



MMC West Africa

QUARTER 4 2019

Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: West Africa



This Quarterly Mixed Migration Update (QMMU) covers the West Africa (WA) region. The core countries of focus for this region are Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso and Nigeria. Depending on the quarterly trends and migration-related updates, more attention may be given to any of the countries over the rest.

The QMMUs offer a quarterly update on new trends and dynamics related to mixed migration and relevant policy developments in the region. These updates are based on compilation of a wide range of secondary (data) sources, brought together within a regional framework and applying a mixed migration analytical lens. Similar QMMU's are available for all MMC regions.

The Mixed Migration Centre is a global network consisting of seven regional hubs and a central unit in Geneva engaged in data collection, research, analysis and policy development on mixed migration.

For more information on the MMC, the QMMU's from other regions and contact details of regional MMC teams, visit mixedmigration.org and follow us at [@Mixed_Migration](https://twitter.com/Mixed_Migration)

MMC's understanding of mixed migration

"Mixed migration" refers to cross-border movements of people, including refugees fleeing persecution and conflict, victims of trafficking, and people seeking better lives and opportunities. Motivated to move by a multiplicity of factors, people in mixed flows have a range of legal statuses as well as a variety of vulnerabilities. Although entitled to protection under international human rights law, they are exposed to multiple rights violations along their journey. Those in mixed migration flows travel along similar routes, using similar means of travel — often travelling irregularly, and wholly, or partially, assisted by migrant smugglers.

Front cover photo credit:

Jean-Baptiste Joire (2017)

Women watching boats in Joal-Fadiout, Senegal, February 2017.

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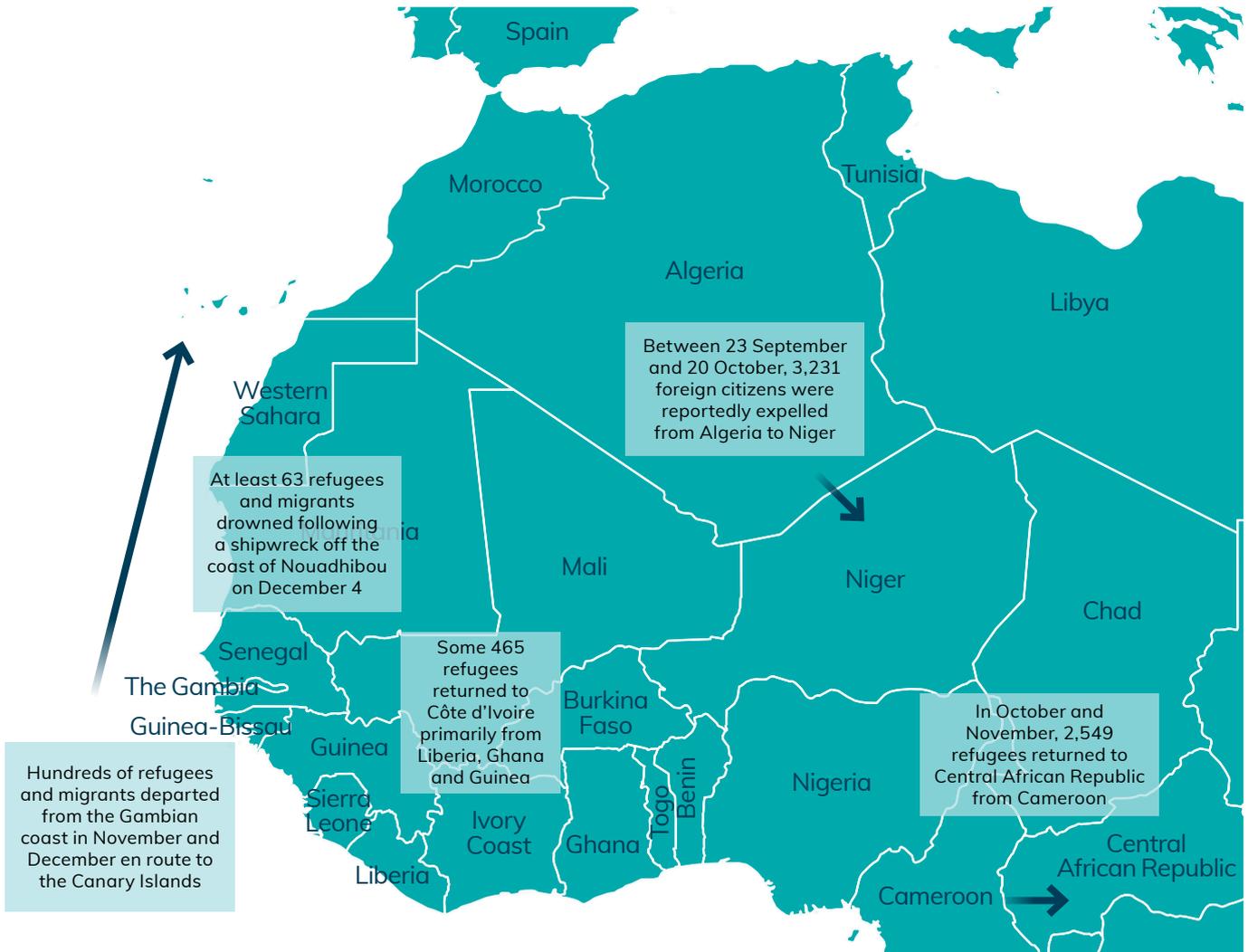
Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: West Africa

