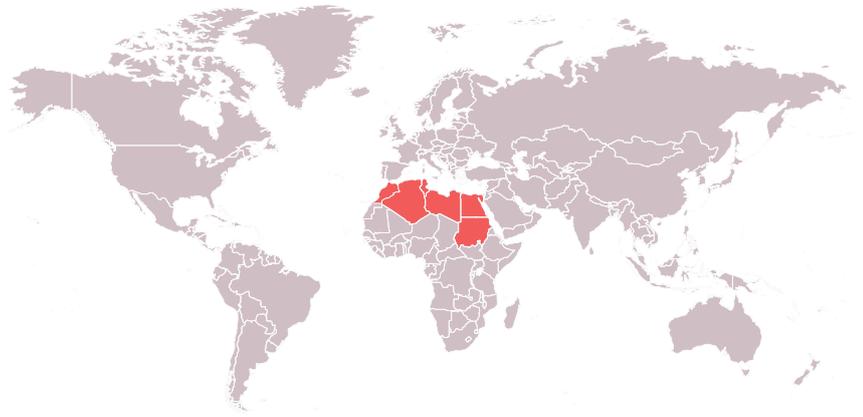




Mixed
Migration
Centre



MMC North Africa

QUARTER 4 2021

Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: North Africa



This Quarterly Mixed Migration Update (QMMU) covers the North Africa (NA) region. The core countries of focus for this region are Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia. Depending on the quarterly trends and migration-related updates, more attention may be given to some 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 a compilation of a wide range of secondary (data) sources, brought together within a regional framework and applying a mixed migration analytical lens. Similar QMMUs are available for all MMC regions.

The Mixed Migration Centre is a global network consisting of six 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 QMMUs 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:

Taha Jawashi (2017)

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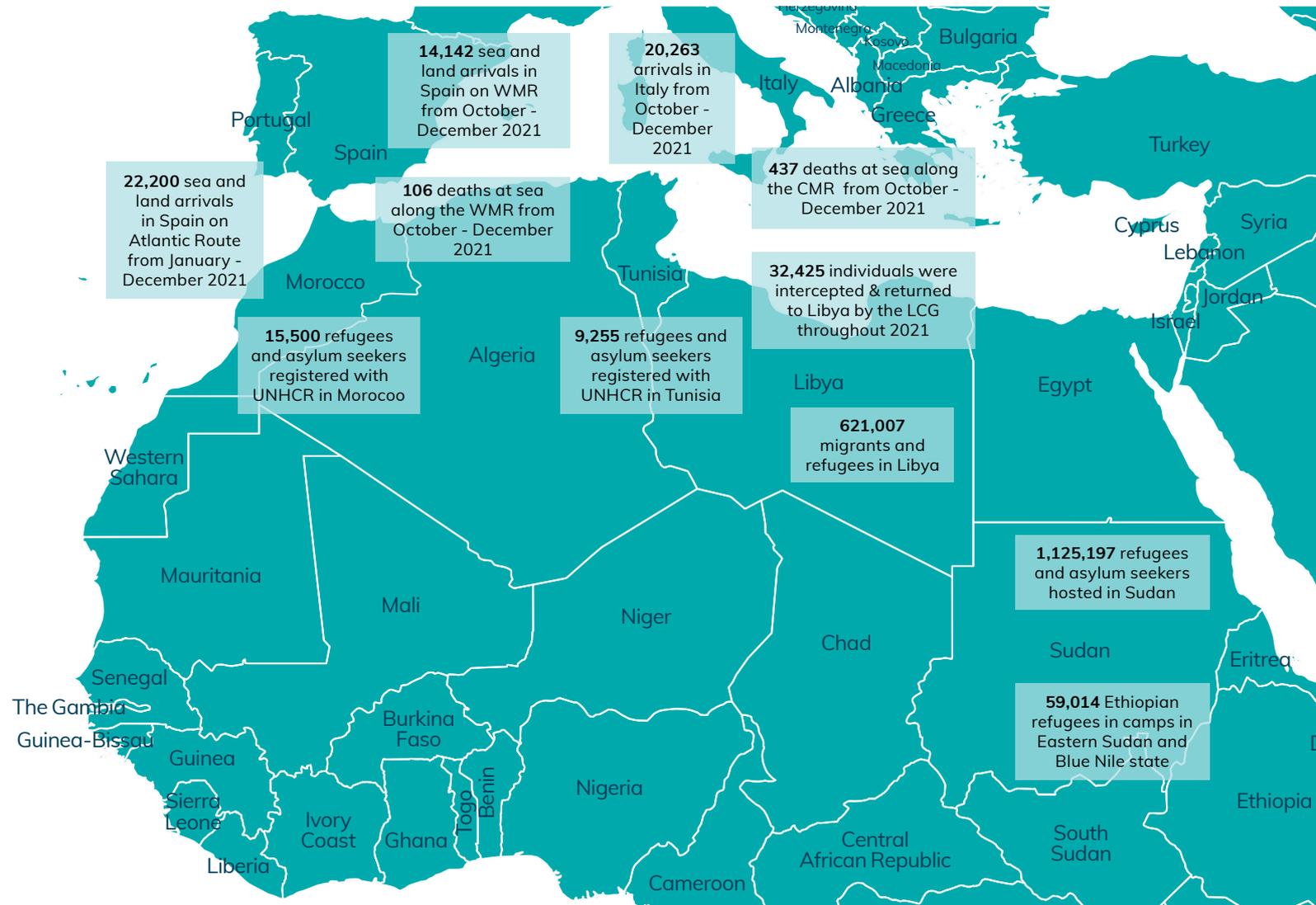
Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: North Africa

