northern territories where there is no effective asylum system in place and make their way south. The island has the highest ratios of refugees per capita in the EU after Malta and Luxembourg (Source: EU Commission 2017). Earlier in April, over a hundred refugees and asylum seekers [took](#) to the streets of Nicosia to protest their inability to properly access the labor market. Asylum seekers are only able to apply for low-paying jobs in agriculture, fishing, manufacturing, waste management, wholesale trade repairs, construction and outdoor cleaning, food delivery and leafleting. And while 2018 ministerial decree grants asylum seekers the right to work a month after they have lodged a formal request for asylum, the reality is that they still face many logistical and bureaucratic barriers.

Alan Kurdi ship refugees will be hosted by four European countries

- 62 refugees that were stuck on the Alan Kurdi ship for more than 10 days during the month of April, will be [allowed](#) to disembark in Malta after four European countries, Germany, France, Portugal, and Luxemburg, agreed to host them. The refugees, among whom there are 12 women and two children, were first brought to the Italian island of Lampedusa, but were refused entry by Italy's Interior Minister, Matteo Salvini. The Maltese government accepted to disembark the refugees only on the conditions that none of the refugees will remain in Malta. Its Prime Minister [commented](#) in a statement 'Once again, the European Union's smallest state has been put under pointless pressure in being tasked with resolving an issue which was not its responsibility.'

EGYPT

Irregular migration attempts to Libya

- Egyptian authorities in the eastern governorate of Matrouh [announced](#) in the third week that they had prevented 309 Egyptians from crossing irregularly into Libya. Those stopped and apprehended were reportedly found in the Sallum desert without the requisite clearances. The area is closed off to civilians unless expressly allowed with a formal notice. A formal investigation has reportedly been launched into the incident.

Symposium on migration and displacement in Africa

- A symposium on African migration and displacement was [held](#) in Sharm El Sheikh on 20 April, on the sidelines of the 64th forum of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR). The symposium brought together NGO representatives from Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan and Congo to discuss issues surrounding human mobility and forced mobility in the African context. The forum was held in partnership between the African Commission, the African Center for Democracy and Human Rights Studies, the National Council for Human Rights in Morocco and the Arab Organization for Human Rights and the main event was attended by over 120 participants from 70 Egyptian, African and international organizations.

UNHCR and WHO laud Egypt's inclusion of refugees in health campaign

- UNHCR and WHO have [lauded](#) Egypt's decision to include refugees and asylum seekers in the '100 million seha' campaign which aims to improve the detection of Hepatitis C cases and eliminate Hepatitis C in Egypt by 2023. The campaign was launched in October 2018 but has recently extended the free test service to all foreigners living in Egypt, including refugees and asylum seekers. Speaking about the move, Karim Attasi, UNHCR's representative to Egypt and the League of Arab States, said, "In addition to granting refugees and asylum-seekers access to the public health care system in Egypt on equal footing as Egyptians since 2016, the recent inclusion of refugees in this nationwide campaign only reflects Egypt's long-standing tradition of hospitality towards people seeking protection and safety within its borders." While Dr. Jean Jabbour, WHO's representative to Egypt said, "This is a real example for health to all by all as a lead way to universal health coverage in Egypt. WHO will keep supporting MoHP (Ministry of Health and Population) to ensure the elimination of hepatitis from Egypt as well as to support the public health needs, which remain our role."

LIBYA

Maritime updates

- According to IOM figures, 130 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers were returned to Libyan shores by the Libyan Coast Guard in April. There were 92 recorded deaths along the coast of Libya in the month of April, almost 56% of the number of fatalities along the Libyan coast in the first three months of the year.

Returns from Libya

- According to IOM figures, 1,326 migrants were returned to their countries of origin from Libya in the month of April via the Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) program. Of those returned home in the first four months of the year, 74% are male and 26% are female.

