



**Regional mixed migration summary for February 2017 covering mixed migration events, trends and data for Djibouti, Eritrea, South Sudan, Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Puntland, Somalia, Somaliland and Yemen.**

**Terminology:** Throughout this report the term migrant/refugee is used to cover all those involved in the mixed migration flows (including asylum seekers, trafficked persons, smuggled economic migrants, refugees). If the caseload mentioned refers only to refugees or asylum seekers or trafficked persons it will be clearly stated.

Country	Events /trends /data /analysis
<p><b>Yemen</b></p>	<p><i>The conflict in Yemen entered its twenty-third month with shelling and fighting putting civilians at risk. As previously reported, due to the conflict, monitoring and data collection activities along the Red Sea and Arabian sea coasts continued to be affected, with a majority of monitoring exercises suspended. Therefore the data presented in this report concerning new arrivals in Yemen cannot be considered comprehensive or conclusive.</i></p> <p><b>Internal displacement:</b> There were approximately 2 million internally displaced persons in Yemen at the end of February 2017.</p> <p><b>Continued arrivals from the Horn of Africa:</b> In February 2017, at least 4,844 migrants and asylum seekers (3,703 Ethiopians and 1,141 Somalis) arrived from the Horn of Africa to Yemen via the Red Sea, Arabian Sea and Gulf of Aden. The overall arrival figures were slightly lower than in January 2017 (5,125), however there was a slight increase in arrival figures on the Red Sea route from Djibouti to Yemen, back on par with arrivals registered in the <a href="#">final quarter of 2016</a>. Due to the reduction of monitoring missions along the Yemeni coast, it is understood that the actual total number of arrivals from the Horn into Yemen is likely to have been higher during the period.</p> <p><b>Arabian Sea arrivals:</b> In February 2017, an estimated 3,709 (2,607 Ethiopian and 1,102 Somali) migrants and asylum seekers arrived in Yemen via the Arabian Sea.</p> <p><b>Red Sea arrivals:</b> An estimated 1,135 (1,096 Ethiopian and 39 Somali) migrants and asylum seekers arrived on the Red Sea coast of Yemen in February 2017, a slight increase on figures reported in January 2017 (967). Migrants and asylum seekers departed from Obock in Djibouti aboard 25 boats which landed in various towns in Lahj and Ta'iz governorates in Yemen.</p> <p><b>Ethiopian profiles, drivers, intentions and costs:</b> 83% of Ethiopian nationals encountered in Yemen identified themselves as Oromo reflecting an ongoing trend first witnessed in <a href="#">July 2016</a> with Oromo comprising an increasing proportion of Ethiopians on the move. Eight Ethiopian nationals were identified as asylum seekers. The primary drivers of migration cited by Ethiopians include lack of livelihoods and the severe drought being experienced in some parts of Ethiopia. The new arrivals expressed an intention to find work either in Yemen, Saudi Arabia or other Gulf States.</p> <p>Ethiopian migrants and asylum seekers continued to rely on smugglers and/or facilitators to enter Djibouti aboard cars and trucks, with some spending up to ten days walking segments of the journey. Some migrants reported paying between 7,000 – 20,000 Ethiopian Birr (approx. USD 305-872) for the journey to Obock.</p> <p><b>Somali profiles, drivers and facilitation:</b> Somali nationals encountered reported that they had originated from Mogadishu (South Central Somalia), Bossaso (Puntland) and Hargeisa (Somaliland). Most cited economic reasons as the primary driver of their migration. Somalis travelling to Yemen via Obock reported travelling by car for segments of the journey and on foot over the mountains to escape detection by Djiboutian authorities and possible deportation back home. The new arrivals reported paying between USD 40-150 for the entire journey.</p> <p><b>Migrant vulnerabilities:</b> Migrants and asylum seekers did not report many protection risks on the sea crossing from Djibouti to Yemen. One group of new arrivals reported an incident of sexual violence by Yemeni and Afari boatmen who also reportedly delayed landing the boats in order to facilitate the capture of migrants by criminal networks along Yemeni coastlines.</p> <p>Migrants and asylum seekers continued to report human rights violations upon arrival in Yemen. Abductions and</p>

