



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



Spain and Italy ready joint migration policy proposal for EU

Major rise in migrants stopped off Libya

Over 200 people rescued from slavery and prostitution in Interpol operation in Niger



REGIONAL

Mixed Migration Flows in the Mediterranean between January and December 2019

According to the International Organization for Migration, between January and December 2019 the number of migrants and refugees who [arrived](#) in Europe by sea and by land was 128,536. This figure represents a 13% decrease in comparison with the same period in 2018. The number of arrivals via the Eastern Mediterranean route was 81,147, representing 63% of all arrivals to Europe. Arrivals via the Western Mediterranean route constituted 25% of arrivals to Europe, whereas arrivals via the Central Mediterranean route represented 12% of arrivals. The number of arrivals in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania and Montenegro were 40,958 during that same period, representing a 28% increase in comparison with the same period in the preceding year.

Spain and Italy ready joint migration policy proposal for EU

An informal document [proposing](#) changes in EU migration policies, based on a new strategic alliance between Spain and Italy, is currently being prepared. Reforms of the asylum system and policies of Member States is envisioned by the European Commission. The proposal, which also aims to strengthen control on weapons sent to Libya, will be shared with other countries once finalized.

EGYPT

The European Union and IOM in Egypt Launch a Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration in North Africa

A joint initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration in North Africa, introduced by the European Union and the International Organization for Migration in Egypt, was [launched](#) in January. The initiative is being implemented in the framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth and Goal 10, Target 10.7: Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies. IOM staff presented the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) program during the event, highlighting challenges and achievements of 2019 and planned activities for 2020.

LIBYA

Maritime updates

According to IOM [data](#), 1,109 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers were rescued and returned to Libya in February. Of those who were rescued in February, 98 were female, 977 were male and 34 were children.

Returns from Libya

According to IOM [figures](#), 686 migrants returned voluntarily to their countries of origin from Libya in February via IOM's Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) program. Of those who returned, 225 were female, 458 were male and 3 were unaccompanied and separated children.

Major rise in migrants stopped off Libya

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the total number of migrants intercepted by the Libyan coast guard between January and February this year [increased](#) significantly in comparison with the same period in 2019. UNHCR registered 1,040 refugees in January 2020 who had been intercepted by the Libyan coast guard, reflecting approximately a 50% increase from January 2019. Migrants intercepted and returned to Libya are often held in detention centers, where rape and torture at the hands of militias have been reported.

Boat carrying 91 migrants goes missing in Mediterranean

A boat carrying 91 migrants and refugees was reported [missing](#) off the Libyan coast last month. The rubber dinghy had departed from al-Qarbouli, east of Tripoli, on 8 February. Alarm Phone referred to the disappearance of the boat as an 'invisible shipwreck' and urged Libyan, Maltese and Italian authorities to share information on rescue missions.

Council of Europe urges Italy to halt cooperation with Libya

The Council of Europe highlighted the human rights violations faced by migrants in detention centers after they are intercepted at sea and returned to Libya, [urging](#) Italy to suspend its cooperation with the Libyan coast guard within the framework of the 2017 Memorandum of Understanding. Dunja Mijatovic, human rights commissioner of the Council of Europe, stated that "the 2017 Memorandum of Understanding between Italy and Libya's Government of National Accord, which was automatically renewed on 2 February 2020, plays a central role in the facilitation of interceptions of migrants and asylum seekers at sea."

MOROCCO

Moroccan navy rescues 111 Spain-bound migrants in Mediterranean

On 15 and 16 February, 111 migrants who had attempted to reach Spain were rescued by the Moroccan navy. The migrants, most of whom were from sub-Saharan Africa, were [rescued](#) from inflatable boats in the Strait of Gibraltar. They were returned to Tangier, Nador and Al Hoceima.

NIGER

At least 20 killed in stampede for food at refugee camp in Niger

A stampede at a refugee camp in the southeast of Niger in February [resulted](#) in the death of at least 15 women and five children during the distribution of food and goods to those who had fled unrest in Nigeria. Sixteen people were injured.

Over 200 people rescued from slavery and prostitution in Interpol operation in Niger

More than 232 victims of sex trafficking and forced labour were [rescued](#) by authorities in Niger. According to Interpol, this includes 46 children from Niger and 180 Ghanaian men. Niger is considered a key transit country for many migrants and one in which many people are trafficked before reaching North Africa and Europe.

GREECE

Arrivals to Greece by sea

2,015 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers [arrived](#) in Greece by sea in February. This represents a decrease of 60% on figures for the previous month of January, and a decrease of 23% from a similar reporting period in February 2019.

Greek police arrest 7 suspected of attacks on migrants

Greek police [arrested](#) seven people and were searching for another two on suspicion of planning or carrying out attacks on migrants on the island of Lesbos, authorities said Friday. Police said five Greeks and two foreigners between the ages of 17 and 24 were arrested Thursday night outside the Moria migrant camp, the largest camp for asylum-seekers in the Greek islands.

ITALY

Arrivals to Italy by sea

1,212 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers [arrived](#) in Italy by sea in February. This figure represents a 10% decrease in arrivals by sea from the previous month of January, and a 1920% increase from a similar reporting period in February last year.

Italy accepts migrants and refugees rescued at sea

A boat run by Spanish charity Open Arms that had been repeatedly denied permission to dock by both Italy and Malta was [granted](#) permission late on Saturday to enter the Sicilian port of Pozzallo.

The charity said it only had food for another two days as it remained stranded in the Mediterranean with 363 rescued migrants and refugees on board. In the past few months Italy has allowed such charity ships to disembark rescued migrants at its ports on condition that other European Union nations agree to take some of them in.

SPAIN

Arrivals to Spain by sea

1,721 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers [arrived](#) in Spain by sea in February, which represents a decrease of 7% from figures for January.

Arrivals to Spain by land

454 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers [crossed](#) into Spain in February, a decrease of 13% in figures from the previous month of January.

Spain locates 69 missing African migrants

Spain has located 69 African migrants who had gone [missing](#) while trying to reach Europe by boat, the country's Maritime Rescue service said. A spokeswoman with the government agency said that a merchant ship found the boat some 36 nautical miles south of the Spanish port city of Málaga. An official rescue vessel that had been looking for the group since it went missing on Monday was transferring the migrants to a nearby port, the official said.

MULTIMEDIA & EDITORIALS OF INTEREST

[Moroccan families mourn drowning of 45 who used risky migration route to Spain](#) – USA Today

[Slavery and Human Trafficking in Libya](#) – Borgen Magazine

RESEARCH OF INTEREST

[Evidence-based operational responses to mixed migration: challenges and best practice - External assessment, January 2020](#) – Mixed Migration Centre