

Monthly Trend Report

Covering mixed migration to, through & from NORTH AFRICA

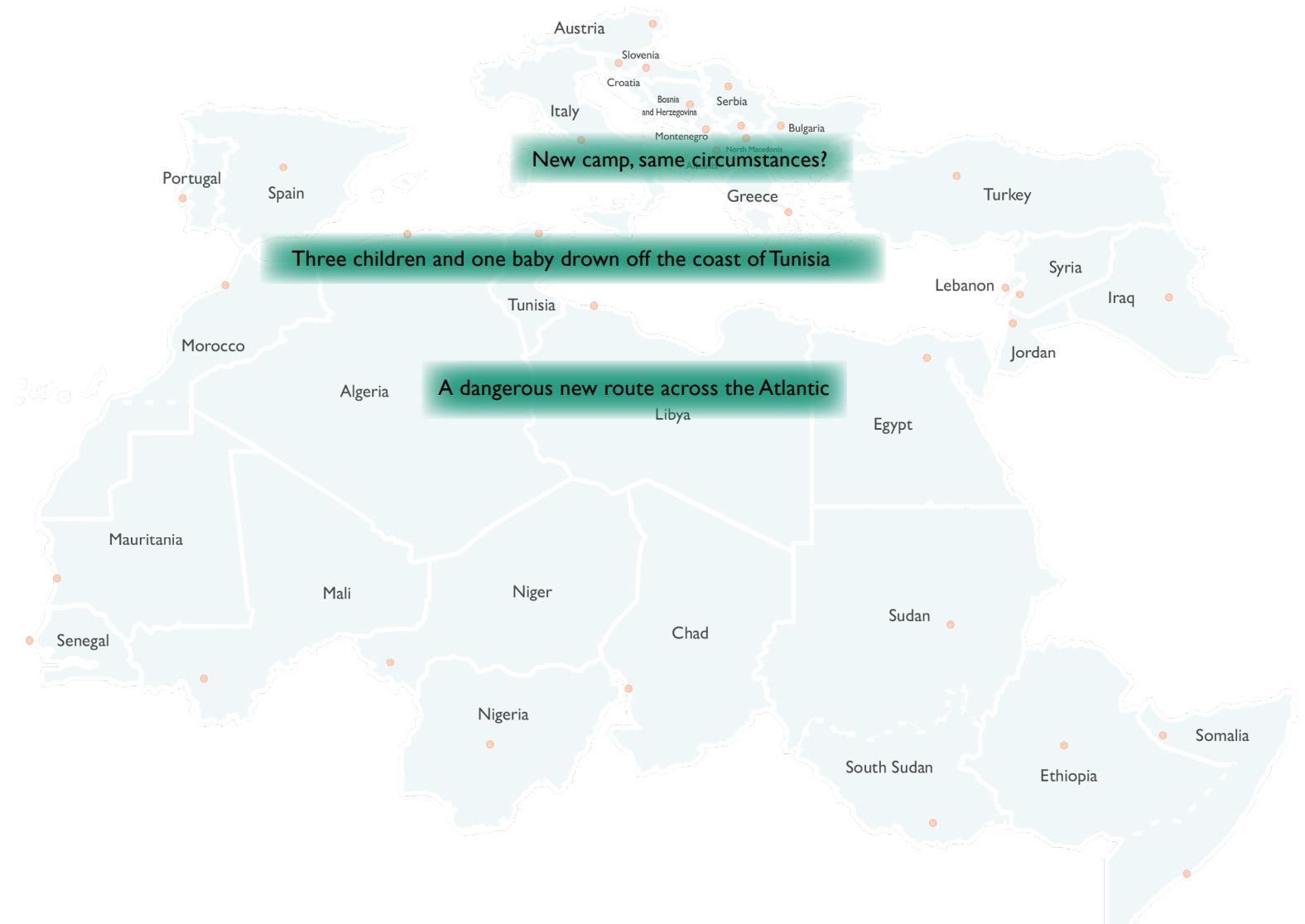
About: MHub is the regional knowledge hub and secretariat for the North Africa Mixed Migration Task Force, comprising of DRC, IOM, OHCHR, MMC, Save the Children, UNHCR, UNICEF and UNODC. It promotes a human rights-based approach to ensure the protection of people moving in mixed and complex flows to,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

A dangerous new route across the Atlantic

More African migrants have been making the [dangerous](#) journey across the Atlantic Ocean to the Canary Islands. The Mixed Migration Center (MMC), an independent research institute based in Geneva, thinks the global impact of the coronavirus pandemic may be to blame, especially with fewer smugglers now available on more common migration routes. Over the past few months, significantly fewer migrants have passed through Europe, but more Africans are now starting to get into boats. More than 7,000 Tunisians have set out across the Mediterranean since the beginning of the year —the highest number since the Arab Spring in 2011. In neighboring Libya, once one of the most important transit countries on the so-called central Mediterranean route, the smugglers have now become the customers of other smugglers.

