



Monthly Trend Report

Covering mixed migration to, through & from **NORTH AFRICA**

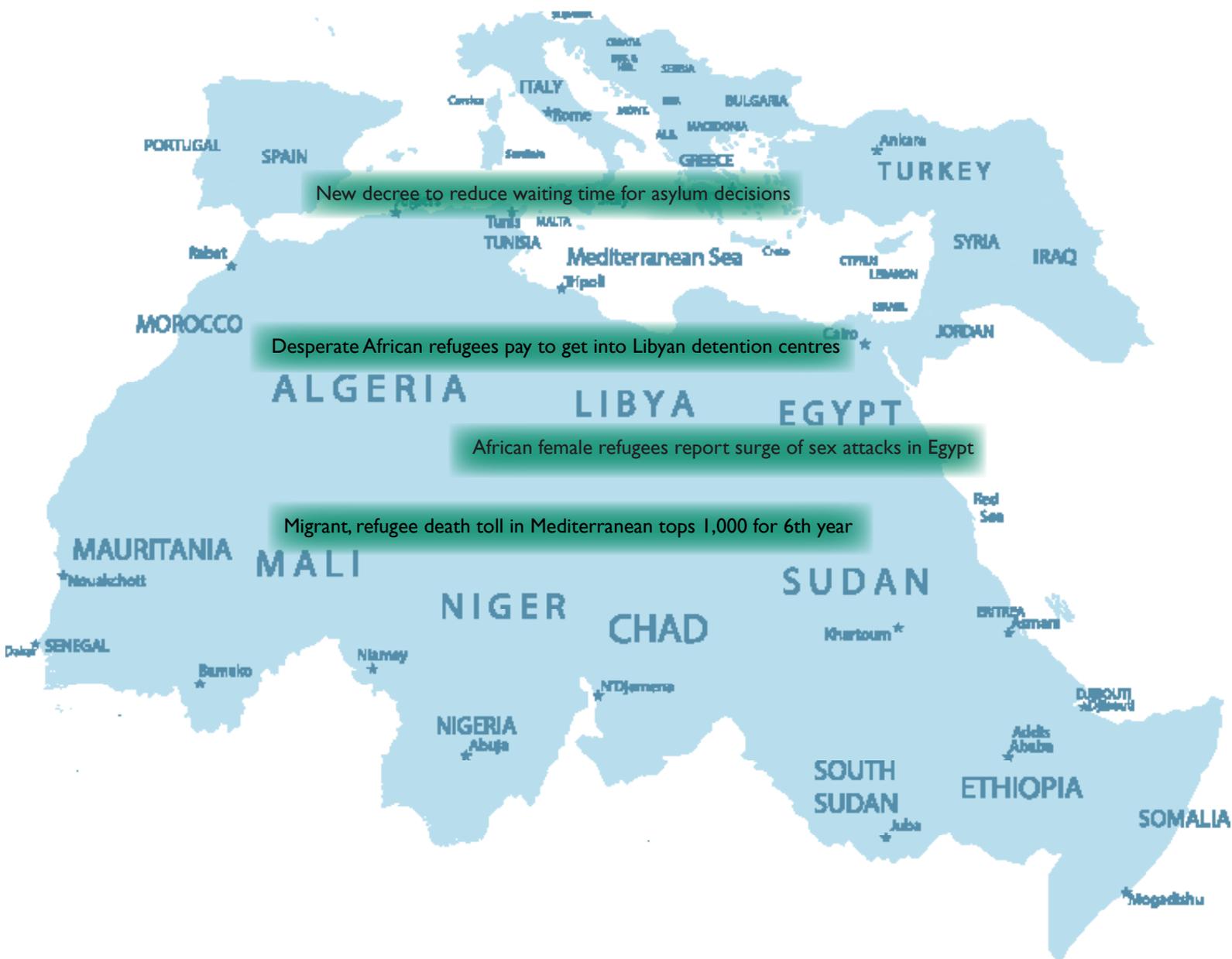
About: MHub is the regional knowledge hub and secretariat for the North Africa Mixed Migration Task Force, comprising of DRC, IOM, OHCHR, MMC, Save the Children, UNHCR, UNICEF and UNODC. It promotes a human rights-based approach to ensure the protection of people moving in mixed and complex flows to,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



REGIONAL

Migrant, refugee death toll in Mediterranean tops 1,000 for 6th year

Middle East Monitor [reported](#) that the number of migrants and refugees who have died while attempting to cross the Mediterranean has surpassed 1,000 for the sixth year in a row. Overall, the total death toll since 2014 surpasses 18,000, according to both the UNHCR and the IOM figures. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has urged European Union states to reactivate search and rescue operations and explained that more dangerous journeys have resulted in a decrease in the number of Mediterranean crossings.