Quarter 4 - 2019

Key Updates

- **Shipwreck off Mauritania:** On 4 December 2019, a ship carrying between [150](#) and [200](#) refugees and migrants traveling from the Gambia to the Canary Islands foundered off the coast of Nouadhibou, on the north coast of Mauritania. The boat had reportedly departed from the Gambian coast on 27 November, meaning that those on board had been at sea for more than a week at the time of the wreck. At least 63 refugees and migrants drowned in the shipwreck. The majority of the [87 survivors](#) initially registered by IOM were Gambian; 13 were reported to be [Senegalese](#).
- **1000% increase in Burkina Faso internal displacement in 2019:** As of 31 December the number of IDPs in Burkina Faso was estimated at [560,033](#). This increase of more than 1000% over the 47,029 IDPs recorded at the beginning of the year highlights the dramatic deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation which has occurred in 2019.
- **Migrant detention in Niger:** In its review of the human rights situation in Niger taking place in late November into early December 2019, the [UN Committee Against Torture](#) expressed concerns about detention of migrants. The Committee highlighted the need for Niger to transition from a security-based approach to managing migration to a [rights-based approach](#).
- **Decrease in Western Mediterranean arrivals over 2018:** As of the end of December 2019, the Western Mediterranean Route was showing a 50% decrease in land and sea arrivals to [Spain](#) as compared to 2018. Through the end of October 2019, West Africans had made up approximately 41% of these arrivals, with Guineans comprising 13%, Malians 11%, Ivoiriens 9% and Senegalese 8%.
- **Asylum-seekers protest in Agadez:** In mid-December [hundreds of asylum-seekers](#) marched from their camp some 18km outside of Agadez into the city, staging a twenty day [sit-in](#) in front of the UNHCR offices in Agadez to protest delays in the asylum process and challenging humanitarian conditions in their camp. In early January there were [reports](#) of force used by authorities to break up the protest, and an escalating situation which led to burning of the majority of the reception center.
- **Massive expulsion from Algeria:** NGO Alarme Phone Sahara reported a [significant expulsion](#) of foreign citizens from Algeria taking place over a one month period. They stated that 3,231 persons of various nationalities had been expelled into Niger between 23 September and 20 October 2019.

Regional Overview*



*Information on the map relates to selected updates and does not represent all mixed migration flows within and out of West Africa.

Mixed Migration Regional Updates

Mixed migration within West Africa

The security situation in the final quarter of 2019 continued to be precarious. A single attack in Western Niger, claimed by Islamic State in Western Sahara Province, killed [71 Nigerien soldiers](#), while more than [100 Malian soldiers](#) were killed in Mali in attacks attributed to Islamic State and Al Qaeda in October and November. According to [ACLED](#), “militant activity also remained high in Burkina Faso.”

In early December, following a 10 day mission to **Mali**, the [UN Independent Expert](#) on the human rights situation in Mali raised a warning that the country’s security situation “has now reached a critical threshold.” This is characterized by “a limited presence of State institutions in some areas, unprecedented incidents of violence across communal lines, and increasingly deadly terror attacks against the security forces as well as civilians.”

Notwithstanding the acute security environment, the numbers of Malian refugees hosted in its neighboring countries of Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Niger did not change significantly during the year. As of 31 December 2018, it stood at some [136,032](#) persons, and had risen to some [138,659](#) persons as of 30 November 2019. However, the number of IDPs within Mali rose substantially. As of the end of November 2019, [UNHCR](#) reported some 201,429 IDPs in the country, an increase of 81,131 since the beginning of the year.

During the last week in September and the first week of October 2019, [UNHCR](#) data showed a precipitous increase in the number of IDPs in **Burkina Faso**, from 289,591 IDPs as of 23 September to 486,360 IDPs as of 8 October. It seems, however, that this large jump in numbers is due primarily to [improvements](#) in the registration process that have captured previously displaced persons. As of 31 December the number of IDPs in Burkina Faso was estimated at [560,033](#). This increase of more than 1000% over the 47,029 IDPs recorded at the beginning of the year highlights the dramatic deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation which has occurred in 2019.

