



## 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

### **Austria says it will stop any migrants trying to rush its border**

Austria will stop any migrants attempting to rush its [border](#) if measures to halt them in Greece and through the Balkans fail, conservative Interior Minister Karl Nehammer said. The rush echoes Europe's migration crisis in 2015-2016, when Austria served as a corridor into Germany for hundreds of thousands of migrants who traveled through Greece and the Balkans. Austria also took in more than 1% of its population in asylum seekers in the process.

### **EU countries agree to take some migrant children**

Five EU countries have [agreed](#) to take in some migrant children who are stuck in Greece, amid continuing tension on the Greek-Turkish border. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen thanked Finland, France, Germany, Luxembourg and Portugal. The numbers per country have not been announced yet - German media spoke of up to 1,500 in total. They are children categorized as unaccompanied and/or very sick.

### **IOM and UNHCR announce temporary suspension of resettlement departures**

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and IOM, the International Organization for Migration, are [concerned](#) that international travel could increase the exposure of refugees to the virus. As a result, IOM and UNHCR are taking steps to suspend resettlement departures for refugees. This is a temporary measure that will be in place only for as long as it remains essential.

## LIBYA

### **Maritime updates**

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, Libyan authorities initiated public health measures in March 2020 aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19. These measures [include](#) travel and mobility restrictions due to the closure of airports, points of entry (POE) along land borders and maritime boundaries, as well as domestic movement restrictions.

### **Shipwreck Off Coast of Libya Pushes Migrant Deaths on the Mediterranean Past 20,000 Mark**

Berlin – A tragic [shipwreck](#) off the coast of Libya last month and more than a dozen other recent fatalities elsewhere have pushed the death toll in the Mediterranean Sea to 20,014 since 2014, according to IOM's Missing Migrants Project.

### **Fire at detention centre**

A young Eritrean migrant was [killed](#) in a recent fire that ravaged part of the Zintan detention center in Libya. The cause of the fire is unknown, but migrants there fear further incidents as conditions in the center are poor and cells are overcrowded.

### **600 migrants missing**

There is alarm over the 600 migrants that have been declared [missing](#) in a Libyan detention centre following their rescue from the Mediterranean Sea since the beginning of the year. They were returned from the sea to a facility in troubled capital, Tripoli. Concern at the whereabouts of the migrants reportedly missing from the facility run by the government through the Ministry of Interior.

### **Libya's refugees face cut off from aid due to Coronavirus**

Hundreds of refugees [forced](#) to leave a UN-run centre in Libya earlier this year, including survivors of the Tajoura detention centre bombing, are among those worried about being cut off from aid in the coronavirus outbreak.

### **400 migrants picked by the Libyan coast**

Over 400 migrants have been [picked](#) up by the Libyan coast guard and returned to Libya over the weekend. That's according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which called the action "unacceptable."

### **85% of migrants are subjected to torture in Libya**

Doctors for Human Rights (MEDU) released a report [titled](#) "The Torture Factory" on Tuesday. The organization gathered accounts from more than 3,000 migrants and refugees who had reached Italy from Libya between 2014 and 2020. They found that 85% of those migrants and refugees had been subjected to "torture, violence, and inhumane and degrading treatment" in Libya.

### **If Coronavirus hits Libyan detention centers it would be a 'Massacre'**

Overcrowded migrant [detention](#) centers, particularly those in Libya, are among the places most at risk for an outbreak. A highly contagious airborne virus like coronavirus could spread at lightning speed, say experts. Figures about how many migrants are in Libya are difficult to come by. A study by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimated there are between 700,000 and 1 million migrants in the country.

## MOROCCO

### **5+5 Dialogue on Migration in the Western Mediterranean**

Western Mediterranean countries called for further [cooperation](#) aiming for successful, innovative and responsible measures that are mutually beneficial in the areas of migration and movement, according to the declaration of the 8th Ministerial Conference of the "5+5" Dialogue on Migration in the Western Mediterranean. The two-day conference held in Marrakesh concluded on Monday with the adoption of a Consensual Declaration with practical provisions. The foreign ministers of Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Tunisia, Spain, France, Italy, Malta and Portugal reiterated their common will to continue working for a comprehensive, consultative and balanced approach to dialogue in addressing the problem of migration, based on shared responsibility and solidarity.

## NIGER

### **Livestock herders face threat of displacement due to Climate Change**

In Niger, as in many other countries in the Sahel, livestock herders face a double [threat](#) to their way of life. Pastureland is shrinking at an alarming rate as temperatures rise and rainfall decreases due to climate change. At the same time, the presence of armed groups along traditional transhumance routes has made it dangerous to roam in search of greener pastures. The fighting has displaced tens of thousands of people from both within and outside the country. Many end up in the border areas of Diffa in the southeast and Tillabéri in the southwest, where displaced people live in particularly difficult conditions. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), there were nearly 198,000 internally displaced people and 221,000 refugees in Niger as of January 2020. In Diffa and Tillabéri, the influx has put pressure on basic services, including health care and the drinking water supply. It is increasingly difficult for humanitarian organizations to access these areas as the security situation deteriorates.

