



Monthly Trend Report

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

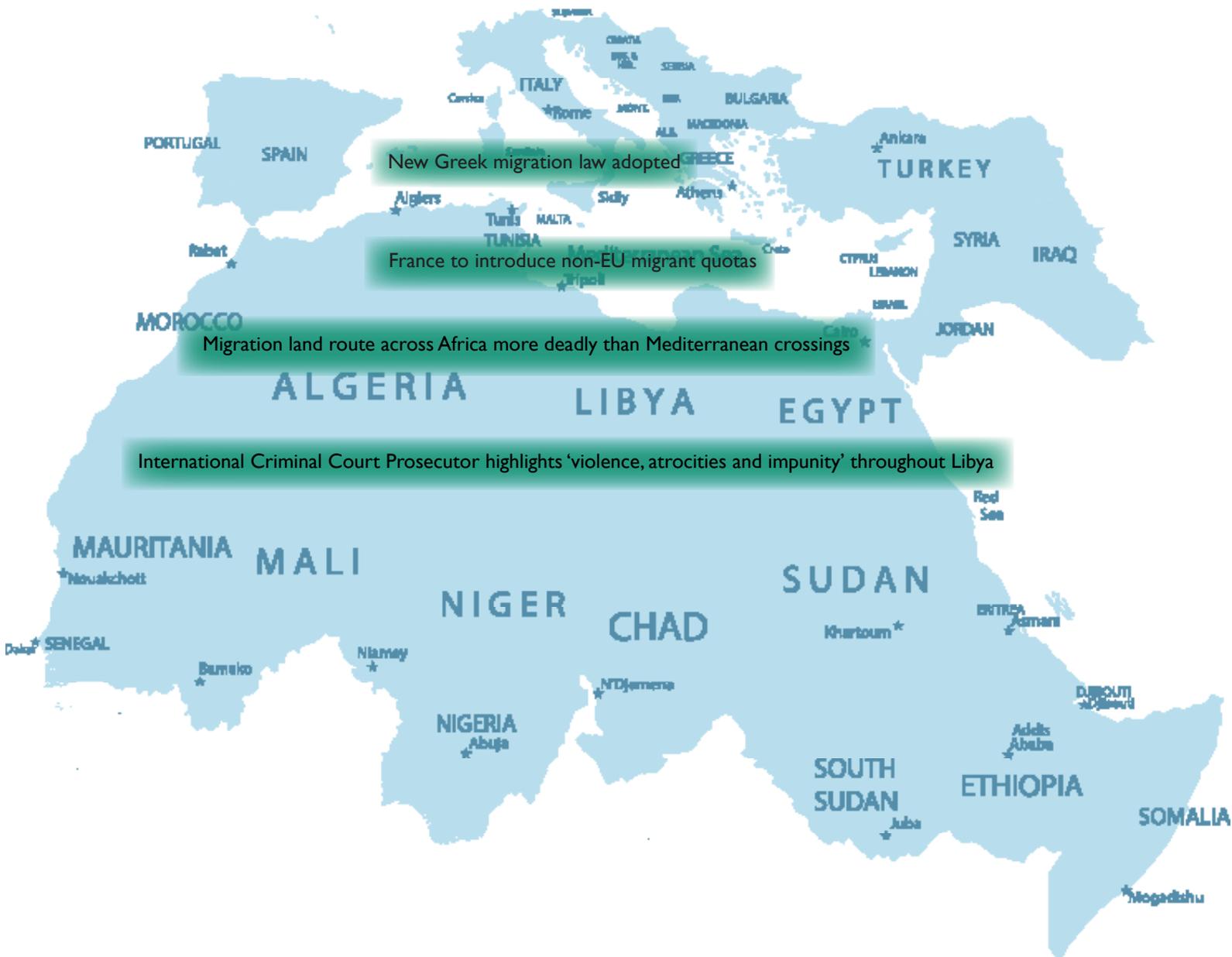
About: MHub is the regional knowledge hub and secretariat for the North Africa Mixed Migration Task Force, comprising of DRC, IOM, OHCHR, MMC, Save the Children, UNHCR, UNICEF and UNODC. It promotes a human rights-based approach to ensure the protection of people moving in mixed and complex flows to,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

Migration land route across Africa more deadly than Mediterranean crossings

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the land route across Africa is twice as [deadly](#) as Mediterranean routes to Europe. The number of deaths in the Mediterranean since 2014 surpassed 19,000, yet it is reportedly the case that the risk of death along the migration land route used to reach the Mediterranean is considerably higher. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) listed dehydration, violence, starvation and illness as the main causes of death along the land route across Africa.