In the middle of December following a [mission](#) to **Niger**, the UN Assistant-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator stated that “the United Nations is extremely concerned about the situation in Niger, and in particular about the humanitarian consequences of the growing insecurity in neighboring countries and the devastating effects of climate shocks.”

While the number of refugees in Niger has remained relatively [consistent](#) throughout 2019, with the exception of a spike in refugees from northwestern **Nigeria** going to the Maradi region (see below), the situation remains grave. More than 400,000 people have been forcibly displaced, with approximately 188,372 IDPs and 221,392 refugees reported by [UNHCR](#) as of the end of October, which also marks an increase in IDPs of approximately 30,574 since the beginning of [2019](#). Over the course of the [year](#) some 250 civilians were killed and almost 320 people were abducted, with displaced persons and their hosts particularly vulnerable. The UN estimates that 2.3 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance.

As of the 31 December, some [35,363 refugees](#) from Nigeria had undergone individual and biometric registration in the Maradi region of Niger. They had fled ongoing violence in the northwestern Nigerian states of Katsina, Sokoto and Zamfara, and ended up in more than 50 villages in the Nigerien departments of Guidan Roumji, Guidan Sori and Tibiri. Reports from USAID as of mid-December put the number of refugees in Maradi at approximately [42,000](#), suggesting that others are still undergoing or have yet to start the registration process.

The [closure of Nigeria's land borders](#), which dates from late summer, continued during the final quarter of the year. The Nigerian government has stated the objective of reducing cross-border smuggling of goods such as rice and petroleum that can undermine its domestic markets. Given the interconnectivity of border communities and economies, the decision has had negative consequences for livelihoods in communities on both sides of the border. Additionally, there have been reports of repercussions for [Nigerian traders in Ghana](#), with the closure of 400 shops on pretexts that had previously been overlooked, and the alleged harassment of traders in Accra.

Returns

As of the end of November, UNHCR had supported the voluntary repatriation from **Cameroon** of [2,549 refugees](#) from the **Central African Republic**. UNHCR's goal for 2019 was to assist [4,000 Central Africans](#) to return from Cameroon out of the 6,350 who had registered.

As of 30 November, some [465 refugees](#) had voluntarily returned to **Côte d'Ivoire** within the quarter. This brought the total of returns to 2,224 for the year to date, with the majority (1020) coming back from Liberia, followed by Ghana (656) and Guinea (361).

Policy updates

In its review of the human rights situation in **Niger** taking place in late November into early December 2019, the [UN Committee Against Torture](#) expressed concerns about detention of migrants. It pointed to Niger's anti-smuggling law, Loi 2015-36, as helping to create the conditions for abuse of human rights by forcing migration underground, leading to more dangerous routes and riskier situations. The UN experts raised questions and concerns about alleged inhumane treatment of detained migrants; return of migrants to situations in which they could be vulnerable to torture or other abuses; the lack of recognition and protection for unaccompanied child migrants; and the need for Niger to ensure that foreign security forces combatting irregular migration within its territory upheld the human rights of migrants.

The response of the Nigerien delegation highlighted its agreements with UNHCR and IOM. It also pointed out that "no migrant was prosecuted because of their migratory status," stating that "they were prosecuted because they committed a crime."

The Committee emphasized the need for Niger to transition from a security-based approach to managing migration to a [rights-based approach](#). It [called upon Niger](#) to: guarantee that all "allegations of violence or excessive use of force against migrants and asylum-seekers are promptly, thoroughly and impartially investigated and that those responsible are prosecuted and punished"; establish and ensure "decent and safe reception conditions" for asylum seekers and migrants; limit detention of migrants to situations of last resort; and "ensure full respect for the principle of non-refoulement," also guaranteeing the right of appeal which would suspend removal pending judicial review.

In late November, the Government of **Mali** hosted back-to-back meetings of the two Tripartite Commissions governing the Tripartite Accords on the voluntary repatriation of Malian refugees living in Burkina Faso (ninth meeting) and Niger (thirteenth meeting) respectively. The Commissions are comprised of the Malian government, UNHCR, and the governments of Burkina Faso and Niger. The joint communique from the meeting of the [Burkina Faso](#) commission highlighted the surge in attacks in Burkina Faso which has shrunk the protection space and made access to refugees and asylum seekers more difficult. It also noted that as of 31 October 899 refugees had voluntarily returned to Mali since the beginning of the year, and 3,005 others had registered for return. The joint communique from the meeting of the [Niger](#) commission made note of the prevailing state of emergency in the regions of Tillabéry and Tahoua, and the presence of 57,274 Malian refugees in Niger living in a concerning security context at the borders of the two countries. Some 3,669 Malian refugees in Niger have registered their intention to return.