Quarter 4 - 2021

Key Updates

- **Land and sea arrivals to Italy, Malta and Spain** from North Africa through the Central (CMR) and Western Mediterranean Routes (WMR) were comparable in numbers to the same period in 2020, increasing by [1%](#).
- **32,425 refugees and migrants were intercepted by the Libyan Coast Guard (LCG) and returned to Libya** in 2021. This marks an increase of [173%](#) compared to 2020 (11,891).
- According to [local media sources](#), **the Moroccan authorities intercepted more than 12,000 refugees and migrants** (on land and at sea) in 2021, while allegedly also dismantling around 150 smuggling networks.
- **543 refugees and migrants were reported dead or missing** in Q4, of which 437 were along the CMR and 106 along the WMR ([IOM](#)). This marks a slight increase from 492 in the same period in 2020.
- The [United Nations \(UN\)](#) announced the **resumption of humanitarian flights out of Libya** in October, including UNHCR evacuations of vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers and [IOM](#) voluntary humanitarian return (VHR) flights.
- In the week of [October 1st](#), as the UN reported, **the Libyan authorities began conducting a large-scale “security operation”** in Tripoli, **arresting at least 5,000 refugees and migrants and placing them in overcrowded detention centres**. This triggered demonstrations in front of UNHCR’s Community Day Centre, which reportedly closed for a couple of days as a result, and closed its door permanently in December (also see Thematic Focus).

Regional Overview*



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

Mixed Migration Regional Updates

Mixed migration from North Africa to Europe

North African arrivals in Europe

From October – December 2021, the International Organization for Migration ([IOM](#)) reports that 33,597 refugees and migrants entered Spain (by sea or land), Italy (by sea) and Malta (by sea) through the Central and Western Mediterranean Routes (CMR and WMR), indicating an increase in arrivals of 1% compared to the reported number of arrivals in the same period of 2020 ([MMC](#)).

Arrivals in Italy through the CMR in Q4 increased compared to the same period last year. [UNHCR](#) reports 20,263 arrivals from October 1st – December 31st, 2021 compared to 10,407 arrivals in October – December 2020 ([MMC](#)). Up until [November](#), North Africa remained a top region of origin of people on the move along the CMR to Italy, with Tunisians (the most common nationality) representing 24% of arrivals, followed by Egyptians (2nd, 13%) and Moroccans (9th, 3%). Moreover, it was noted that in November, Italy received the second highest number of monthly sea arrivals in 2021, with 9,517 refugees and migrants reaching the shores of southern Italy, following a peak of 10,286 recorded in August. Sea arrivals in November 2021 also demonstrate an increase when comparing to the same month in 2020 (5,360) and 2019 (1,233).