France to introduce non-EU migrant quotas

Quotas on the number of foreign workers from outside the European Union will be [introduced](#) by France. New measures include the exclusion of those not entitled to stay from access to medical services, the [clearing](#) of migrant tent camps in north-eastern Paris, and the introduction of a quota system similar to those used by Canada and Australia, where a points-based system focusing on professional and personal characteristics is used. Quotas will be decided on an annual basis. The measures additionally include the reduction of the period of health cover from 12 months to six months. For asylum-seekers, a waiting time of three months will be necessary prior to access to basic cover.

Decrease in number of Maghrebi irregular migrants

According to the Institute for Security Studies, there has been a significant [decrease](#) in 2019 in the number of irregular migrants from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya, in comparison with 2018. Authorities in Spain, Italy, Greece, Tunisia and Algeria intercepted over 20,000 Maghrebi irregular migrants attempting to reach Europe via the Mediterranean Sea in 2019, approximately half the number of those intercepted in 2018. It is reportedly the case that fewer migrants originating in the Maghreb attempted to irregularly migrate. Nonetheless, the decrease in numbers in 2019 may also be due to an increase in arrests by Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia of those attempting irregular migration.

Migrant deaths along Mediterranean routes halved in a year

According to the IOM Missing Migrants Project, the number of deaths along the Western Mediterranean Route (WMR), Central Mediterranean Route (CMR) and Eastern Mediterranean Route (EMR) are approximately 50% [lower](#) in 2019 compared to the same period in 2018, decreasing from 2,117 in 2018 to 1,091 by 13 November 2019. The number of migrants and refugees who have entered Europe by sea have decreased by 11% in 2019. The highest number of deaths in 2019 were registered on the CMR.

EGYPT

Egypt hosts first regional forum on fighting human trafficking and migrant smuggling in Africa

On 26 November 2019 Egypt [held](#) the first regional forum that brought together national coordinating bodies from 18 African countries, with the aim of discussing good practices in the fight against human trafficking. The forum, organized by the National Coordinating Committee for Preventing and Combating Illegal Migration and Trafficking in Persons (NCCPIM-TIP) in cooperation with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa, furthermore aimed to discuss the establishment of coordination mechanisms and institutional frameworks to combat human trafficking and migrant smuggling.

LIBYA

Maritime updates

According to IOM [data](#), 330 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers were rescued and returned to Libya in November. Of those who were rescued in November, 51 were female, 261 were male and 18 were children.

Returns from Libya

According to IOM [figures](#), 211 migrants, all of whom were male, returned voluntarily to their countries of origin from Libya in November via IOM's Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) program. The latest return operations bring the total number of migrants assisted by the VHR program so far in 2019 to 8,946.

Libya denies striking secret migration deal with Malta

The Libyan embassy in the Maltese capital Valetta [denied](#) the allegation that it had implemented a deal with Malta on the interception of migrants, highlighting that cooperation between the Libyan and Maltese governments on issues of irregular migration and the fight against human trafficking was transparent. Times of Malta had stated that Maltese armed forces and the Libyan Coastguard were collaborating to intercept migrants in the Mediterranean and return them to Libya.

Drivers of migration to Libya

A [survey](#) conducted by IOM and the World Food Program with 4,195 migrants in Libya [revealed](#) that a lack of adequate income, better educational opportunities, the security situation in the country of origin, lack of food, as well as environmental and climate shocks were amongst the strongest drivers of migration to Libya. Most of the migrants with whom the survey was conducted had come from Algeria, Egypt, Niger, Chad and Sudan. Forty-one percent of respondents explained they felt forced to flee their home countries, particularly migrants from East and West Africa. Food insecurity was a primary concern for over half of the migrants interviewed.

International Criminal Court Prosecutor highlights 'violence, atrocities and impunity' throughout Libya

ICC Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda [told](#) the UN Security Council that violence, atrocities and impunity remain to be commonplace in Libya, highlighting escalating violence, civilian deaths, displacement, abductions, disappearances and arbitrary arrests. Bensouda referred to the need for support by the Security Council and the international community to bring an end to the conflict in Libya. There are currently arrest warrants for Saif Al-Islam Gaddafi, Al-Tuhamy Mohamed Khaled and Mahmoud Mustafa Busayf Al-Werfalli.

