



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.

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

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.

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

HIGHLIGHTS



REGIONAL

Covid-19 and the vulnerability of migrant workers in The Middle East

According to the UN, there are 35 million international migrants in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Jordan and Lebanon, most of them are in low-skill, low-wage occupations. Due to the onset of Covid-19, the IMF sees the economies in the Middle East and North Africa as down by 5.7 percent for 2020. This means additional hardship for those already vulnerable migrant workers throughout the region. Additionally, the World Bank forecasts a 20 percent drop in [remittances](#) to low- and middle-income countries, from 2019's \$714 billion (the highest ever) to \$572 billion in 2020 which tops the 5 percent dip after the 2008 crisis. This will further exacerbate the consequences of Covid-19 and devastate the millions of people dependent on remittances from India to Egypt.

ALGERIA

Increasing number of Algerians attempting crossing to Europe

Four Algerians migrants have died during their crossing at sea when their makeshift raft capsized. The Algerian had also intercepted another vessel with 16 migrants before the [shipwreck](#); official sources confirmed that these 16 people would be indicted as "any attempt to leave the national territory" illegally by sea is punishable by law for up to 6 months. Despite this, an increasing number of Algerians have set out to reach Europe by crossing the Mediterranean in recent months. For the first time since 2016, the majority of irregular migrants reaching Andalusian shores in Spain were of Algerian nationality.

LIBYA

Maritime updates

According to IOM [data](#), 1,467 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers were rescued and returned to Libya in July. Of those who were saved in September, 107 were female, 1,245 were male, and 80 were children.

Libya's migrant workers suffer the repercussions of Covid-19

Covid-19 has had severe [repercussions](#) on Libya's migrant workers; Hussein Ali, a migrant worker from Niger, started providing services to homeowners as he became unemployed during the pandemic. He explains that whereas he used to make 10 to 15 US dollars per day in Tripoli, his income has now significantly decreased to the point where he sometimes cannot afford food. According to the UNHCR, more than 60 percent of migrant workers in Libya have lost their employment during the past couple of months due to the measures taken against Covid-19. Additionally, the IOM has estimated that the Covid-19 pandemic has affected more than 500,000 irregular migrants who depend on daily labor wages.

UN: Shipwreck off Libyan Coast

According to the IOM, 13 passengers who were aboard a sinking boat off the coast of Libya are [missing](#) and presumed drowned. Libyan fisherman managed to pull 22 survivors from the water, including nationals of Egypt, Bangladesh, Syria, Somalia and Ghana. Those survivors received medical attention for their burns, a common issue due to leaked engine fuel mixing with saltwater. On September 22nd, over 300 migrants were stopped and returned to Libya in a span of 48 hours. Most of those who return are sent to detention centers.

MOROCCO

Morocco's blocked border with Spain brings suffering

Six months of border closers due to Covid-19 restrictions have affected thousands of Moroccans who commuted to the Spanish [enclaves](#) of Ceuta and Melilla on a daily basis for work. Over 8000 people have lost their jobs in the two enclaves including restaurant staff, housekeepers, business traders and those in tourism. A month prior, 300 migrants were stopped by Spanish security forces as they tried to climb the fences into Melilla, with one recorded death and several others injured.

SUDAN

Devastating floods and Covid-19 put vulnerable populations at increased risk

According to the UNHCR the devastating [floods](#) throughout Sudan have put the lives of hundreds of thousands of refugees, internally displaced people, and host communities at increased risk at a time when the Covid-19 virus is spreading. Many of those affected by the flood have previously been displaced due to conflict and have been unable to earn a living because of Covid-19 restrictions. Furthermore, the threat of infection from Covid-19 and other diseases has increased; flooded latrines and contaminated water sources are impeding the practice of Covid-19 prevention measures such as frequent hand washing. Moreover, damaged health facilities have reduced the availability of services should the transmission of Covid-19 or other viruses increase.

TUNISIA

Steady rise in numbers of Tunisians attempting to cross to Italy

According to Tunisian authorities, 19 different boats carrying a total of 246 migrants were [intercepted](#) at sea in one single night. Out of those 246 passengers, only 29 were from other countries whereas the majority were of Tunisian nationality. UNHCR estimated that in August, 40% of all migrants who arrived in Italy were Tunisian. Since 2017, there has been a steady rise in the numbers of young Tunisian men attempting to cross into Italy. This increase in migration can be linked to current economic and political instability in Tunisia causing high unemployment as well as shrinking fish stocks.