	<p>interceptions by armed groups along Yemeni coastlines continued to account for the largest proportion of protection concerns. Based on interviews with 1,557 migrants/asylum seekers, 769 incidences of abduction were reported in the month, almost all of which were reported to have taken place on or near the shore upon arrival. Once captured by criminal and often armed groups, migrants are held for ransom in smuggling dens until they are able to raise enough money for their release. The death of 2 Ethiopian young men was reported by five of their friends who were released after their families paid a ransom of 18,000 to 23,000 Ethiopian Birr (approx. USD 785-1,000). The bodies of the two men were reportedly buried behind the smugglers' den.</p> <p>Those who escape or are released from captivity continue to report that they were mistreated and that some, particularly women and girls, were subjected to sexual violence including rape. At a smuggling compound, 10 women and/or girls were reported to have been sexually abused by smugglers until they were transferred and/or sold to traffickers for forced labour. As has been the trend, the new arrivals continue to speak openly and with more specificity about the rape and assault of the women in captivity.</p> <p>Protection issues reported by migrants transiting through Djibouti on their way to Yemen are reported in the Djibouti country section below.</p> <p><b>Military attack kills 42 Somali refugees off Yemen coast:</b> Media reports indicate that <a href="#">42 Somali refugees carrying official UNHCR documents</a> were killed on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2017 after a military vessel and later a helicopter gunship opened fire on a boat carrying between 140 and 160 migrants. According to a survivor, the boat departed from Ras Arra, along the southern coastline in Yemen's Hodeida province, and was 30 miles off the coast near the Bab al-Mandab strait <i>en route</i> to Sudan. <a href="#">About 75 men and 15 women are reported</a> to have survived the attack and were taken to detention centres in Hodeida. It was not immediately clear who carried out the attack. <a href="#">Humanitarian agencies</a> condemned the attack and the Somali government called on the Saudi-led coalition to investigate the raid. As conditions in Yemen deteriorate, it is <a href="#">reported</a> that refugees and asylum seekers are increasingly fleeing onwards across the Red Sea to Sudan with the intention of heading to Europe. <a href="#">RMMS first reported</a> on the use of this route in mid-2016.</p> <p><b>Departures from Yemen:</b> As of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016, an estimated total of 92,603 persons had fled Yemen to countries within the Horn of Africa (36,603 in Djibouti, 34,760 in Somalia, 14,102 in Ethiopia, and 6,838 in Sudan) since March 2015. Yemenis and Somalis continue to represent the largest proportion of people moving out of Yemen, accounting for 30% and 35% of movements respectively. Djibouti is the primary destination for Yemeni nationals, with 71% of those moving opting to travel to Djibouti. The general outflow of persons from Yemen has reduced since peak figures in 2015. More recent figures were not available at the time of writing this report.</p> <p>The latest statistics and overview of the displacement situation arising out of the Yemen crisis can be found on the UNHCR data sharing and information <a href="#">portal</a>.</p>
<p><b>Djibouti</b></p>	<p><b>Departures to Yemen:</b> In February 2017, an estimated 1,135 (1,096 Ethiopians and 39 Somalis) migrants and asylum seekers arrived along the Red Sea coast of Yemen. New arrivals landed aboard 25 boats in various towns in Lahj and Ta'iz governorates. Due to the reduction of monitoring missions along Yemen's coast, it is likely that the actual number of arrivals from the Horn of Africa to Yemen was higher during the period.</p> <p><b>Migrant vulnerability:</b> Migrants and asylum seekers transiting through Djibouti reported fewer protection concerns along the route to Obock compared to January 2017. However, there were continued reports of assault, robbery, forced labour, gender-based violence including rape, and extortion. In addition, many migrants suffer from exposure to harsh conditions, hunger, illness and dehydration. Four bodies of Ethiopian males were reportedly found in Tadjoura and appeared to have died from dehydration. Two Ethiopian males also died from dehydration in Obock. In Dikhil, 12 Ethiopian males were intercepted and deported back to Dire Dawa by Djiboutian military.</p>
<p><b>Somalia/ Somaliland</b></p>	<p><b>Somali refugees in the neighbouring countries:</b> As of 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017, there were 877,822 Somali refugees and asylum seekers being hosted in countries in the region. The majority of these refugees are hosted in three countries – Kenya (36%), Yemen (29%) and Ethiopia (28%).</p> <p><b>Internal displacement:</b> According to UNHCR, there are approximately 1.1 million internally displaced persons across the whole of Somalia (Somaliland, Puntland and South Central Somalia) a figure that has remained constant in recent</p>

