Tens of migrants lose their lives in the waters seeking to reach European shores

Independent fact-finding mission reveals abuses against migrants in Libya

Morocco hosts first ministerial meeting for GCM champion countries
The month of March was marked by alarming incidents in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic routes to Europe in which tens of migrants lost their lives. A mass crossing attempt involving thousands of migrants took place at the Spanish Moroccan border in Melilla. In Libya, a fact-finding mission revealed several violations being practiced against migrants in the country.

**ANOTHER DEADLY MONTH IN THE MEDITERRANEAN!**

At least 70 migrants went missing at sea and presumed dead off the Libyan shore in the first half of March, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The total number of migrants reported dead or missing in the Central Mediterranean reached 215 from the start of the year until 17 March, according to IOM’s Missing Migrants Project.

Elsewhere in the Mediterranean, about 20 migrants, most of them Syrians, lost their lives in a shipwreck off Tunisia as they tried to cross the Mediterranean to Italy. Another 9 migrants died after their boat sank near the port of Mahdia in a central-east region of Tunisia. In Greece, authorities said the bodies of six people believed to be possible migrants have been found off the island of Lesbos.

On the Atlantic Route between African coast and Spain’s Canary Islands, at least 44 migrants, including women and infants, drowned off the coast of Tarfaya (southern Morocco).

Four African migrants were found dead in eastern Tunisia after crossing over from Algeria, according to local authorities.

**HUNDREDS OF MIGRANTS ATTEMPT TO CROSS INTO MELILLA**

More than 2,500 migrants attempted to cross the high border fence separating Melilla from Morocco over two days early in March. A week later Around 1,000 migrants tried unsuccessfully to climb over the barrier into the Spanish enclave. Many migrants and Spanish police were injured as authorities attempted to stop the crossings.

Some of the migrants involved in the incident said they were trying to reach Europe out of desperation and that they will do it again if they get the chance. Desperation to reach Europe saw about 2,731 minors completing the journey last year, up from 561 four years earlier, the Tunisian Forum for Economic and Social Rights (FTDES) said.

**INDEPENDENT FACT-FINDING MISSION REVEALS ABUSES AGAINST MIGRANTS IN LIBYA**

An independent fact-finding mission established by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights documented numerous violations against migrants, refugees and asylum seekers that may amount to crimes against humanity, including consistent patterns of murder, torture, inhumane acts, rape, persecution and enslavement.

The mission’s chair said the violations occurred in Libya’s migration detention centers, in trafficking hubs, and in other contexts. The incidents we investigated included the raid in Tripoli in early October 2021 targeting foreigners and migrants, and abductions, torture and rapes perpetrated by human traffickers. The mission’s report is available here.

Germany’s foreign ministry announced it would be extending its participation in the EU monitoring mission Irini in the Mediterranean, but it would no longer commit to training the Libyan coast guard, due to concerns about their treatment of migrants.

Libya has opened a new center for migrants from North African countries on the airport road in Tripoli. IOM assisted the safe return home of 162 Nigerian migrants from Libya, the fourth such charter flight for this year. So far 19,452 Nigerians have been assisted to voluntarily return home between April 2017 and February 2022, with more than 500 assisted this year alone.
# MOROCCO HOSTS FIRST MINISTERIAL MEETING FOR GCM CHAMPION COUNTRIES

The Kingdom of Morocco hosted the first ministerial meeting of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) Champion Countries. The meeting is intended as a platform for exchange, consultation and dialogue on the progress, challenges and opportunities faced by states in the implementation of GCM and will highlight the commitment of champion countries for the promotion and implementation of the pact.

Moroccan Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates, Mr. Nasser Bourita, called at his speech at the event for the encouragement of regular migration and reducing the vulnerabilities of migrants.

## MIGRANT ARRIVALS

### GREECE

**ARRIVALS TO GREECE BY SEA**

367 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers arrived in Greece by sea in March. This figure represents a surge by 649% in arrivals by sea from the previous month of February.

### ITALY

**ARRIVALS TO ITALY BY SEA**

1,070 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers arrived in Italy by sea in March. This figure represents a fall of 56% in arrivals by sea from the previous month of February.