Malta has deal with Libya Coast Guard over migrant interceptions

A secret deal between Maltese armed forces and the Libyan Coast Guard is reportedly being [used](#) to return migrant boats entering Malta's search and rescue zone. The Maltese government has been operating within the law. An issue with the deal with the Libyan Coast Guard is the intervention by the latter beyond its coastal waters. According to the Maltese government, "Search and rescue areas are not areas where the coastal state exercises sovereignty or has jurisdiction, but areas forming part of high seas where foreign military assets have every right to investigate any illegal activity departing from their coast."

Deportation of irregular migrants to Nigeria

On 18 November 2019, 21 irregular migrants were [deported](#) from the Libyan city of Benghazi to Lagos, Nigeria. The Immigration Control Department had also announced the deportation of 60 irregular migrants to Chad and Sudan one day before.

MALI

Voluntary return of West and Central African migrants

West and Central African migrants who had been stranded in Algeria were [assisted](#) by IOM to return to their countries of origin after transiting through Mali. Thirty of the 108 stranded migrants had migrated from Mali, whereas the remaining 78 migrants returned to eight different countries, including Guinea, Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

MOROCCO

11 arrested in Morocco for suspected involvement in the organization of irregular migration

On 22 November 2019 11 sub-Saharan Africans who were suspected of organizing irregular migration operations were [arrested](#) by Moroccan authorities in the city of Oujda. Raids on five houses had taken place by security services, who found 75 irregular migrants of different nationalities. According to the investigations that took place, five individuals were suspected of involvement in smuggling to Europe.

Death and disappearance of migrants near Melilla

On 26 November 2019 a boat that had left from Charrana, Morocco [faced](#) difficulties at sea, resulting in the death of four people and the disappearance of sixteen. Of the 78 people on board, 58 survived after being saved by the Spanish maritime rescue service near the Spanish north African enclave of Melilla, where the survivors were subsequently taken to.

NIGER

Over 40,000 migrants assisted with Voluntary Return and Reintegration from Niger since 2015

IOM's Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) program [helped](#) more than 40,000 stranded migrants to return to their countries of origin since 2015. The adoption of law N° 2015-36 criminalizing irregular migration led to an increase in requests for assistance to return. In 2019 alone, almost 12,000 migrants were assisted under the AVRR program between January and September. Migrants registered in IOM's six transit centres are primarily from Mali, Guinea, Senegal and Nigeria.

TUNISIA

Tunisia rescues 43 sub-Saharan migrants off Djerba

A group of 43 migrants from different countries in sub-Saharan Africa who had intended to reach Italy were [rescued](#) by the Tunisian Coast Guard on Thursday, 21 November and transferred to the Zarzis migrant reception center. The boat had reportedly left from the Libyan coast a few days before the migrants were rescued. The group included 23 Ethiopians, 15 Eritreans and 5 Somalis between the ages of 16 and 40, 11 of whom were women. According to IOM, the increasing violence in Tripoli and surrounding areas has resulted in a higher number of migrants attempting to reach Europe via the Central Mediterranean Route.

GREECE

Arrivals to Greece by sea

8,065 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers [arrived](#) in Greece by sea in November. This represents a decrease of 12.5% on figures for the previous month of October, and a significant increase of more than 284% from a similar reporting period in November of last year.

New Greek migration law adopted

A controversial new law tightening asylum procedures was [adopted](#) in Greece on 1 November 2019, with the aim of accelerating the identification of those in need of international protection. The bill has been criticized by human rights groups for including more stringent rules on reception of asylum seekers, delays in accessing the right to work, a more limited definition of family, and introducing tougher rules on the recognition of torture victims. Commenting on the draft bill, Dunja Mijatovic, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, stated that the law "raises concerns from a human rights perspective."

Police find 41 migrants alive in a refrigerated truck

A group of 41 people were [found](#) by Greek police inside a refrigerated truck with difficulty breathing. It is believed that the truck, the driver of which was arrested, had arrived in Greece from Turkey. The number of arrivals of asylum seekers in Greece has reached a peak since 2015.

More than 250 migrants claim 'pushback' by Greece

On 4 November 2019, more than 250 irregular migrants were [caught](#) by Turkish border units in the province of Edirne. The migrants claimed that they were subjected to physical assault at the hands of Greek security forces, who subsequently pushed them back to Turkey. The migrants were transferred to the provincial migration office. Most were from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Algeria. 'Pushbacks' to Turkey by Greek authorities has been common since 2015. Migrants interviewed by Turkish authorities reported torture, theft and other human rights abuses.