Furthermore on the CMR, [UNHCR](#) reported 607 arrivals in Malta from January – October 2021. This represents a decline compared to the same periods in 2020 (2,281) and 2019 (3,406). Sudanese (15%, 3rd) and Egyptians (8%, 4th) are among the top countries of origin among arrivals in Malta.

On the WMR to Spain, [UNHCR](#) data reveal that Q4 saw a decrease of 37% compared to the same period in 2020 (from 22,506 to 14,142). Overall, the number of land and sea arrivals in Spain from January to December 2021 on the WMR was 3% higher than during the same period last year. Data from [the Spanish Ministry of Interior](#) show 22,200 arrivals in the Canary Islands via the Atlantic Route from January 1st to December 28th, 2021, representing a slight decrease of 2% compared to the same period in 2020.

Departures on the CMR and WMR

[UNHCR](#) finds that the largest share of refugees and migrants crossing the CMR and arriving in Italy from January to November 2021 had departed from Libya (47%, compared to 39% in January – November 2020), followed by Tunisia (31%, down from 43% in 2020). In November, arrivals in Italy from Libya more than doubled compared to October (111%). The majority of persons departing from Libya in Q4 originated from Bangladesh, Egypt and Eritrea.

[A regional media source](#) stated that the number of Algerians departing and crossing the WMR to Spain continued to increase over the course of 2021. Spanish authorities estimate that almost 10,000 Algerians have arrived in Spain since the beginning of 2021, around 20% more than in 2020. According to a representative of the Algerian League for the Defense of Human Rights, quoted by the same media report, the number of women, children, disabled people and pregnant women involved in sea crossings also increased.

Interceptions and rescue operations in the Mediterranean

According to [IOM](#), 32,425 migrants were intercepted by the Libyan Coast Guard (LCG) and returned to Libya throughout the course of 2021. This marks an increase of 173% compared to 2020 (11,891). While data up until the end of the year was not yet published, as of October 30th, the main nationalities to be intercepted were Sudanese (14%), Bangladeshi (10.5%) and Malian (10%), as reported by [UNHCR](#). In 2021, the main disembarkation sites, following interception at sea, were Tripoli Naval Base (14,248 individuals intercepted), Azzawya Oil Refinery Port (5,498) and Tripoli Commercial Port (4,876).

Multiple rescue and interception operations were carried out by the Tunisian Coast Guard at sea and on the Tunisian coast over the course of Q4. Notably, on November 21st, the spokesman of the Tunisian National Guard [reported](#) over 200 migrants, including from different African countries and Tunisians, were intercepted trying to reach the Italian coast during nine separate operations. Late in November, Tunisia's coastguard said it had thwarted six departure attempts and rescued 125 individuals.

As [stated](#) by the Algerian Defense Ministry, 4,704 refugees and migrants were stopped trying to leave the country in 2021, of which more than half of them in the month of September. In Morocco and the Western Sahara,¹ at the end of November, the Moroccan Royal Navy intercepted and arrested [230 refugees and migrants](#) in Laayoune and Tarfaya who aimed to reach the Canary Islands. On December 1st, 2021, [Alarm Phone](#) communicated that about 60 people were in danger of drowning in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Western Sahara, after which they were intercepted and rescued by Moroccan authorities and returned to the city of Laayoune. Since the beginning of 2021, the Moroccan police [detailed](#) thwarting the irregular departure of more than 12,000 individuals from its shores, while also dismantling 150 smuggling networks.

Dead or missing refugees and migrants

From October – December 2021, 543 refugees and migrants were reported dead or missing in the Mediterranean, of which 437 were along the CMR and 106 along the WMR ([IOM](#)). This marks a slight increase from 492 in the same period in 2020.