### SPAIN

**ARRIVALS TO SPAIN BY SEA**

316 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers arrived in Spain by sea in March, which represents a fall by 90% from figures of February.

**ARRIVALS TO SPAIN BY LAND**

887 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers arrived in Spain by land in March, a surge by 1748% compared to arrivals in February.

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1 Last seen the 04.04.2022.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
IN OTHER NEWS

- IOM in Morocco organized a workshop with key migration data producing bodies in the country to discuss key challenges, achievements and good practices in collecting, managing and disseminating migration data. Also in Morocco, the Sub-regional Office of North Africa, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) held a workshop on “Migration statistics and recognition of migrant skills in Morocco: Perspectives and Outlook”.

- Egypt’s parliament approved legal amendments toughening penalties on migrants smuggling. In Egypt as well, UNHCR and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, organized a two-day joint roundtable in support of the drafting process of the Asylum Law in Egypt.

- IOM and the African Union have signed an agreement to strengthen cooperation to assist the efforts of member states to develop and implement migration policies and institutional frameworks consistent with the UN Agenda 2030 and the African Union’s Agenda 2063.

- “Tounesna” a space to assist the reintegration of Tunisian migrants voluntarily returned to the country was inaugurated at the headquarters of the Office of Tunisians Abroad in Gafsa.
THE ATLANTIC ROUTE MISERY

2021 was a year in which migrants’ deaths at the Atlantic Route between African coast and Spain’s Canary Islands made the headlines. More desperate migrants were taking this dangerous route in hopes of reaching Europe. DW sheds light on the migrants taking this trip and the toll of 2021.

WORKING IN THE FIELD INFORMALLY DURING COVID-19 IN ALGERIA

Many irregular Sub-Saharan migrants work at the agricultural sector in Algeria before they move on their journey to Europe. The International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) interviewed migrants to highlight their life and work conditions during the Covid-19 health crisis and the challenges the pandemic imposed on them.

A LOOK AT THE BORDER WALLS SPREE GRIPPING THE WORLD!

More countries are now building or have built border walls to control movements across their borders. The migration Policy Institute’s Élisabeth Vallet attempts to understand the phenomenon, put it in its context and asses the efficiency of these walls.

THE STORY OF A SENEGALESE IRREGULAR MIGRANTS ACCUSED OF SMUGGLING OTHER MIGRANTS

A young Senegalese man was accused of people smuggling soon after he survived crossing the Mediterranean Sea. The BBC tells his story.

THE LIFE-SAVER SMARTPHONE!

A smartphone can be a lifeline for detained refugees. It can be their only communication link with the world, their trip-planning tool and a documentation tool of the abuses they are subject to. Wired digs into the various usages of smartphones by detained refugees. The author, Sally Hayden, is also the author of a book titled “My Fourth Time, We Drowned: Seeking Refuge on the World’s Deadliest Migration Route”

THE STORY OF MOUSSA

UN OHCHR and Reuters Visual Journalist Maurizio Martorana tell the story of Moussa, a Sudanese refugee living in Angers in France. Moussa speaks about his life in France, his hopes and aspirations.
The Challenge of Coordinating Border Management Assistance between Europe and the Maghreb
– Migration Policy Institute

This Transatlantic Council on Migration report examines the border security situation within the Maghreb, including Maghrebi states’ cross-border priorities and the structural factors impeding the development of better border security. It then takes stock of efforts by the European Union and its Member States to work with partners in the region to address border security challenges and offers lessons learned from experiences to date.

4Mi snapshot: Financing of human smuggling in West and North Africa – Mixed Migration Centre

This snapshot focuses on the economics and financing of smuggling of people on the move in West and North Africa. It draws on 5,171 surveys with refugees and migrants conducted in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Libya and Tunisia from February to October 2021. It is also based on 356 surveys among smugglers conducted in the same countries during the same period. It analyses fees for smuggler services and payment modalities, providing valuable insights on the overall dynamics of smugglers’ economic activities. This snapshot is produced in the context of a partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Observatory on Smuggling of Migrants.

*MHub does not vouch for the accuracy or reliability of articles in its Monthly Bulletin.
**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, UNFPA 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.