	<p>months.</p> <p>Due to the current drought situation in Somalia that continues to displace populations within and outside the country, <a href="#">UNHCR has called</a> for swift, substantial and adequate funding to prevent famine in the country and a repeat of 2011, when some 250,000 people died, more than half of them aged under five. Since the beginning of 2017, more than 3,770 Somali new arrivals have been recorded at Melkadida in Ethiopia, and acute malnutrition reported in about 75% of arriving child refugees.</p>
<p><b>South Sudan</b></p>	<p><b>Regional displacement:</b> Displacement from South Sudan into neighbouring countries in the region continues to rise. As of 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017, there were 1,609,200 South Sudanese refugees displaced in the region. According to UNHCR more than 60,000 people were displaced in the first half of February alone, including some 48,000 who moved into Uganda, where daily arrivals surpassed 6,700. The majority of these refugees are being hosted in neighbouring Uganda (764,326), Ethiopia (345,687) and Sudan (332,885).</p> <p>UNHCR has warned that the South Sudanese refugee crisis is now the <a href="#">world's fastest growing</a> as a vicious combination of fighting and drought produce a famine that is displacing tens of thousands of people. UNHCR describes the new rate of displacement as “alarming” and an “impossible burden” on neighbouring host countries that are in critical need of help.</p> <p><b>Internal displacement:</b> According to UNHCR, as of 28 February 2017, there were 1.9 million people displaced inside South Sudan.</p> <p><b>Refugees in South Sudan:</b> As of 28<sup>th</sup> February, there were 260,868 refugees in South Sudan, the majority (92%) of whom are from neighbouring Sudan.</p>
<p><b>Sudan</b></p>	<p><b>EU urged to end cooperation with Sudan after abuse of migrants:</b> Members of the European parliament have called on the EU to rethink its cooperation with Sudan on migration flows after scores of asylum seekers, mostly from Ethiopia and some from Eritrea, were reportedly whipped, fined, jailed and deported from Khartoum following a peaceful protest in late February over a sharp rise in visa processing fees. According to <a href="#">media reports</a>, about 65 asylum seekers were lashed 40 times each on their backs and back of their legs with leather whips and fined more than USD 800. About 40 asylum seekers were also reportedly deported immediately to their home countries. This incident raises concern about the <i>refoulement</i> of asylum seekers and the human rights conditions in the country even as the EU seeks to strengthen cooperation with the Khartoum government to curb irregular migration. In 2016, the EU announced more than USD 100 million in development aid for Sudan to address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement.</p>
<p><b>Ethiopia</b></p>	<p><b>Refugees in Ethiopia:</b> As of 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017, there were 811,555 refugees and asylum seekers registered in Ethiopia. The majority of refugees are from South Sudan (349,086), Somalia (246,859) and Eritrea (167,619). According to UNHCR 81,078 Eritrean refugees previously registered as living in the camps are believed to have spontaneously settled elsewhere in Ethiopia. This figure is subject to verification.</p> <p>The EU continues its engagement with Ethiopia to address irregular migration from the country. The High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, Federica Mogherini, <a href="#">met with the Ethiopian Prime Minister</a> Hailemariam Desalegn in Addis Ababa on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2017 and discussed broad areas of cooperation, including economic investments, better migration management, current drought situation and support to refugees being hosted by Ethiopia. This follows earlier meeting held in February 2017 between the EU Vice President Mogherini and the Ethiopian Minister for Foreign Affairs Gabeyehu in Munich, Germany. Under the <a href="#">EU Trust Fund for Africa</a>, Ethiopia is set to benefit from regional programmes to tackle the root causes of irregular and forced migration with a focus on job creation including a facility to support returns and to help stranded migrants and their sustainable reintegration into communities.</p>