Several EU countries refuse to back migrant boat plan

A proposed “fast-track” plan proposed by Germany, France, Italy and Malta was [refused](#) by most European Union member countries at a meeting of EU interior ministers. According to the mentioned plan, EU member countries were to help migrants get off boats in the Mediterranean Sea and disembark at EU shores before undergoing a screening. The aim of the fast-track plan was to relocate asylum seekers and return people who do not qualify for asylum within four weeks.

ALGERIA

IOM organizes first humanitarian charter flight from Algeria to Niger

On 15 October 2019 the first charter flight for voluntary return from Tamnasset to Niamey was [organized](#) by the International Organization for Migration, in collaboration with the governments of Algeria and Niger, for more than 160 Nigerien nationals. The purpose of the charter flight was to create a shorter journey for migrants in transit.

Since 2016, IOM missions in Niger and Libya have assisted over 7,500 Nigerien migrants with their return from Libya through voluntary humanitarian return operations.

EGYPT

African female refugees report surge of sex attacks in Egypt

An increasing number of incidents of sexual violence have been [reported](#) by African refugee women in Cairo. Incidents of sexual assault in the street, as well as against domestic workers, have been reported.

The lack of jobs and the restrictions on foreigners seeking work permits in addition to rising inflation and rent costs, drives many migrants and refugees to homelessness. Only a tiny fraction of refugees has obtained work permits. Even among those who are employed, low wages, poor working conditions, long hours and sexual exploitation are a common narrative.

IOM organizes charter flight to Germany

IOM [organized](#) a charter flight from Cairo to Hannover for 259 refugees from Syria, South Sudan, Sudan, Eritrea and Somalia. IOM supported the resettlement of the mentioned group in cooperation with the Federal German Office for Migration and Refugees, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Government of Egypt and Caritas Germany.

LIBYA

Maritime updates

According to IOM [data](#), 1,131 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers were rescued and returned to Libya in October. Of those who were rescued in October, 91 were female, 1,001 were male and 39 were children.

Returns from Libya

According to IOM [figures](#), 976 migrants returned voluntarily to their countries of origin from Libya in October via IOM's Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) program. Of those returned via the VHR program, 5 were female, 971 were male and 6 were unaccompanied migrant children (UAMC). The latest return operations bring the total number of migrants assisted by the VHR program so far in 2019 to 8,735.

74 Migrants Rescued off Libyan Coast, 110 Others Turned Back

On 13 October 2019, 74 migrants on a rubber boat were [rescued](#) by humanitarian groups off the coast of Libya; six children were on board. In a separate incident, the Tunisian coast guard stopped a boat carrying 110 migrants who had intended to reach Italy, and forced it back to Tunisia, while also rescuing 25 migrants who had jumped into the sea. The boat had left on 11 October from the Tunisian city of Sfax. Two days later, three small boats reached Italy, carrying 41 migrants, among whom there were 15 Tunisians.

Desperate African refugees pay to get into Libyan detention centres

According to the United Nations, [bribery](#) by African refugees who wish to be resettled has been used to enter detention centers in Libya. Some nationalities of refugees have preferred to be inside detention centers to avoid kidnapping, extortion, torture and targeting by human traffickers.

Libyan Coast Guard denies accusations of being cause of death for migrants at sea

Brigadier General Ayoub Qassem, spokesperson for the Libyan Navy, has [denied](#) accusations directed by international organizations towards the Libyan Coast Guard regarding the death of migrants at sea. According to Ayoub Qassem, the Libyan Navy and Coast Guard have been successful in fighting irregular migration.

Libya authorities 'fire warning shots' at migrant rescue ship

Alan Kurdi, a ship belonging to the German NGO Sea-Eye, was [threatened](#) by Libyan authorities that fired warning shots in the air while the ship was rescuing 90 migrants on 26 October 2019. Sea-Eye's operation took place following a distress call by the migrants on the lifeboat off the Libyan coast.

MOROCCO

New initiative to dismantle irregular migration networks in North Africa

An initiative by the European Union and the United Nations Regional Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for the Middle East and North Africa was [launched](#) in Rabat on 18 October 2019. The project worth 5M USD aims to dismantle irregular migration networks in North Africa through capacity building and specialised training for authorities in charge of the detection and interception of smuggling and human trafficking networks. The project also seeks to assist security services to have the ability to identify and investigate such cases, while protecting the victims.

Morocco was quoted by the EU ambassador to Morocco, Claudia Wiedey, as having the "legislative framework meant to give it the means to prevent and punish crimes of human trafficking."