In 2021, more than 4,000 refugees and migrants died or disappeared last year while crossing the sea to Spain, more than twice as many as in 2020, according to a [report](#) published by the Spanish NGO Caminando Fronteras. These figures contrast with those of [IOM](#), which counted at least 955 dead or missing in the crossing to the Canary Islands and 324 to the Spanish mainland and the Balearic Islands from Morocco and Algeria. However, [IOM](#) also estimates that 2021 was an extremely deadly year, the deadliest since 1997 according to its data and that of the Spanish NGO APDHA. According to Caminando Fronteras, the vast majority of refugees and migrants disappeared while trying to reach the Canary Islands having disembarked from the coastline between Morocco and Senegal.

Several shipwrecks continued to be reported around the region, including off the Tunisian coast on [October 17th](#) between Mahdia and Monastir. The boat carried at least 31 people, 7 of whom were rescued, while 2 bodies were found and 22 individuals went missing. Off the Libyan coast, more than 160 migrants drowned

1 Western Sahara has been on the [United Nations list of Non-Self-Governing Territories](#) since 1963.

in two separate shipwrecks during the [week of December 12th](#). A few days later, 27 bodies, including a baby and two women, washed ashore in Khoms, as [reported](#) by Libya's Red Crescent. [UNHCR](#) specified that from January – October 2021, 109 bodies were recovered in Libyan waters, compared to 97 over the same period in 2020.

Political migration dialogues

Leaked European Commission (EC) draft action plans have revealed the European Union (EU) is working on strengthening relations with “partner countries” within the framework of its pact on migration and asylum. Documents outline draft proposals on Morocco, Libya and Tunisia, among other countries. In particular, the EU [intends](#) to support Morocco in the areas of governance and migration management, to promote Morocco's engagement with EU border control agencies and renew joint efforts to tackle the “root causes of migration”. [Regarding Libya](#), the EU wants to establish a rights-based migration and asylum system and envisions a dialogue on migration with Libya after the presidential elections, which were initially planned in December.² Prior to this, Libya received approximately €455 million in EU funding on migration and asylum. More than half has been spent on protecting migrants and a third on ‘community stabilisation’ and border management. On Tunisia, the leaked draft plan [notes](#) that the EU will continue to support Tunisia in its path towards democracy, its response to the pandemic and its economic challenges. The EU is closely monitoring political developments in Tunisia and the plan repeatedly states that EU support is conditional on Tunisia's commitment to democracy, human rights, gender equality and good governance. The plan adds that some €30 million of EU funds have already been spent on strengthening the Tunisian Coast Guard. These funds are aimed, according to the document, at ensuring that Tunisia's migration strategy and asylum legislation are finalised and approved.

Mixed migration in Libya

Latest figures on refugees and migrants in Libya

As of November 2021, [IOM](#) estimates that there are at least 621,007 migrants in Libya.³ This marks a small increase compared to the number reported the last quarter (597,611). Similar to Q3 in 2021, IOM identifies the main migrant nationalities in Q3 to be Nigerien (24%), Egyptian (17%), Sudanese (15%), Chadian (13%) and Nigerian (6%). The top three mantikas with the largest migrant populations are Tripoli, Misrata and Benghazi. [UNHCR](#) calculates that, as of December 1st, 2021, 42,489 refugees and asylum seekers are registered in Libya. Compared to reporting in Q3 of 2021, this represents a slightly increasing trend (41,897), however it represents a decrease compared to Q4 of 2020 (44,199).

2 [The presidential elections](#), scheduled for 24 December, organised within the framework of a process under the aegis of the UN, were postponed to a later date due to “technical, judicial and security” constraints that prevented the timetable set out in the electoral law from being respected. In January, 2022, it was announced there will be a renewed focus on a constitutional basis for elections, which could take up to three months. In addition, the Libyan House of Representatives declared the mandate of the incumbent government expired.

3 This figure includes refugees and asylum seekers.

Resumption of humanitarian evacuation flights and VHR in Libya

After more than a year, as reported by [UNHCR](#), humanitarian evacuation flights resumed from [Libya on October 22nd, 2021](#). At the resumption of flights, [1,000](#) vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers were put on a UNHCR priority list for evacuation. On November 5th, UNHCR brought 172 asylum seekers to its Emergency Transit Mechanism Facility in Niger and at the end of November, [UNHCR](#) organised a charter flight bringing 93 individuals to Rome, including “children, women at risk, survivors of violence and torture, as well as people with serious health problems.” A further 500 vulnerable individuals will be brought from Libya to Italy via 5 flights over the course of the next year. In December, 107 refugees were evacuated to the UNHCR Emergency Transit Centre in Romania by [UNHCR and IOM](#), noting that their cases will be processed for resettlement to Canada. “With this flight, 1,463 vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers have been able to fly out of Libya this year on resettlement or evacuation flights, or as part of complementary pathways, including family reunifications”, UNHCR stated.