## SUDAN

### **Sudanese refugees in Chad demand voice at Juba peace talks**

Sheikh Mohamed Dafallah of the Treguine refugee camp in eastern Chad [highlighted](#) last month that Sudanese refugees in the country were not given the opportunity to be part of the peace talks in Juba. Dafallah emphasized the importance of including refugees and displaced people along with the government and armed movements. According to the head of the Sudan Revolutionary Front, El Hadi Idris, administrative and logistical reasons resulted in the exclusion of the refugees' delegation. Nonetheless, he highlighted that Chairman of the Higher Council for Peace, discussed the facilitation of travel from Chad to Juba for the refugee delegation.

## GREECE

### Arrivals to Greece by sea

2,084 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers [arrived](#) in Greece by sea in March. This represents a decrease of 0.4% on figures for the previous month of February, and an increase of 3% from a similar reporting period in March 2019.

### European Union to give migrants in Greece €2,000 to go home

On 12 March, the EU [announced](#) the implementation of a new scheme granting migrants who have been in camps on Greek islands since before 1 January 2020 a total of €2,000 for what has been referred to as 'voluntary return'. EU Home Affairs Commissioner Ylva Johansson explained that 5,000 migrants would be eligible for the scheme. The latter was introduced following the arrival from Turkey by boat of an increasing number of migrants and refugees on Greek islands, following Turkey's decision to allow migrants and refugees to cross into Greece. Approximately 42,000 asylum seekers are currently in overcrowded camps, which are only able to accommodate around 6,000 people. New asylum applications were [suspended](#) in Greece last month.

### Asylum seekers protest for Athens to open its borders

On 16 March 2020, a protest to allow asylum seekers to cross into Europe was [held](#) at the Turkey-Greece border. The use of violence by Greek authorities became common following the arrival of large numbers of migrants and refugees at the border last month.

### Migrants arriving in Greece say they have no protection against coronavirus

Migrants and refugees [arriving](#) in overcrowded camps on the Greek island of Lesbos have said that they are not protected against the novel coronavirus. Following the arrival of 56 migrants and refugees in late March, one migrant said: "We are here 56 people, six African and all of us Afghans. They didn't give us gloves. They didn't give us any masks."

## ITALY

### Arrivals to Italy by sea

241 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers [arrived](#) in Italy by sea in March. This figure represents a decrease of 80% in arrivals by sea from the previous month of February, and a decrease of 8% from a similar reporting period in March last year.

### Information platform on coronavirus for migrants in Italy launched

An online platform with information on the novel coronavirus for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers has been [launched](#) by the Italian Recreation and Cultural Association and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. A hotline providing medical advice has also been launched. The online platform, which is available in different languages, includes information on avoiding infection with COVID-19 as well as on governmental measures. Migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in Italy can use the hotline for medical consultations. The Italian Recreation and Cultural Association stated that "Migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers [have been] a population group that is currently receiving scarce or no attention."

### Migrants abandoned during coronavirus emergency

The lack of protection of migrants working in the field during the coronavirus emergency has been [highlighted](#) by the Italian farmworker labor union (FLAI-CGIL). Jean-René Bilongo, coordinator of the "Placido Rizzotto Observatory" of FLAI-CGIL, referred to the lack of water and inadequate pay. He explained that "Migrants and asylum seekers who were forced to leave reception centers following the application of the Salvini security decree are still being exploited in the fields as if COVID-19 didn't exist."

## SPAIN

### **Arrivals to Spain by sea**

706 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers [arrived](#) in Spain by sea in March, which represents a decrease of 59% from figures for February.

### **Arrivals to Spain by land**

148 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers [crossed](#) into Spain in March, a decrease of 67% in figures from the previous month of February.

# MULTIMEDIA & EDITORIALS OF INTEREST

## [EU Must Stop Equating Protecting Borders With Asylum Management](#) – The Globe Post

This piece discusses the focus on migration as a security issue in the EU, the link between border externalization policies and violence against asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, as well as the need for increased focus on protection and well-being.

## [Making Sense of Female Sub-Saharan Migrants' 'Vulnerability' in Morocco](#) – Morocco World News

A piece focusing on the migratory experiences of female migrants from West and Central Africa in Morocco as well as the existing discourse on vulnerability.

## [COVID-19 and the Displaced: Addressing the Threat of the Novel Coronavirus in Humanitarian Emergencies](#) – Refugees International

This piece focuses on the importance of including asylum seekers, refugees and internally displaced persons in the response to the novel coronavirus.

# RESEARCH OF INTEREST

## [Living and Working in the Midst of Conflict: The Status of Long-term Migrants in Libya](#) – International Organization for Migration

A study of the situation of long-term migrants in Libya, with a focus on livelihoods, remittances and security.