Morocco aborts irregular migration attempt near Rabat

On 16 October 2019 an attempt at irregular migration was [halted](#) by Moroccan authorities in the city of Sale. Five individuals suspected of organizing a network for [irregular migration](#) were arrested, in addition to 22 individuals who were willing to migrate irregularly. The flow of sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco has resulted in a strategy by the Moroccan government to combat irregular migration.

NIGER

Violent attacks cause thousands to flee Nigeria

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, indiscriminate attacks on civilians by organized armed groups have led more than 40,000 people to [flee](#) northwest Nigeria into Niger since earlier this year. UNHCR explained that kidnappings, torture, extortion, murder, sexual violence and destruction of houses and property were reported, and that the arrival of more Nigerian refugees in Niger is expected.

GREECE

Arrivals to Greece by sea

9,213 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers arrived in Greece by sea in October. This represents a decrease of 11% on figures for the previous month of September, and a significant increase of more than 120% from a similar reporting period in October of last year.

Evacuation of overcrowded migrant camp

An overcrowded migrant camp on the island of Samos was [evacuated](#) on 15 October 2019 following clashes between Syrian and Afghan migrants over food supplies that led to a fire and caused several casualties.

The crisis in the Samos camp had been growing for weeks, as it now has to accommodate more than 5,700 migrants and refugees – ten times what it was designed for – and the number grows almost daily.

Greek Prime Minister highlights need for EU cooperation to respond to possible new refugee crisis

Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis [highlighted](#) at the European Council summit in Brussels on 17 October 2019 the importance of having a 'Plan B' to respond to a possible new refugee crisis. The mentioned plan was discussed in the context of migrant flows from Turkey to Europe.

UNHCR urges Greece to move asylum seekers to mainland

Following the recent increase in arrivals of refugees at reception centres on Greek islands, UNHCR [highlighted](#) the need to urgently transfer from the islands those with permission to continue the asylum procedure in mainland Greece. According to UNHCR, sea arrivals surpassed 10,000 in September, which witnessed the highest number of arrivals in any one month since 2016.

ITALY

Arrivals to Italy by sea

2,017 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers arrived in Italy by sea in October. This figure represents a 19% decrease in arrivals by sea from the previous month of September. The number of arrivals by sea in October 2018 was approximately half of the number of arrivals in October 2019.

New decree to reduce waiting time for asylum decisions

A ministerial decree reducing the waiting time for an asylum decision from two years to four months was [signed](#) by the Italian government. The decree aims to speed up safe repatriations, more specifically to 13 European and African nations considered 'safe', including Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Serbia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Ukraine, Ghana, Senegal and Cape Verde.

Bodies of migrants who drowned at sea recovered off Lampedusa

The bodies of 12 migrants, who had [drowned](#) following the capsizing of their boat off the coast of Lampedusa on 6 October, were [recovered](#). About 50 people, among which reportedly many children, were on board; only 22 people survived. Most of the migrants on board were from sub-Saharan Africa. Survivors recounted that the boat had left from Libya and arrived at the Tunisian city of Sfax, where a further 15 people boarded. The boat subsequently began the journey to Sicily. Although presenting more risks, the route from Tunisia to Italy is shorter than that from Libya. EU Commissioner for Migration and Home Affairs, Dimitris Avramopoulos, called for the quick implementation by member states of a [temporary plan](#) to relocate migrants rescued in the Mediterranean and distribute them amongst willing member states.

SPAIN

Arrivals to Spain by sea

3,667 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers crossed from Morocco to Spain by sea in October, which represents a 20% increase from figures for September. Same as above

Arrivals to Spain by land

660 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers crossed into Spain via its land borders with Morocco (through Ceuta and Melilla) in October, a 2.5% decrease in figures from the previous month of September.

MULTIMEDIA & EDITORIALS OF INTEREST

[Greece struggles with new migrant influx - an overview](#) – InfoMigrants

An editorial that sheds light on the recent increase in arrivals of migrants and refugees in Greece in September 2019.

RESEARCH OF INTEREST

[Scaling Fences: Voices of Irregular African Migrants to Europe](#) – United Nations Development Programme

A report on the perspectives and experiences of irregular migrants from Africa to Europe.

[Data on Children in Migration](#) - European Commission

The study conducted by the Joint Research Centre of the EU commission [revealed](#) that the highest number of child asylum applicants in relation to the population is in Greece. In 2018 the number of child asylum requests in Greece for every 100,000 residents was 184. The list of EU countries with the highest number of child asylum requests included Cyprus, Germany, Malta, Luxembourg, Austria and Sweden.