Additionally, this quarter, the Rwandan government, the African Union and UNHCR [extended](#) their agreement on the use of the Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM) in Rwanda. The Gashora Refugee Camp Transit Centre will be able to accommodate up to 700 people - compared to 500 currently - until December 31st, 2023.

In terms of Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR), on October 22nd, [IOM](#) resumed flights, which had been suspended since August, and returned 127 Gambian nationals, including 5 women and 5 children, from Libya to Banjul.

Mixed Migration in Tunisia

Latest figures on refugees and migrants in Tunisia

As of November 30th, 2021, [UNHCR](#) has registered 9,255 refugees and asylum seekers in Tunisia, of which the top nationalities are Ivoirian (38%), Syrian (27%), Guinean (5%), Sudanese (5%) and Cameroonian (5%). This represents a 17% increase compared to the last quarter. Greater Tunis⁴ (4,413), Sfax (2061), and Médenine (1,198) continue to host the largest refugee and asylum seeker populations. Tunisia still lacks a national database on migration. However, the National Institute of Statistics in collaboration with the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) presented the main results of the first nation-wide survey on international migration to, in and from Tunisia, with data from the survey collected between July 2020 and March 2021. The survey is part of the Mediterranean programme of coordinated surveys on international migration (MED-HIMS) carried out by ICMPD. It aims, essentially, to fill data gaps and to identify and develop a set of relevant indicators to strengthen the Tunisian information system and inform all stakeholders on international migration (also see Highlighted New Research and Reports).

4 Greater Tunis includes the four governorates Tunis, Ariana, Ben Arous and Manouba.

UN experts condemn “collective expulsion and deplorable living conditions of refugees and migrants”

In early October, [media reports and several amateur videos](#) released by migrant rights groups documented the deportation of intercepted refugees and migrants at sea, who were reportedly sent back to a desert area on Tunisia’s border with Libya. [Eight associations](#) working in Tunisia denounced the refoulement of sub-Saharan refugees and migrants, including a number of women and minors. The associations announced that, according to their sources, several human rights violations were reported. Furthermore, they stressed the fundamental human right to apply for international protection, violated by returning people to Libya, which has no asylum legislation and criminalises irregular migrants.

In a [statement](#) released in November, 2021, UN human rights experts condemned Tunisia’s recent arbitrary returns of refugees and migrants to Libya. According to the experts, dozens of sub-Saharan refugees and migrants were stranded in precarious conditions near the Tunisian-Libyan border, where they lacked access to shelter, food, water and medical care, and faced threats of torture, abduction and gender-based sexual violence (GBV). The experts called on Tunisia’s non-refoulement obligations, stating that Libya is not a safe country of return, with refugees and migrants at risk of torture, ill-treatment, arbitrary detention and other irreparable harm. They also called on the Libyan authorities to respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of refugees and migrants, including their right to life, liberty, security, health, food, housing, water and sanitation.

Controversy after Tunisian Instagrammer posts photos of her crossing to Italy

A media controversy [erupted](#) in December in Tunisia after Sabee Saïdi, an 18-year-old Tunisian girl, posted on social media footage of herself crossing the Mediterranean to Italy. The girl, originating from Sfax, posted stories on her 280,000-follower Instagram profile in which she explained that she was travelling irregularly on a small fishing boat with a dozen other young people. Some have accused the influencer of embellishing and trivialising the harka (“burning the borders”, in Arabic) whereas irregular immigration is often associated with tragedy and despair in Tunisia. After the initial online backlash Saïdi published a video after her arrival in Lampedusa, Italy, stating that she did not encourage young people to emigrate “illegally”, and added that she was not the first to document the crossing. In the video, she had explained that she was “forced” to leave her country because of difficult social conditions. She described the two days she spent on the boat heading to the Italian coast as a “terrible” experience, stating she was “very close to death”.