Unrest and conflict in Tripoli

- The situation in Libya surrounding Tripoli has continued to escalate as Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar's forces fight to wrest control of the capital from the UN-backed Government of National Accord (GNA). As of 2 May, the fighting had [displaced](#) around 10,110 families, or approximately 50,550 individuals (Source: IOM DTM). There have also been [reports](#) that unrest and fears of further clashes and instability have driven numbers of Libyans to cross the border into Tunisia. Many humanitarian and international organizations have expressed concern for the migrants, refugees and asylum seekers trapped in Tripoli. In particular, many have expressed concerns for those held in detention centers with dwindling supplies and little in the form of protection. Migrants and refugees in detention centers have been [reaching](#) out via texts since the beginning of the conflict, requesting help and in the hope of alerting the world to the danger they are in. There are reports that migrants and refugees in some detention centers were forced to provide support to the advancing forces, with some saying, "The police and soldiers force migrants to do cleaning work and load weapons. They [tell] migrants that if you know how to shoot a gun we will make you stay with us."
- These actions could eventually amount to war crimes, as Judith Sunderland, Associate Director for the Europe and Central Asia division of Human Rights Watch (HRW) explains, "Forcing civilians to stockpile weapons in a warzone counts as abusive forced labour, is unlawfully cruel, and puts them at unnecessary risk... Making them wear uniforms suggests they are being used as hostages or human shields, both of which are war crimes."
- After it was revealed that 700 migrants and refugees were still being held in a detention center near armed clashes in Tripoli, Amnesty International's Deputy Director for the Middle East

and North Africa, Magdalena Mughrabi, [called](#) upon the Libyan government to release all those being held in detention centers. Speaking about the situation, she said, "The Libyan government must immediately release all migrants and refugees from these horrific detention centres where they are held illegally and face appalling abuse and torture. The authorities must do everything to ensure the safety of these men, women and children, left without access to food, water and other essentials amid the escalating violence in and around Tripoli." Ms. Mughrabi also levelled some criticism against the European response to irregular migration saying, "By actively supporting the Libyan authorities in stopping sea crossings and containing people in Libya, European governments have helped to fuel this crisis. The renewed conflict in Tripoli shows yet again how crucial it is for EU member states to ensure safe routes out of Libya for migrants and refugees."

- Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) also [called](#) for the evacuation of all refugees and migrants trapped in or near the conflict zone. MSF also called upon European states not to impede the operations of search and rescue vessels in the Mediterranean, explaining that, "One of the desperate options for Libyans and non-Libyans seeking to escape the fighting is the Mediterranean Sea... In the vacuum of any dedicated search and rescue response in the Central Mediterranean, people's lives are significantly at risk at sea just as they are in Tripoli's conflict areas." Rights and humanitarian organizations have ample justification for their concerns and there have been [reports](#) that migrants and refugees in a detention center were seriously wounded in a shooting on 23 April.

AU-EU-UN task force meets to discuss situation in Libya

- The AU-EU-UN task force [met](#) in Addis Ababa on 16 April in order to discuss the rapidly escalating situation in Tripoli. The meeting was chaired by the Special Envoy of the Chairperson and Commissioner for Social Affairs, Amira Elfadil, and attended by the Head of the EU Delegation to the AU, the Chief of Mission IOM and the UNHCR Representative to the AU. The meeting was dominated by humanitarian issues with those assembled highlighting the rapidly deteriorating situation in Tripoli and the urgent need for humanitarian assistance especially basic needs. The task force called upon all warring sides to preserve the lives of civilians and migrants and refugees caught up in the conflict. The task force also discussed the VHR program allowing migrants to voluntarily return home and called for greater efforts to fast track the return of foreign nationals back to their countries of origin.

MOROCCO

Morocco's remittance inflows rank second in the region

- The World Bank brief "Migration and Remittances. Recent Developments and Outlook" published in April 2019 [report](#) identifies Morocco's remittance inflows as ranking second in the Middle East and North African region. Up to \$7.4 billion were [received](#) by Morocco in 2018, which represents 6.2% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Morocco is preceded only by Egypt, which with \$28.9 ranks highest in remittances, and followed by Lebanon (\$7.2), and Jordan (\$4.4). As shown by global statistics, 2018 annual remittance flows to low- and middle-income countries are expected

to reach \$550 billion, which by corresponding to a higher amount of both foreign direct assistance (FDI) and official development assistance (ODA), represent a great contribution to the country's economic development.