Returns from Europe

A new [migration decree](#) promulgated by the Italian government is intended to reduce the time it takes for asylum decisions to be taken from two years to just four months. This would correspondingly lead to faster repatriations of those who are not granted asylum. The West African nations of **Cape Verde, Ghana and Senegal** were among the thirteen countries whose citizens are covered by the decree, given their designation by the Italian government as “safe countries of origin.” According to the Italian Foreign Minister, “We are working to avoid creating a pull factor for migrants, by giving a clear message that those who need help are welcome but those who, based on international rules, cannot stay here will be repatriated.” The Director of the Department of Senegalese Abroad of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that he could not confirm whether the [Senegalese government](#) was aware of the new measure.

[German news sources](#) reported in October that the government of **The Gambia** had relented from its absolute refusal to accept deportations of its citizens, expressed in a moratorium on deportations it had issued in [March](#) of 2019. A local [German refugee assistance agency](#) confirmed that 9 Gambians were therefore deported in the fourth quarter of the year. However, the EU Commission has been seeking acceptance from the Gambian government to enact deportations on a larger scale, utilizing charter flights, rather than at a smaller scale on commercial flights.

While German sources expressed that the moratorium had been lifted, a recent statement from the Gambian government suggests that negotiations are still ongoing. According to the [Gambian Foreign Minister](#), “modalities are to be worked out with partners regarding the repatriation of Gambians abroad given that the moratorium placed by the Government of The Gambia is to be expired in January 2020.”

Estimates vary, but it appears there are up to [3,400](#) Gambians in Germany who could be deported. The issue of deportation is a [sensitive](#) one in the Gambia, where many families have connections abroad, and depend on these ties for economic support. Prior to the enactment of the March moratorium, social media and public protests had erupted. The limited resumption of deportations late this year has not gone unremarked; the Public Relations Officer [Gambia Refugees Association Europe Branch](#) issued the following statement in a press release from mid-November: “Our association denounced this form of humiliating and inhumane treatment and calls for an immediate stop to it.”

Mixed migration from West Africa towards North Africa and Europe

As of the end of December 2019, the **Western Mediterranean Route** was showing a 50% decrease in land and sea arrivals to [Spain](#) as compared to 2018. Through the end of October 2019, West Africans had made up approximately 41% of these arrivals, with Guineans comprising 13%, Malians 11%, Ivoiriens 9% and Senegalese 8%. [IOM's Missing Migrants Project](#) recorded 155 migrant deaths along the Western Mediterranean Route from October – December 2019.

In terms of arrivals associated with the **Central Mediterranean Route**, West Africans were not as substantially represented. Ivoiriens were the third most common nationality of sea arrival in [Italy](#) through October 2019 (11%), and Guineans were the ninth (2%). Ivoirien sea arrivals had almost doubled since the end of [August](#), and their total of 1,020 was on par with 2018 arrivals through October ([1,049](#)). However, West African representation was down as compared to 2018, when Nigerians and Malians were also among the top ten nationalities of arrival in Italy.

Southbound mixed migration from North Africa

Expulsions from Algeria

A [bus accident](#) in early October 60 km from Arlit in northern Niger resulted in the deaths and serious injuries of four or five Nigerien refoulés from Algeria. Accidents along this route are [common](#), and it is also not the first time that [expelled foreigners from Algeria](#) have been affected by a bus disaster.

In mid-October, [IOM](#) organized the first charter flight of Nigerien nationals from Tamanrasset, in southern Algeria, to the Nigerien capital Niamey. 166 migrants returned on the flight, 18% of whom were selected due to specific vulnerabilities, such as medical needs. At least one other such flight occurred during the quarter, with [113 Nigerien migrants](#) assisted to return from Algeria to Niamey in late October. IOM explains that the inauguration of charter flights from Algeria to Niger is intended to avoid the difficult overland journey. The NGO [Alarme Phone Sahara](#) has suggested that these charter flights assist the government of Algeria in carrying out its objectives of deportation. The [UN Special Rapporteur for the Human Rights of Migrants](#) has expressed concern about this ongoing practice by the Algerian government, but in his report of 16 May on his mission to Niger stated that “IOM and other humanitarian actors declined to support these operations as being contrary to international law.” It is not clear whether some migrants who participated chose to return through this method rather than face expulsion by the Algerian government.

According to [MSE](#), an average of 500 people a week are being expelled from Algeria to Niger. From January to October 2019, more than 23,800 people were expelled from Algeria, half of them forcibly. It appears that expulsions for the year may meet or exceed the 2018 number of more than 25,000. While Nigerien citizens have the option of returning to their country in organized convoys, other nationalities are dropped at the border and must walk around 15 km through the desert to reach the town of Assamaka in Niger. Many attempt to re-enter Algeria within 24 hours from their expulsion, assisted by local smugglers; however, the Nigerien authorities forcibly return others to Algeria, including some Syrians, Bangladeshis and Yemenis.