<p><b>Eritrea</b></p>	<p><b>UN criticises new Swiss policy on Eritreans:</b> The UN's Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants recently criticised Switzerland's decision to tighten its asylum policy towards Eritreans. In early February, the Federal Administrative Court of Switzerland ruled that it would no longer recognise Eritreans as refugees solely on the grounds of having fled their country illegally. Until recently, leaving Eritrea illegally was considered a legitimate reason for asylum in Switzerland, owing to the risk of facing up to five years in prison in Eritrea. The court's <a href="#">decision</a>, which cannot be appealed, concluded that the illegal exit from Eritrea could not "in itself justify recognition as a refugee".</p> <p>Mr Crépeau <a href="#">cautioned</a> that a high bar would be placed on the Swiss government to put in place a mechanism that could check that after returning failed Eritrean asylum seekers "nothing indeed happens", and warned against tightening asylum policies based on doubts. Instead he concluded that in the case of doubt, the government should err on the side of protection.</p>
<p><b>Kenya</b></p>	<p><b>Refugees in Kenya:</b> As of 28 February 2017, there were 492,761 refugees and asylum seekers in Kenya. The majority of refugees are Somali nationals (317,273), but other populous groups include refugees from South Sudan (93,613), DR Congo (29,530), and Ethiopia (27,586). The majority of refugees live in refugee camps across the country (425,494), while 67,267 refugees reside in Nairobi.</p> <p><b>Voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees:</b> The number of Somali refugees registering for support to return to Somalia continues to increase. In February 2017, 8,272 Somali refugees returned from Dadaab refugee camp to various locations within Somalia (a 63% increase on movements in January). Increased road convoys and the resumption of flights to Mogadishu have contributed to the boost in returns. The total number of Somali refugees returning to Somalia in 2017 stands at 13,357. A total of 53,755 have returned since the beginning of the voluntary return programme in 2014. The UN refugee agency, UNHCR, has come under <a href="#">criticism for continuing</a> the repatriation of Somali refugees which may endanger their lives as humanitarian agencies express concern about the worsening drought situation in Somalia calling <a href="#">for urgent action</a> and adequate funding to mitigate against a deterioration into famine.</p> <p><b>Draft National Migration Policy for Kenya:</b> The National Coordination Mechanism on Migration (NCM), a government led inter-agency body tasked with facilitating coordination, collaboration and information-sharing on migration issues at the national level, has completed a draft National Migration Policy for Kenya. The draft policy, now set for validation, covers various migration issues including citizenship, the management of foreign nationals, migration enforcement, trafficking in persons, refugee movement, labour migration and border management.</p> <p><b>IGAD to hold a special Summit on Somali refugees:</b> The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) will hold a special summit on Durable Solutions for Somali refugees on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2017 in Nairobi. The Summit, hosted by the Kenyan government, will seek to reinforce asylum and protection for Somali refugees in the region and renew efforts to find durable and sustainable solutions including voluntary repatriation, local solutions and resettlement and complementary pathways for admission.</p>
<p><b>Other regional news and news from other regions</b></p>	<p><b>Tunisia and Germany strike a new agreement to curb irregular migration:</b> In early March 2017, Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel announced a <a href="#">new agreement</a> with Tunisia aimed at curbing irregular migration from and/or through the northern African country and facilitating smoother repatriation of migrants whose asylum applications are rejected in Germany. In exchange, the German government will earmark <a href="#">250 million euros</a> to support rural development and vocational training in Tunisia. An estimated 1,500 Tunisian migrants are expected to be repatriated under this new agreement and the Tunisian government has reportedly dedicated an office at its Berlin consulate to facilitate the status determination of Tunisian asylum seekers.</p> <p>The EU entered into a similar <a href="#">agreement with Libya</a> in early February 2017 and is reported to be negotiating another <a href="#">controversial deal</a> with Egypt to curb irregular migration to Europe by establishing camps in the northern Africa country where irregular migrants will be processed to determine their eligibility for asylum in Europe. Egypt has rejected this proposal amidst a heightened crackdown on irregular migrants transiting through the country. In mid-March 2017, Egyptian security forces announced they had intercepted <a href="#">nearly 400 irregular migrants</a> attempting to enter Egypt through its southern and western borders. The nationalities of the intercepted migrants were not immediately clarified. Egypt has recently gained popularity as a transit country for migrants and asylum seeking to enter Europe via the</p>

Mediterranean Sea crossing.