Moroccan authorities dismantle people smuggling rings

- Moroccan authorities in Nador [arrested](#) five individuals on 2 May for facilitating irregular migration. The arrests were made with intelligence supplied by the General Directorate of Territorial Surveillance (DGST).

- The DGST announced that the operation was the result of joint Moroccan-Spanish efforts within the framework of cooperation on security measures to counter transnational crimes between the two countries. According to the information released, the authorities seized 15 rubber boats, 12 boat engines, two vehicles and electronic devices in the operation.
- Authorities in Nador [arrested](#) another four individuals that form another smuggling ring on 5 May. During the operation, forces also seized money, a boat engine, cell phones, a tear gas cannister, binoculars and a walkie-talkie. According to information released by the DGST, they also foiled an irregular migration attempt during the same operation.

NIGER

Anti-human trafficking pact signed between Niger and Nigeria

- The Nigerien Agency Against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants (ANLTP/TIM) [signed](#) an agreement with the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) to eliminate human trafficking in their respective country, Niger and Nigeria. Both agencies also agreed on establishing a technical working group for the training of counsellors and social workers on how to

deal with victims of trafficking. NAPTIP Director General commented on the agreement by saying, "This strong collaboration and partnership by both countries in the fight against human trafficking promises to be very effective and mutually rewarding."

TUNISIA

UNHCR calls for improved refugee distribution after tensions in Tunisian refugee camps rise

- Tensions have been [rising](#) in Tunisian migrant reception centers as they lack capacity to host and properly assist the current migrant population. 1,581 asylum seekers and 211 refugees were in the country as per March 2019. Most of them have Syrian origins, but others come from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Iraq, Yemen, and Palestine. UNHCR special

envoy for the central Mediterranean, Vincent Cochetel, visited Medenine reception center and invited the government to improve the redistribution of migrants across the country, particularly as most come from Libyan detention centers and are now facing serious psychological problems due to the violence and torture experienced.

GREECE

Arrivals to Greece by sea

- 2,065 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers arrived in Greece by sea between 27 February and 1 May. According to IOM figures, two deaths were recorded along the Eastern Mediterranean Route during this reporting period.

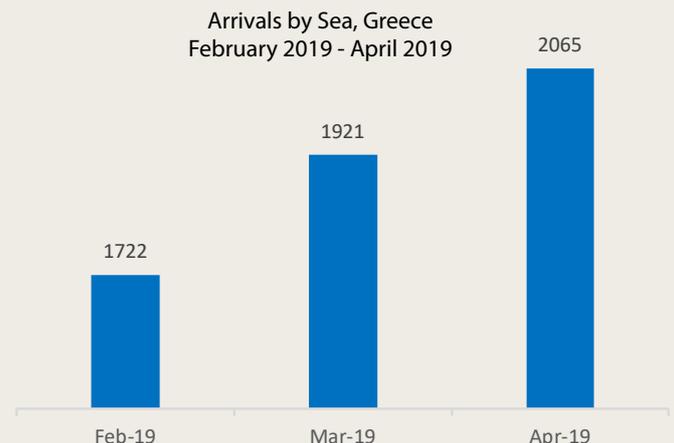
15 months later language courses for refugees are yet to start

- More than 5,000 refugees aged 16 up are [waiting](#) to be taught fast track language courses as part of the Greek integration program, although more than a year after the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Migration Policy heralded the program, classes have not started. The program was initially foreseen to be implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and has been put on halt since the government decided to take control of the initiative. Given the delay, the program returned to IOM, which will start implementing with local NGOs support. The government expected starting dates are in June, although consultations with Brussels have yet not secured and decided the amount of funding available.