Providing further detail on this phenomenon, Alarme Phone Sahara's monitors in Niger's Agadez region reported a [significant expulsion](#) of foreigners from Algeria taking place over a one month period. They stated that 3,231 persons of various nationalities had been expelled into Niger between 23 September and 20 October.

Assisted movements to and from Niger

In November [IOM](#) reported that its Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration program had supported 40,000 migrants to go back to their countries of origin from Niger since the program began in 2015. It has seen an increase in requests for return assistance in consecutive years since the passage of Niger's *Loi 2015-36*, and in the first three quarters of 2019 alone nearly 12,000 migrants took part in the program.

The arrival in Niger of 43 Eritrean, Sudanese and Syrian refugees [evacuated from Libya](#) in late November appears to signify the re-commencement of UNHCR's Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM) in Niger following a period of several months without significant evacuations there. Earlier in the month [54 refugees](#) who had previously been brought to Niger from Libya under the ETM were relocated to Italy. The group was comprised of Eritreans, Ethiopians and Sudanese, and included 23 children.

Asylum seeker protests

Protests on the part of Sudanese asylum-seekers in Niger resulted in a literal conflagration in early January. The protests began in mid-December when [hundreds of asylum-seekers](#) marched from their camp some 18km outside of Agadez into the city, staging a twenty day [sit-in](#) in front of the UNHCR offices in Agadez. Many had been awaiting progress in their cases since 2017, and were protesting the slow speed and opacity of the asylum process and challenging humanitarian conditions in an environment in which desert temperatures can reach 50 degrees Celsius. They also expressed concerns over declining security in Niger.

[Reports](#) suggest that asylum-seekers were injured as the police used tear gas and force to break up the protest, and as the situation escalated, the asylum seekers reportedly set fire to parts of the camp. UNHCR Special Envoy for the Central Mediterranean, [Vincent Cochetel](#), stated that "80% of the reception centre destroyed by a minority of refugees from Darfur in Agadez who only want to hear about resettlement to Europe." However, according to one of the [asylum-seekers](#) speaking during the sit-in, "We have very clear demands consisting of living in decent conditions and to provide us refugees cards. If we were seeking to go to Europe we would not come to Niger. We came here seeking protection as refugees and this is why we want the UNHCR to deliver us the refugee cards."

Following the incident, [Nigerien authorities arrested](#) at least 335 of the asylum seekers, and reportedly only around 400 remain in the camp, down from approximately [1500](#) earlier in 2019. One aid worker in Agadez indicated that asylum seekers were departing for Algeria, returning to Sudan or even going back to Libya on account of the slow asylum process and difficult conditions in the desert camp.

Thematic focus: Atlantic departures and Canary Island arrivals

The so-called “cayuco crisis” (or boat crisis) of the mid 2000s has in recent years been overshadowed by Mediterranean arrivals to Italy and Greece, and more recently by an upsurge of sea arrivals to mainland Spain. However, in 2006 the arrival of more than 31,000 refugees and migrants – primarily from sub-Saharan Africa – to the Canary Islands was considered an onslaught and spurred deterrent policies on the part of Spain that have been seen as a model for more recent European policy. Now that such measures are helping to stem migration flows elsewhere on the continent, the ironic result may be a return to greater numbers of refugees and migrants seeking to reach the Canary Islands.

Maritime disasters

On 4 December 2019, a ship carrying between [150](#) and [200](#) refugees and migrants traveling from the Gambia to the Canary Islands foundered off the coast of Nouadhibou, on the north coast of Mauritania. The boat had reportedly departed from the Gambian coast on 27 November, meaning that those on board had been at sea for more than a week at the time of the wreck. At least 63 people drowned in the shipwreck. The majority of the [87 survivors](#) initially registered by IOM were Gambian; 13 were reported to be [Senegalese](#). According to IOM, this was the worst maritime disaster on the Western Mediterranean Route in 2019.

Figures are fundamentally unreliable for both deaths at sea, and arrivals in the Canary Islands and Spain more broadly, given that there is no record of how many boats and people have departed from the West African coastline, and it is easy for these small boats to disappear at sea without anyone’s knowledge or to land undetected. However, [IOM’s Missing Migrants Project](#) recorded 43 deaths in five shipwrecks along the route to the Canary Islands in 2018, and 143 deaths in 11 such disasters in 2019.

Canary Islands as destination once again?

It is notable that within just a little more than a week of the Nouadhibou shipwreck, at least two other boats were intercepted. On December 6th, [Mauritanian authorities](#) stopped a boat carrying approximately 190 Gambian nationals. On the 11th of December, a boat carrying approximately 30 [people](#) (20 Gambians and 10 Senegalese) was intercepted off the coast of Dakar by Senegalese police. It was said to have originated from the Gambian coast.