GREECE

Arrivals to Greece by sea

85 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers [arrived](#) in Greece by sea in September. This figure represents a decrease of 81.4% in arrivals by sea from the previous month of August.¹

Fires ravage Europe's largest migrant camp

Massive fires have ravaged [Moria](#), Europe's largest migrant camp located on the island of Lesbos. The overcrowded facility hosts an estimated 13,000 people, more than six times its maximum capacity of 2200. According to the UNHCR, more than 4,000 children, including 407 unaccompanied minors, reside in the camp.

Temporary Camp at Kara Tepe

Although no one was hurt in the [Moria](#) blaze, thousands were left without shelter, sanitation or access to food and water. The Greek Government stated that it had moved around three-quarters of the 12,000 asylum seekers who had been stuck around the fire-ravaged Moria camp to the temporary camp of Kara Tepe on the island of Lesbos.

¹ Last seen the 18.10.2020.

ITALY

Arrivals to Italy by sea

4386 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers [arrived](#) in Italy by sea in September. This figure represents a decrease of 17.6% in arrivals by sea from the previous month of August.²

Stranded boat disembarks in Sicily

After being stranded for nearly 40 days at sea aboard a Danish [freighter](#), twenty-seven migrants were given authorization to disembark in Sicily after being transferred to an Italian NGO vessel, the “Mare Jonio.” Passengers aboard included a mother and a child.

Italian Authorities seize NGO ship

Italian port authorities seized the German-flagged NGO ship [Sea-Watch 4](#) in Palermo, with officials claiming that rescuing people was not in accordance with the ship’s registration. This is happening at a time when European authorities are struggling to find common ground in tackling the steady flow of migrants and refugees attempting to cross the Mediterranean from Africa to Europe. In this regard, Italy, a popular country of destination, due to its geographical position, has often reacted to the situation with harsh measures such as refusing to allow ships carrying rescued migrants and refugees to dock.

SPAIN

Arrivals to Spain by sea

5,044 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers arrived in Spain by sea in September, which represents an increase of 88.6% from figures of August.³

Arrivals to Spain by Land

26 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers arrived in Spain by land in September, which represents a decrease of 64.9% from figures of August.⁴

A more dangerous route to Europe

Although once a rare sighting in the [Canary](#) Islands, the arrival of precarious dinghies crammed with migrants has now become an almost daily occurrence. So far this year, there has been a 520% increase in migrant arrivals to the Canary Islands since the same period in 2019. According to the IOM, this perilous journey has claimed many lives where a total of 239 migrants have died attempting to reach the Canaries between January 1 and August 19 compared to 210 during the whole of 2019 and 43 during 2018. Most migrants attempting the crossing are from Africa’s Sahel region and Western Africa. Traffickers have lowered their prices from around \$2,377 to about \$951 and boats now depart from additional ports further south in Senegal and Gambia, making the journey even riskier.

² Last seen the 18.10.2020.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

MULTIMEDIA & EDITORIALS OF INTEREST

[Water wars: How conflicts over resources are set to rise amid climate change](#) – World Economic Forum

This article highlights the increasing frequency of competitiveness and conflict over scarce water resources due to climate change and a growing global population. It then goes on to offer recommendations on water conservation.

[The Smuggler Wore a Veil: Women in Algeria's Illicit Border Trade](#) - Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

This piece sheds light on how women in Algeria, despite assigned gender roles and social customs, are slowly turning to smuggling to support their families' meager incomes.

RESEARCH OF INTEREST

[The DTM Monthly Regional Update \(August-July 2020\)](#) – IOM

The DTM monthly update for the Middle East and North Africa Region contains consolidated updates and highlights from DTM field operations. This document consists of updates from the regional network of flow monitoring of migrants, as well as the tracking and monitoring of internal displacement in countries.

['We didn't think it would happen to us': Mapping of CwC Activities along the Central Mediterranean Route](#) - UNHCR

This report aims to inform the development of a comprehensive strategy on Communicating with Communities (CwC) for the entire Central Mediterranean Route by engaging with the persons taking part in irregular migration as well as the diaspora in Europe.

[Migration in West and North Africa and across the Mediterranean: Trends, risks, development and governance](#) – IOM

By using important new data from the past two years, this report provides a comprehensive, fact-based and fairer account of migration from and within West and North Africa and on routes towards the Mediterranean.

[Mapping of mixed migration research and collaborative initiatives in West and North Africa](#) - IOM

This report was developed to map the existing research conducted on issues around mixed migration throughout West, Central and North Africa between 2015 and mid-2020.