Nearly 7,000 people's housing security is affected by the ending of EU funded programme

- 6,800 people are [facing](#) eviction after EU funded programme, ESTIA, comes to an end. According to a migration ministry official, recognized refugees will be able to retain economic aid, as well as a tax number, open a bank account, and

register at job centers. However, the refugee community does not seem to be aware of these benefits; and Doctors Without Borders spokesperson said that there are no realistic solutions for those who will lose their homes and financial assistance. Although migrant arrivals have plumed to 9,000 since the beginning of the year, immigration ministry Dimitris Vitzas hopes that the evictions will improve migrants' overcrowded living conditions on the island of Samos and Lesbos. NGOs representative Christiana Svana commented on the measure by saying 'it is good to say that refugees must integrate and no longer depend on aid provided by the associations and the UNHCR, but for that it was necessary to plan an integration programme.'



ITALY

Arrivals to Italy by sea

- 288 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers arrived in Italy by sea between 31 March and 1 May, which represents an approximately 10% increase in arrival figures from the previous month of March. 92 fatalities were recorded along the Central Mediterranean Route during the same reporting period, over five times the number of recorded fatalities over a similar reporting period last month.

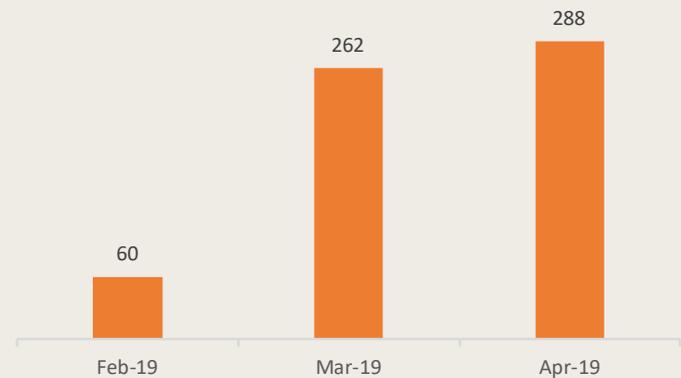
Italian and Hungarian Prime Minister meeting reinforce anti migrant approach

- Hungarian and Italian Prime Minister, Viktor Orban and Matteo Salvini, [met](#) in Budapest to discuss protection and migration related issues. The leaders have similar values and beliefs on issues such as border protection and irregular migrant, and also on preserving Europe's Christian heritage and culture. Both leaders are against the idea of redistributing migrants among other European countries and call for tighter border control. Although migration to Hungary is minimal, the government extended the state of emergency introduced in 2015. The Prime Ministers defined migration has one of the biggest challenges faced by Europe and support further cooperation on anti-migration political alliances.

United Nations evacuates 146 asylum seekers from Libya

- As part of a humanitarian evacuation, the UN refugee agency [transferred](#) 146 asylum seekers from Libya to Italy. Since 2017, the agency undertook five evacuations, although previous operations have taken Libyan migrants to different destinations. Most asylum seekers who arrived in Italy are unaccompanied minors, originally from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan, and Syria. Member of the Italian Senate, Stefano Candiani, defined UN screening operations as the way refugees should be granted protection and arrive in Europe.

Arrivals by Sea, Italy
February 2019 - April 2019



SPAIN

Arrivals to Spain by sea

- 2,362 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers have crossed from Morocco to Spain by sea between 31 March and 28 April. This is an almost fourfold increase in the number of arrivals from a similar reporting period the previous month of March. According to IOM figures, three deaths were recorded along the Western Mediterranean Route.

Arrivals to Spain by land

- 432 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers have crossed into Spain via its land borders with Morocco (through Ceuta and Melilla) in April, roughly the same number of arrivals via those same land borders the previous month of March.

Spain dismantles Bangladeshi-run ring

- Spanish authorities [dismantled](#) a smuggling ring responsible for bringing more than 350 migrants from India into Spain by providing them with fake passports. Police reported that 11 people were arrested at their headquarter in Barcelona. Migrants were originally from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan,

and Sri Lanka, and each of them were requested to pay the ring between 14,00 to 20,000 euros for the journey. They were smuggled into Morocco from Algeria, after flying in from India. They were then transported from Morocco to Spain by boat. Spain [increased](#) efforts in preventing irregular migration networks, which halved last year only. The country attributes this achievement to the increased cooperation with Morocco.