While the number of [arrivals in Spain](#) as a whole (including the Spanish mainland, Canary Islands and enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla) decreased by more than half in 2019 over 2018 (32,513 arrivals as compared to 65,383), the Canary Islands route showed an increase. In 2019, [UNHCR](#) recorded some 2,698 arrivals, more than double the number of [1,305](#) it had recorded in 2018, which in itself saw a [264% increase](#) in arrivals over 2017. The 2019 total includes a particular uptick in arrivals at the end of the year, with [495 refugees and migrants](#) reportedly landing in the Canary Islands in October, 517 in November and more than [700](#) in December. And, as is clear from the above, not all boats that set out for the Islands will actually reach them.

This trend has not gone unnoticed by European actors. Spanish preoccupation about the possible reopening of the Canary Islands route dates back to at least June of 2018, when the Director General of International Relations and Foreign Affairs of Spain expressed “[concern](#)” that there could be further attempts from Senegal and other countries on the so-called “Atlantic route” to reach Europe. In examining arrivals from Africa in the Canary Islands, the [Frontex Risk Analysis 2019](#) noted that during 2018 “on the Western African route, a strong increase in detected irregular migrants was registered.” According to human rights activist and founder of [Caminando Fronteras](#) (Walking Borders), Helena Maleno, the European border and coast guard agency, Frontex, has been present in the Canary Islands in recent months, seemingly in reference to the re-opening of this route.

Historical patterns...

[Irregular migration to the Canary Islands](#) began to pick up from the late 1990s into the early 2000s as Spain increased deterrent measures in other locations, such as through the installation of radar surveillance along its mainland coast, and later as it improved relations and cooperation with the [Moroccan government](#), helping to choke off more northerly routes. In the early 2000s these factors were coupled with increased demand for a [western migration route](#) on the part of sub-Saharan Africans, who were being expelled from Libya in the tens of thousands as the Qaddafi regime turned away from pan-Africanism. The boat routes grew in importance and also began to shift southward towards Senegal and ultimately the Gambia, culminating in the arrivals some [31,678 refugees and migrants](#) in 2006, half of whom were Senegalese. This unprecedented number severely overtaxed the reception capacity of the Canary Islands.

According to [a study by Saferworld](#), “the 2006 ‘boat crisis’ spurred a new set of border control and development aid ‘innovations’ that have lingered ever since as a blueprint for externalised border controls.” These measures include increased development cooperation between Spain and West African countries such as Senegal, but also an increased securitization of the Atlantic coast with both EU and Spanish sponsored patrols. It certainly seems that the measures taken by Spain and the EU more broadly to combat the “cayuco crisis” achieved their desired goals. From a peak of some [31,678 arrivals](#) in the Canary Islands in 2006, subsequent years saw the numbers progressively decrease: approximately 12,478 in 2007; 9,181 in 2008; and 2,246 in 2009 and 196 in 2010. Arrivals remained [below 1,000 annually](#) between 2010 and 2017, and according to an official at the [Spanish embassy in Dakar](#), “from 2009 to 2017, no cayuco arrived in the Canary Islands from Senegal. “

...and present-day circumstances

Spain continues to play an important role in the migration security arrangements off the Atlantic coast. According to [ABC](#), a Spanish news source, “Since the arrival of more than 31,000 sub-Saharan by sea from Senegal and Mauritania in 2006, Spain has not ceased to devote resources to blocking this route.” In Mauritania, [Spain](#) currently employs two Maritime Service patrol boats and a helicopter, as well as supporting land patrols. Its police also sponsor an International Cooperation Team comprised of five agents from each country. In [Senegal](#) Spain has deployed one helicopter from its National Police and two Guardia Civil boats to patrol along Senegal’s coast in conjunction with Senegalese authorities with the objective of halting attempts at irregular migration. According to a source from the [Spanish embassy in Dakar](#), this cooperation produces “a significant deterrent effect.”

A returned migrant interviewed as part of an IOM study on [recent migration dynamics in Senegal](#) sees it differently, however, stating that “the reinforcement of security does not prevent departures but just changes the points of departure (Rufisque, Kayar).” The same study found that respondents from key migrant sending locations in Senegal considered the sea route to be the most accessible and the least costly option. At the same time, there were multiple departures from [the Gambia](#) late in the year, and its small strip of coastline is less guarded. Previous Spanish attempts at cooperation on migration were impeded by the difficulty of working with the dictatorship of Yaya Jammeh, but they have picked up again with the new administration of Adama Barrow. Early in 2019 there were two high-level visits made by Spanish officials to the Gambia to discuss migration and cooperation; one by the Minister of the Interior and the other by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. However, the political situation in the Gambia is also tenuous, and [mass protests](#) early in 2019 speaking out against deportations from Europe demonstrate just how sensitive an issue migration is for this small West African nation that has seen so much emigration in recent decades.