A significant drop in remittances

As the COVID-19 [pandemic](#) and economic crisis continues to spread, the amount of money migrant workers send home is projected to decline 14 percent by 2021 compared to the pre COVID-19 levels in 2019, according to the latest estimates published in the World Bank's Migration and Development Brief. The foremost factors driving the decline in remittances include weak economic growth and employment levels in migrant-hosting countries, weak oil prices; and depreciation of the currencies of remittance-source countries against the US dollar. The decline for 2020 and 2021 is projected at 8% in the Middle East and North.

ALGERIA

More migrants rescued at sea

The Italian coast guard confirmed that on Sunday night it had saved six people from a [boat](#) that is thought to have set off from Algeria 10 days earlier. At least five of the migrants' companions died en route.

LIBYA

Maritime updates

According to IOM [data](#), 521 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers were rescued and returned to Libya in July. Of those who were saved in October, 30 were female, 466 were male, and 25 were children.

Migrants at risk of being kidnapped

An armed group in Libya is reported to have [kidnapped](#) 60 migrants — including two dozen children — about two weeks ago. They are holding them hostage in “appalling living conditions,” according to the latest statement from Doctors Without Borders (MSF). In a statement, MSF said that the armed group initially took around 350 migrants’ hostage, adding that most of them managed to escape while some others were released. The migrants were reported to mainly originate from West African countries. A shooting reportedly broke out following an attempted escape on October 2, and at least three people were killed in the melee.

First life-saving evacuation from Libya since suspension of services

A group of 153 vulnerable African [refugees](#) and asylum seekers were flown out of Libya to Niger this week on a plane chartered by the U.N. refugee agency. This was the first life-saving evacuation from Libya in seven months, after the operation was suspended because of COVID-19. COVID-19 cases continue to rise in Libya with The World Health Organization reporting more than 46,600 cases, including 681 deaths. So far, more than 3,400 migrants and asylum seekers are being held in government-run detention centers in Libya.

MOROCCO

New project on labor migration governance

A Regional [project](#) aimed at strengthening migrant workers' protection was launched Wednesday in Rabat in the presence of representatives of Moroccan government, ILO, IOM, EU and Germany. This program seeks to build a comprehensive approach in dealing with labor migration and mobility in North Africa. It is also meant to improve the governance of labor migration in Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt and create more job opportunities in Europe for professionals from these three countries.

SUDAN

Clashes, climate shocks and COVID-19 wreak havoc in Sudan

Clashes, [climate](#) shocks and COVID-19 are driving more Sudanese into poverty and threatening the health and well-being of hundreds of thousands of people who were already reeling from decades of conflict and violence. One in four Sudanese are estimated to face food shortages today as prices climb and clashes, droughts and floods destroy people's ability to farm.

TUNISIA

Three children and one baby drown off the coast of Tunisia

Authorities in [Tunisia](#) have now confirmed that at least 17 people died in the shipwreck that took place on Sunday, October 11 off the coast of Tunisia. Among those drowned, reported AFP, were three children, a baby "less than six months old, as well as seven women aged between 20 and 30 and two Tunisian men."

Unemployment in Tunisia leads to increased migration

Lebanon and Tunisia have never been large source countries of migrants to Europe, but this year [Tunisians](#) represent the biggest group of migrants – at 42 per cent, nearly double the figures from the last two years. Tunisian arrivals to Italy have now surged past those from Libya. Nearly 8,000 in total have attempted the journey since the beginning of the year. The covid-19 crisis, meanwhile, caused an economic decline of 21.6 per cent – the country's greatest contraction in history. As Tunisians grow increasingly frustrated with the country's plight, unemployment levels keep rising and protests are growing.

GREECE

Arrivals to Greece by sea

84 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers [arrived](#) in Greece by sea in October. This figure represents a decrease of 6.7% in arrivals by sea from the previous month of September.¹

New camp, same circumstances?

Following the fires at [Moria](#), almost 8000 people, mostly families with children, were relocated to a new camp on the island of Lesbos, where living conditions are reported as abysmal. With no access to running water, no sewage management and substandard shelter, residents of the camp are far more susceptible to the impacts of Covid-19. Women were also reported as being more at risk of sexual violence.

Germany receives migrants and refugees

Another [flight](#) bringing migrants, refugees and asylum seekers from Greece landed in the northern German city of Hanover on Thursday. A total of 66 people will be distributed across Germany, according to the German interior ministry. The majority of the new arrivals — 48 persons — belong to a contingent of more than 1,500 recognized refugees who were accepted by Germany after the destruction of the Moria migrant camp on the Greek island of Lesbos.