MULTIMEDIA & EDITORIALS OF INTEREST

[Communication divide fueled Algeria's protests](#) - The Arab Weekly

This brief piece discusses how social media and mass communication are playing a major dividing role between Algerian youth and the traditional political class.

[Migrants flee Libyan 'prison' to Tunisia](#) - Politico

Politico covers the story of migrants and refugees intending to reach Europe but having to escape to Tunisia due to the inhumane conditions and risk of torture and violence in Libyan prisons.

['Does the world have eyes? Tell the world we are humans, not animals'](#) - Irish Times

This editorial describes the challenging conditions migrants are facing in Tripoli, as fighting between rival Libyan militias intensified. Thousands of refugees and migrants are trapped in indefinite detention trying to leave the country, as a result of European migration policy, which supports Libyan authorities to intercept and return migrants to its shores.

[Children's picture book artists tell migrants' stories through postcards](#) - The Guardian

A look into a creative initiative by Piet Grobler and Tobias Hickey, who invited illustrators across the globe to create postcards portraying human migration. The overwhelming response by illustrators led to the publication of a stunning book, "Migration: Open Hearts, Open Borders" that includes the best images and illustrations out of over 300 received.

[Podcast: North Africa stability brief. Week ending 28 April 2019](#) - North Africa

This ten-minute podcast lead by Arezki Daoud gives an overview of the major political and security highlights occurring in North Africa during the last week of April 2019, including the Algerian ethnic warfare, the clashes in Tripoli and indiscriminate shelling of densely populated areas in Libya, the Moroccan labor protests, and the Egyptian constitutional referendum.

[Educating in an Era of Mass Migration](#) - Harvard Graduate School of Education

A project aimed at 'Reimagining Migration', develops a comprehensive educational curriculum and helps teachers to structure dialogues around this complex topic. The collaboration between educators at UCLA and the Harvard Graduate School of Education, tries to confront the climate of political division and hostility, by creating a culture of acceptance and critical thinking into the classrooms.

[What 2 new migration compacts tell us about how the world deals with the 'migration crisis'](#) - Mada Masr

Starting from the 2015 'migration crisis', this interesting editorial explains the process that led to the adoption of the Global Compact for Migration and the Global Compact for Refugees, and their impact on the international community and the migration phenomenon

[Migration is burning issue in EU election campaign](#) - Daily News

With European elections approaching soon, and migration being one of the most discussed topics in the public sphere, this editorial presents interesting data on migrants and refugees arriving and living in European countries.

[Migrants and the media: what shapes the narratives on immigration in different countries](#) - The Conversation

This editorial focuses our attention on news production in Europe, and what are the factors that contribute to creating different migration themes and narratives in different countries.

[Art Meets Migration: Mirage of Hope Exhibition opens in Tunisia](#) - Africa News

IOM Tunisia's initiative involved 13 artists representing 11 Mediterranean countries who contributed to give birth to a beautiful contemporary art exhibition on migration.

[Some refugees are now integrated. Can Greece's economy keep up?](#) - Al Jazeera

This editorial focuses on volunteers' initiatives that help migrants and refugees in Greece to integrate into the country's society by teaching language courses

[What do refugees think of their Italian hosts?](#) - Al Jazeera

Stories of solidarities about Italian families who host refugees during a time in which Italian populist parties formed a new government lead by an anti-immigration agenda.

[Niger refugees: Hundreds hope for a new life in Europe](#) - Al Jazeera

A three minutes video about the plight of refugees in Niger hoping to cross the sea and reach Europe.

[Spain's Labor Migration Policies in the Aftermath of Economic Crisis](#) - Migration Policy Institute

MPI reports on Spain's immigrant population, and the country migration policies for low and middle skilled workers after the impact that the 2008 economic crisis had on the country.

[Migration and Development Brief 31](#) - World Bank

The World Bank Migration and Development Brief provides updates on global trends on migration and remittances, and highlights developments related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) indicators.

*MHub does not vouch for the accuracy or reliability of articles in its Monthly Bulletin.