What next for Atlantic departures?

While irregular migration to the Canary Islands has a long and at times dramatic history, which may be instructive to look back to in the current moment, it is also clear that we are not repeating history exactly. On the one hand, a migrant respondent in the [IOM study](#) on migration dynamics in Senegal stated his belief that “the pirogues have become safer, the engines more powerful and the means of navigation more powerful.” On the other hand, we are starting from a point of much greater coastal securitization than was the case in the early to mid-2000s. Activist Helena Maleno expresses concerns that [Frontex](#) will militarize the sea route to the Canary Islands in the manner of the Alboran Sea crossing between Morocco and Spain. And clearly, there is already security presence on the part of Spain in Senegal and Mauritania.

It is still uncertain as to what extent coastal patrols will expand, and what results they will have for the scale and distribution of Atlantic departures. And, even more importantly, what this will mean for the conditions in which the journey can be undertaken. We have seen elsewhere that increasing securitization targeting migration processes often serves to drive them underground and make them more dangerous. The fact that departures may be pushing south towards the Gambia to a greater extent, resulting in a correspondingly longer ocean voyage, could be one manifestation of this phenomenon.

I.

Highlighted new research and reports



[Europe spends billions stopping migration. Good luck figuring out where the money actually goes](#)

The Correspondent, December 2019.

Taking Nigeria – the country with Europe’s largest numbers of African asylum seekers – as a case study, this in-depth investigative article seeks to answer the questions of how much money Europe spends in trying to deter migration, and where the money goes. To do so it interrogates spending by the Netherlands and Italy, seeking to determine how much of Dutch and Italian funding targets migration-related objectives in Nigeria. The article finds that in practice, these

are very challenging questions to answer, and it elaborates on the many ways in which spending is difficult to pinpoint. Ultimately the article provides an estimated overview largely gleaned from contacting European embassies in Nigeria and complementing this information with information from the International Aid Transparency Initiative. Based on this admittedly incomplete synopsis, the article closes by outlining where the money does go, where the money doesn’t go, and what are the real-world consequences for Nigeria of this funding.

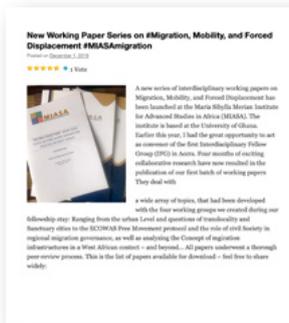


[Las Llaves de Europa](#)

eldiario.es, November 2019.

This piece draws heavily on quotes and personal accounts to illuminate the effect of recent migration policies, particularly in Niger. It examines the effects of Niger’s Law 2015-36 on the economy of Agadez and the security of refugees and migrants, highlighting the detrimental effect it has had on both local livelihoods and on people on the move safety as smuggling has become more difficult and people are forced onto ever more dangerous routes. It also underscores the dangers and drawbacks of the border securitization agenda

which has played out in Niger. Finally, the article turns to both Mali and Burkina Faso to shed light on how the evolving migration context in Niger and in the region more broadly have impacted these two countries which are also extremely important for West African migration routes.



[MIASA Working Paper Series on Migration, Mobility and Forced Displacement](#)

Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa, University of Ghana, Legon, November 2019.

This working paper series has published two papers during the quarter with particular relevance for the West African migration context. **“Acting Together”: How non-state actors shape migration policies in West Africa** (MIASA Working Paper No 2019(2) sheds light on the role that non-state actors play in regional

migration policy processes. It looks at the relationships between government and non-state actors, and how they interact at both national and regional levels. The paper concludes that non-state actors play a vital role in providing “bottom-up” input on national migration approaches at the regional level. **Migration Infrastructures in West Africa and Beyond** (MIASA Working Paper No 2019(3) seeks to apply the concept of migration infrastructure – originally developed in the Asian context – in West Africa. Using infrastructure as a conceptual framework for the study of migration allows for analysis along five dimensions: commercial, regulatory, technological, humanitarian and social. This paper analyzes the advantages and shortcomings of this conceptual framework as applied to West African mobilities.