¹ Last seen the 20.11.2020.

ITALY

Arrivals to Italy by sea

3477 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers [arrived](#) in Italy by sea in October. This figure represents a decrease of 20.7% in arrivals by sea from the previous month of September.²

Increase in arrivals on Italian shores

[Arrivals](#) on Italy's shores rose dramatically over the past year, according to statistics released by the Italian interior ministry on August 15. A total of 21,618 migrants arrived between August 1, 2019 and July 31, 2020 -- compared to 8,691 people in the previous year, between August 1, 2018 and July 31, 2019. The increase represents a 148.7% increase in arrivals. A total of 2,886 unaccompanied minors arrived on Italian shores, an increase of 157.9%. The majority of them (16,347) arrived through autonomous landings.

In the first six months of 2019, the Italian [government](#) issued more than 100,000 new stay permits. In 2020, fewer than 43,000 were issued during the same period -- a 57.7% decline. This is a consequence of the coronavirus emergency, according to a report on non-EU citizens by Italian statistics bureau ISTAT.

SPAIN

Arrivals to Spain by sea

8,468 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers [arrived](#) in Spain by sea in October, which represents an increase of 68.1% from figures of September.³

Arrivals to Spain by Land

38 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers [arrived](#) in Spain by land in October, which represents an increase of 46.2% from figures of September.⁴

Arrivals to Canary Islands on the rise

While Mediterranean [crossings](#) are down this year, the number of arrivals across the Atlantic Ocean to Spain's Canary Islands has increased almost sevenfold compared to 2019. The treacherous Atlantic route to Europe has claimed over 400 lives so far in 2020. As authorities on the islands are struggling to cope with the pandemic and NGOs and officials alike are pressing for more help from the government, the local population is starting to lose its patience.

2 Last seen the 20.11.2020.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

MULTIMEDIA & EDITORIALS OF INTEREST

[Moving Beyond Pandemic: Human Smuggling in an Age of Pandemic](#)

As COVID-19 chilled global mobility, harmed economies, and sparked border closures and travel bans around the world, the pandemic has impacted the shadow migration world. In this podcast, the migration policy institute speaks with Matt Herbert, an expert in irregular migration and human smuggling, about how the public-health crisis has scrambled the decision-making calculus for would-be migrants, pushing many into more dangerous routes. The business models of human smugglers are also examined.

[World Cities Day: Cities lead the way in protecting forcibly displaced against impact of COVID-19](#)

Whether ensuring the inclusion of refugees and displaced people in COVID-19 prevention and response activities, providing shelter, health care, food and cash assistance, or halting forced evictions through moratoriums, a number of cities have been at the forefront in helping those forcibly displaced to cope through the pandemic.

RESEARCH OF INTEREST

Protecting migrants and refugees in North Africa: challenges and opportunities for reform

This paper looks at asylum, reception and migrant protection systems in Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria and Egypt. It seeks to understand some of the dynamics driving or preventing reform of these systems and proposes some initial entry points for international cooperation.

Human Mobility, Shared Opportunities:A Review of the 2009 Human Development Report and the Way Ahead

This UNDP publication recommends actions for policymakers to enhance the benefits and reduce the costs of human mobility to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. It looks at new patterns of human mobility, reviews progress made on recommendations in the previous report, analyses emerging challenges and sets out next steps. Human Mobility, Shared Opportunities recommends expanding legal pathways, reducing transaction costs on remittances, guaranteeing migrants' rights, especially for women, fostering integration and social cohesion, and mobilizing diasporas. With forced migration doubling over the last 10 years to around 79 million people, tackling its causes will be essential for development.

Africa Migration Report, Challenging the Narrative

The Africa Migration Report takes a distinctly regional approach to inform knowledge on migration in Africa. This first edition, titled Challenging the Narrative, aims to deconstruct negative perceptions of migration in Africa by addressing contextual realities and bringing to light practical interventions and evidence-based knowledge on what is happening on the ground.

IOM Continental Strategy for Africa 2020-2024

The Strategy lays the foundations for renewed and strengthened cooperation with the AUC, AU RECs, and African Union Member States as well as the UN system, among other key stakeholders, for better governance of African migration to foster inclusive and sustainable development in Africa.

It also underlines the needs and priorities of African countries, corresponding to the AU Agenda 2063 and other relevant international and regional instruments. Over the coming five years, key areas of trends and drivers will include climate change and environmental degradation, demographic and urbanization trends, the increasing feminization of migration, growing internal migration, and continued humanitarian and development challenges.