EU urges faster vetting of migrants in Greece after increase in arrivals

Following the recent increase in arrivals of asylum seekers in Greece, the European Commission [urged](#) Greece to accelerate processing as a solution to the overcrowding in island camps. It is reportedly the case that a controversial EU-Turkey [deal](#) from 2016 remains to be in place. Speaking at the European Parliament, a Doctors Without Borders (MSF) representative stated that "In humanitarian terms, the EU-Turkey Statement is a tragedy," and that mental health issues are common amongst migrants who are 'trapped' due to the Greek asylum vetting process. Michael O'Flaherty, director of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, said that facilities on Greek islands able to host 5,000 people hold 30,000 migrants.

ITALY

Arrivals to Italy by sea

1,057 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers [arrived](#) in Italy by sea in November. This figure represents a 48% decrease in arrivals by sea from the previous month of October, and an 8% increase from a similar reporting period in November last year.

Taranto hosts photo exhibit on city's 30,000 migrants

'Loro di taranto', a photo [exhibit](#) that took place between 14 and 21 November, focused on the 30,000 migrants in Puglia city and who have arrived over the past few years, particularly in migrant-rescue vessels since 2014. The exhibit was organized by the Chamber of Labor and FP-CGIL, and curated by Battista Baccaro, the coordinator of Taranto's emergency number 118.

Italy allows Spanish rescue ship to disembark migrants

Italy [allowed](#) the Open Arms ship to disembark 62 African migrants at a southern Italian port. The agreement to allow the migrants to disembark came after Italy initially refused that the group of migrants, which included an additional 11 individuals who required medical assistance and who were disembarked at the port of Augusta, disembark at an Italian port. The group was rescued from a rubber dinghy approximately 50 miles off the coast of Libya and included migrants mostly from Central and West Africa. A boat carrying hundreds of migrants who had departed from Libya had also [capsized](#) off the coast of Lampedusa on 23 November 2019, killing at least 20 migrants.

SPAIN

Arrivals to Spain by sea

957 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers [arrived](#) in Spain by sea in November, which represents a significant decrease of 74% from figures for October.

Arrivals to Spain by land

255 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers [crossed](#) into Spain (primarily via its land borders with Morocco) in November, a 61% decrease in figures from the previous month of October.

MULTIMEDIA & EDITORIALS OF INTEREST

[Concern for migrants at Europe's African land borders](#) – Forbes

An editorial shedding light on land crossings from Morocco to Spain via the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla.

[There's still no plan to deal with migrants in the Mediterranean](#) – The Nation

This piece discusses the lack of prospects of changes in European policy towards migrants attempting Mediterranean crossings to reach Europe.

[The migration debate isn't really about migrants](#) – Spiked

An editorial exploring the role of competing moralising discourses in the migration debate, in which it is argued migration policy plays a less prominent role.

[Launch of Robin Cohen's new book "Migration: the movement of humankind from prehistory to the present"](#) – International Migration Institute

A talk by International Migration Institute (IMI) Honorary Fellow and former IMI director at the launch of his new book "Migration: the movement of humankind from prehistory to the present".

[Niger: Curtailing migration has unintended consequences](#) – The Africa Report

This piece discusses the curbing of irregular migration by Niger and its role as a close European ally.

RESEARCH OF INTEREST

[At a crossroads. Unaccompanied and separated children in their transition to adulthood in Italy – UNICEF, UNHCR and IOM](#)

This research examines the factors facilitating or constraining the transition to adulthood of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) in Italy.

[Europe's Unauthorized Immigrant Population Peaks in 2016, Then Levels Off - Pew Research Center](#)

A report on the 'unauthorized' immigrant population in Europe over the past few years.

[Outspoken but Unheard: How diasporas in Europe shape migration along the Central Mediterranean Sea route – REACH and Mixed Migration Centre](#)

A study aiming to better understand the influence of diaspora in Europe on decisions of migrants and refugees from Mali, Eritrea and Bangladesh in mixed migration flows along the Central Mediterranean Route.

[World Migration Report 2020 – IOM](#)

The tenth IOM World Migration Report was launched 27 November 2019. The new edition focuses on key information on migration and migrants as well as balanced and evidence-based analysis of complex and emerging migration issues.