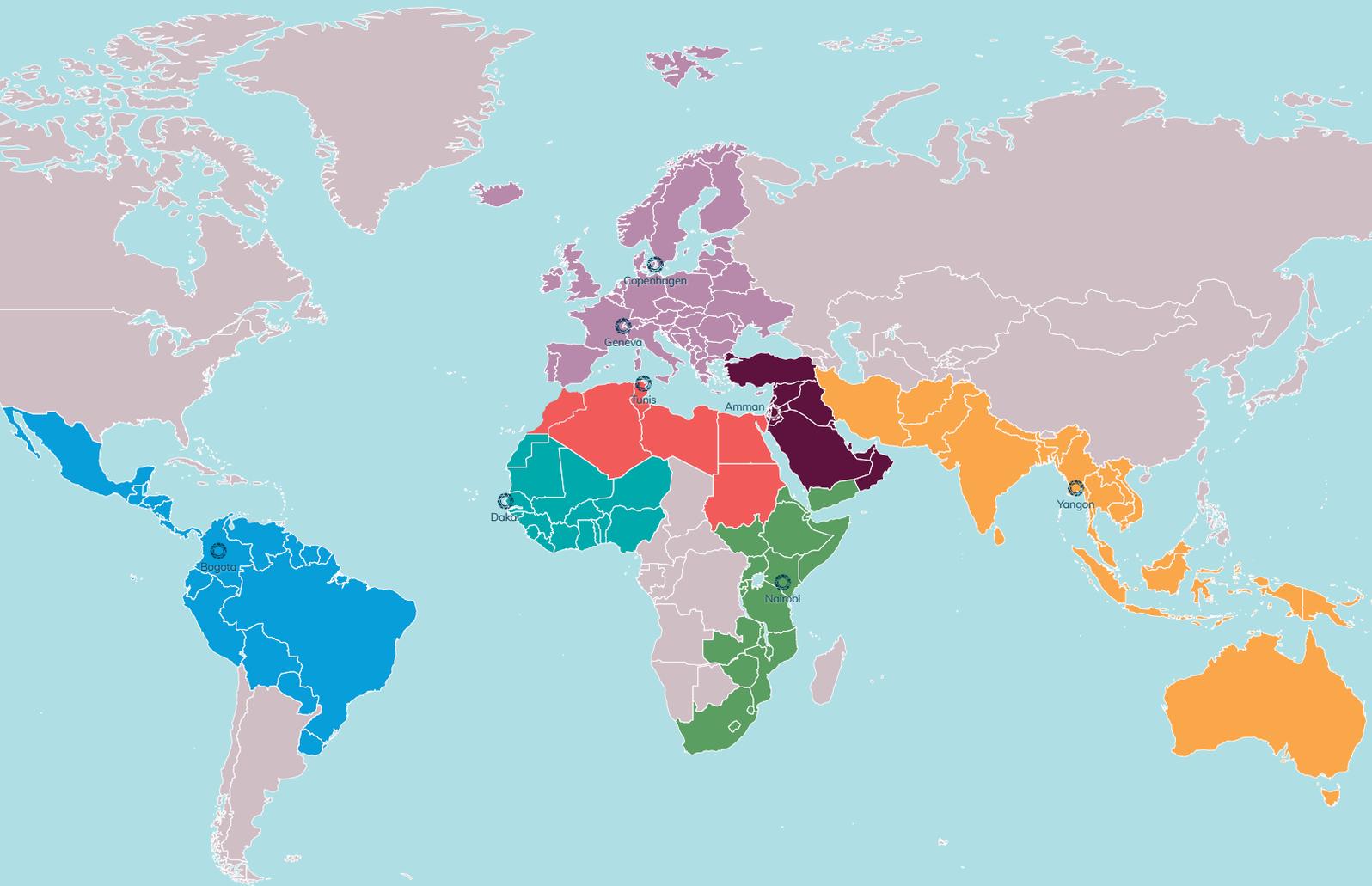


[Returning Home: The reintegration challenges facing child and youth returnees from Libya to Nigeria](#)

Harvard FXB Center for Health and Human Rights, November 2019.

This report is based on a study examining the reintegration experience of Nigerian child migrants who were assisted to return from Libya to Nigeria with the support of IOM’s Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) program. It seeks to highlight the particular challenges they face, assess the resources that are

available to them in their reintegration, and make recommendations as to how the reintegration process can be effectively supported. Nigeria is a major country of origin for children and young people returning from Libya, and this pilot study was carried out in July 2018 in the four Nigerian states with the largest numbers of young people returned through VHR: Delta, Edo, Lagos and Ondo. The report outlines the situation in Libya, the methodology for the study, the migratory experience of the study participants, returnees’ perspectives on their reintegration experiences and a series of recommendations aimed at governments and aid organizations.



The MMC is a global network consisting of seven regional hubs and a central unit in Geneva engaged in data collection, research, analysis and policy development on mixed migration. The MMC is a leading source for independent and high-quality data, research, analysis and expertise on mixed migration. The MMC aims to increase understanding of mixed migration, to positively impact global and regional migration policies, to inform evidence-based protection responses for people on the move and to stimulate forward thinking in public and policy debates on mixed migration. The MMC's overarching focus is on human rights and protection for all people on the move.

The MMC is part of and governed by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and global and regional MMC teams are hosted by the DRC offices in Amman, Copenhagen, Dakar, Geneva, Nairobi, Tunis, Bogota and Yangon.

For more information visit:
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