Mixed Migration in Sudan

Latest figures on refugees and migrants in Sudan

As of November 30th, [UNHCR](#) reported that Sudan hosted 1,125,197 refugees and asylum-seekers, of which 70% live in urban and rural settings, and 30% are settled in camps. The main countries of origin remain South Sudan (798,406), Eritrea (125,997), Syria (93,483), Ethiopia (71,993) and the Central African Republic (27,610). Main hosting states are reportedly Khartoum State (306,017), White Nile State (282,688) and Kassala State (109,966). According to [OCHA](#), as of December 23rd, 59,014 Ethiopian refugees affected by the Tigray crisis remain in Eastern Sudan and Blue Nile state.

UN: Sudan needs nearly \$2 billion in humanitarian aid

The [UN](#) launched a global appeal in December for nearly 2 billion USD in humanitarian assistance for Sudan, aimed to help nearly 11 million individuals, including refugees and asylum seekers. “Humanitarian partners are seeking 1.9 billion USD to provide humanitarian assistance and support to 10.9 million of the most vulnerable people,” Khardiata Lo Ndiaye, Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, said in a statement. The funds are aimed at saving the lives of “internally displaced people, recent returnees, Sudanese hosted refugees and vulnerable Sudanese.” It is estimated that more than 14 million people, or nearly one in three, will need humanitarian assistance in 2022 across the country. This is about 800,000 more than in 2021. Of these 14 million people, more than 9 million will require emergency assistance.

Mixed Migration in Egypt

Egypt celebrates International Migrants Day amid criticism of the situation of refugees and migrants

The Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced in a [statement](#) on December 18th, International Migrants Day, that Egypt is proud to host 6 million migrants and refugees and aims to offer them a decent life in line with Egyptian citizens. He added that Egypt has always considered migration as a positive phenomenon and an important means to achieve development in the countries of origin and destination, further contributing to the convergence of civilizations and cultures. Furthermore, UNHCR praised the Egyptian government’s assurances of its commitment to expanding refugees’ and asylum seekers’ access to health care and ensuring access to education. In October, Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi declared in a speech that Egypt treats refugees and migrants as guests on its soil, allowing them access to schools and universities, as well as including them in COVID-19 vaccination campaigns.

On the other hand, media and human rights reports noted that thousands of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers are living in difficult conditions in Egypt, which have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. In a [podcast](#) published by the independent electronic newspaper Mada Masr on October 3rd, 2021, several interviewed refugee community leaders highlighted the increased lack of protection for refugees, making them vulnerable to sexual violence, detention or deportation, and the delay in providing basic services such

as health and education. In an earlier released report, [Amnesty International](#) stressed that the authorities continued to arbitrarily arrest and detain refugees and migrants. In November, security forces violently dispersed two peaceful demonstrations by Sudanese refugees and migrants following the reported murder of a Sudanese child. The security forces arrested dozens of protesters, allegedly violating human rights while doing so. In this context, the Refugee Platform in Egypt (RPE) published a [report](#) in December on the detention of around 200 Eritrean asylum seekers, including 40 children, in deplorable conditions in Aswan, without trial, and without being allowed to apply for registration with UNHCR, since their arrest between 2019 and 2021. A month earlier, [UN human rights](#) experts expressed serious concern about the forced return of seven Eritrean asylum seekers, including five children, from Egypt, despite the risk of enforced disappearance, torture and ill-treatment, and in violation of international human rights obligations.

Mixed Migration in Morocco

Latest figures on refugees and migrants in Morocco

At the end of 2021, [UNHCR](#) reported there are 9,500 refugees and 6,000 asylum seekers in Morocco, totaling 15,500 people of concern from more than 48 countries of origin. [Local media](#) citing UNHCR stated that the majority of refugees and asylum seekers in Morocco remain Syrian nationals (5,040), followed by 2,503 Guineans, 1,406 Ivoirians, 1,231 Cameroonians, 1,126 Senegalese and 1,097 Yemenis. They also reported an increase in the number of Sudanese asylum seekers in transit from Algeria and Libya, with 542 applying for asylum in Morocco in 2021.