**EU court rules that states can deny visas to refugees:** The European Court of Justice recently ruled that Member States can deny short-term humanitarian visas to people trying to enter a country with a goal to claim asylum. The court ruled against a Syrian family who had applied for the humanitarian visas at the Belgian embassy in Beirut in October 2016. The [ruling](#) held that: “Member States are not required, under EU law, to grant humanitarian visas to persons who wish to enter their territory with a view to applying for asylum”, and cautioned that allowing third-country nationals to obtain such entry visas to obtain international protection in the EU state of their choice “would undermine the general structure” of the bloc’s asylum system.

**Mediterranean Sea arrivals:** A total of 10,536 migrants and asylum seekers arrived in Europe via the Mediterranean Sea in February 2017. This represents a 53% increase on arrivals reported in January 2017. 85% of these flows (8,972 people) were counted along the Central Mediterranean route from North Africa to Italy. This represents a 134% increase on arrivals reported at the same time in February 2016 on this route. Data detailing the arrivals from the Horn of Africa were not available in time for this report. However countries from the Horn no longer feature amongst the top ten countries of arrivals suggesting that arrivals from the region in 2017 so far are much lower than in previous years.

**Migrant deaths:** IOM estimates that there were at least 327 deaths that occurred in the process of migrating in February 2017. The sea route across the Central Mediterranean, linking north Africa with Italy, continues to be the most deadly maritime route, accounting for 217 (66%) of all recorded deaths in February. The Central Mediterranean route has traditionally been highly frequented by nationals from the Horn of Africa (as well as West Africa).

**Burundian refugees in neighbouring countries:** Political tensions in Burundi, which erupted in April 2015, continue to push Burundian nationals to seek refuge in the region. As of 13<sup>th</sup> March 2017, there were 398,124 Burundian refugees displaced in neighbouring countries. The majority of the refugees are being hosted in Tanzania (236,696), where in late January 2017, the government announced the lifting of *prima facie* refugee recognition for Burundian refugees entering the country. All asylum seekers from Burundi who entered Tanzania from the 20<sup>th</sup> January, will now have to undergo Refugee Status Determination. According to UNHCR, the decision will have serious implications on the quality of refugee protection provided to Burundians fleeing to Tanzania. Other countries hosting sizeable populations include Rwanda (85,142), Uganda (44,985) and DR Congo (35,783).

**IOM concerned about the rise of anti-immigrant violence in South Africa:** The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has expressed concern over the latest [anti-immigrant violence in South Africa](#) warning that violence may escalate in future if the root causes of the xenophobic attacks are not addressed. The attacks have been reported in Rosettenville, South of Johannesburg and in Pretoria where property owned by foreign nationals was reportedly looted and burned. The protestors have accused African migrants of taking their jobs and being responsible for the rise in crime.

**New Research, reports or documents**

**Danish Refugee Council establishes the Global Mixed Migration Secretariat (GMMS):** After 5 years of the RMMS in the East Africa and Yemen region and the emergence of other RMMS and similar entities in other regions, in March 2017 the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) established the Global Mixed Migration Secretariat (GMMS) based in Geneva. This new office, started with 4 initial positions, aims to offer coordination and strategic guidance to existing and emerging RMMS entities while also serving to articulate DRC’s mixed migration policy and enhance protection operations and advocacy for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants on the move globally. Direct contact with the GMMS can be made through its coordinator at [geneva.representative@drc.dk](mailto:geneva.representative@drc.dk) and the Global Specialist Lead on Mixed Migration at [chris.horwood@regionalmms.org](mailto:chris.horwood@regionalmms.org).

**[Smuggled South: An updated overview of mixed migration from the Horn of Africa to southern Africa:](#)** Migrants from the Horn of Africa continue to travel along the southern route towards South Africa and almost all of them use smugglers to get to their final destination. This RMMS briefing paper provides an update on the volume, trends and dynamics of mixed migration and migrant smuggling along this route. It offers new estimates on the volume of migration and the value of the illicit migrant smuggling economy from Ethiopia and Somalia to southern Africa and highlights many of the protection issues migrants and refugees face while being smuggled south. The research draws upon data from the RMMS Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism initiative (4Mi), through which field monitors conducted 398 interviews in South Africa, as well as additional interviews in southern Africa and secondary research.

**[RMMS 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2016 trend summary and analysis:](#)** This report by RMMS provides an analysis of the mixed migration trends and displacement dynamics observed in the Horn of Africa and Yemen region in the last quarter of

2016. The report highlights the complex flows and data of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants from the Horn of Africa along four major migration routes, heading north, south, east and west, including the protection risks migrants face while on the move. Finally, the report reviews regional and global initiatives during the reporting period aimed at addressing irregular migration, trafficking and protection at sea.

**Dying to reach Europe: Eritreans in search of safety:** This new report by Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) examines in detail the hardships faced by Eritreans, both in Eritrea and in the course of their journeys in search of safety. Based on first-hand information from hundreds of conversations held with Eritrean refugees, including 106 in-depth testimonies, the report finds that Eritrean refugees are exposed (directly or indirectly) to severe levels of violence, including torture, kidnappings, sexual assault, robbery and extortion, in multiple locations throughout their journey from Eritrea to Europe. In the absence of safe alternatives, the report cautions that efforts by the EU to foster collaboration with governments such as Libya, Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea to curb irregular migration will further harm Eritreans (and other migrants) seeking international protection.

**A blueprint for despair: The EU-Turkey deal:** This new report by Amnesty International examines the human rights impact of the EU-Turkey migrant deal agreed in March last year. The report notes that even though the deal has stemmed the flow of migrants across the Aegean, this has come at a considerable cost to Europe's commitment to upholding the basic principles of refugee protection and the lives of thousands of migrants and asylum seekers trapped on Greek islands. The report cautions the EU against using the deal as a blueprint for new migration deals with countries such as Libya, Sudan, Niger and others and instead consider creating a bold, orderly system providing safe avenues for people seeking protection in Europe.

**Migrants in Sudan: Pilot study on migrants' motivations, intentions and decision-making in Khartoum:** This new pilot study by International Organization for Migration (IOM) seeks to provide a clear understanding of the migration dynamics along the Central Mediterranean route with a particular focus on migration towards and through Sudan. The study explores motivations and intentions of international migrants in Sudan, from the perspective of migration towards Sudan, life in Sudan after migration and onward migration from Sudan, to understand migration related decision making. The study also covers migration routes, information exchange and possibility of return.

**Journeys on hold: how policy influences the migration decisions of Eritreans in Ethiopia:** This new report by the Overseas Development Institute draws interesting conclusions on the policy factors that influence Eritrean refugees' decisions to remain in Ethiopia or leave. According to the findings, efforts to reduce irregular and dangerous secondary migration among Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia, such as livelihood support and vocational trainings, are being undermined by the fact that refugees are denied the right to work. While this supports refugees to meet basic needs, it has a limited effect on people moving. Moreover, it concludes that the gains made by refugee resettlement weaken over time, as people's trust in the formal system declines, resulting in a gradual deflection into irregularity.

*This information sheet is distributed to over 1,200 agencies, academic institutions, donors, embassies, journalists, government officials / departments, international and multi-national organisations and related non-government organisations. Sources: Data is sourced from a wide variety of collaborators, partners, international and local organisations, media outlets and individuals in the region. The key refugee agency – UNHCR – and migration agency – IOM – are frequently the origin of specific refugee or migrant return-related data. RMMS is a unit/project within the Danish Refugee Council and also uses data and information generated by DRC activities. RMMS makes its own independent editorial decisions as to what sections and what data is included in this monthly update.*