Workshop in Rabat on mental health of refugees and migrants

A [workshop](#) organised by the Moroccan Family Planning Association (AMPF) was held in Rabat at the end of December carrying the theme “Mental Health in the Context of Mixed Migration: Challenges and Prospects”, aimed at promoting access to health care for refugees and migrants in Morocco, particularly in terms of mental health. The meeting, held in partnership with the Embassy of Japan and UNHCR, provided an opportunity to discuss the challenges and prospects of mental health of refugees and migrants and to exchange on the joint actions to be implemented in 2022 to guarantee better access to psychological support and the well-being of people on the move.

Thematic Focus:

Migrant Detention in Libya

Thousands of migrants arrested in Tripoli

On October 1st, 2021, the Libyan authorities carried out a large-scale “security operation” in the suburb of Gargaresh, west of Tripoli, targeting mainly refugees and migrants. In a statement, the Prosecutor General of Tripoli explained that these roundups were carried out after suspicions of involvement in trafficking of illicit goods, including “drugs, alcohol and firearms”. The raids left one migrant shot dead and at least 15 others injured, according to the [United Nations Support Mission in Libya \(UNSMIL\)](#). The number of refugees and migrants arrested reportedly exceeded 5,000. [UNICEF](#) reported that some 751 women and 255 children were among the thousands of migrants and asylum seekers caught in the arrests, including mainly Sudanese, Eritreans, and Somalis. A 21-year-old asylum seeker who arrived in Libya last year from Darfur (Sudan) was quoted by [InfoMigrants](#):

“We were at home, sleeping. Suddenly, around 5am, I heard voices outside. I opened the window and there I saw armed men dragging neighbours into the street. I locked the door and refused to open it. That's when they finally broke the door. There were seven or eight of them and they beat me, I still have the mark on my foot. Then they put us in cars. I told them I would rather they killed me on the spot.”⁵

Within the days following the first roundup, according to [AP News](#) and based on IOM reports, Libyan authorities placed arrested refugees and migrants in several detention centres (DCs) in and around Tripoli. Nearly 4,200, including 511 women and 60 children, were sent to Mabani DC, reaching well beyond its capacity. Abu Salim DC was reported to host at least 570 detained migrants. A few days later, on October 6th, [the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights](#) (OHCHR) reported that 500 refugees and migrants managed to escape from the Gharyan DC and were pursued by guards who opened fire on them, leaving 4 shot dead and a large number with injuries. On October 8th, another episode of refugees and migrants trying to escape Mabani DC left at least 6 dead and 24 injured. According to the Head of Mission of [IOM Libya](#), Federico Soda, it is unclear what provoked the shooting incidents, but he stated that the wave of detentions had led to the overcrowding of DCs and the further deterioration of conditions.

Reactions from the international community and subsequent events

The arrests and detention have sparked widespread international coverage and reactions. UNSMIL [condemned](#) in a statement “the use of excessive and unjustified lethal force by the security forces.” It called on the Libyan authorities to end arbitrary arrests and detentions and to immediately release the

⁵ Translated by MMC.

most vulnerable people, including women and children. The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) Country Director (CD) in Libya was [quoted](#) saying that “this is among the largest arrests of migrants we have seen in Libya in recent years”, in line and furthering a continued increase of refugee and migrant arrests and detention, MMC has reported in previous quarters.⁶ Furthermore, the NRC CD was cited reiterating a call to countries, especially in Europe with close relations to Libya, to raise their voices and advocate for the “worrying” situation of refugees in Libya. Besides that, a group of human rights-centered associations⁷ [denounced](#) the unprecedented level of violence against refugees and migrants in Libya and called on the “EU to cease all support to Libya’s coast guards,” responsible for intercepting refugees and migrants at sea and returning them to Libya, and “to provide safe pathways for refugees and migrants and to re-establish an EU-coordinated Search and Rescue mechanism in the Mediterranean.”

While the Deputy Chairman of the Libyan State Presidential Council, Moussa al-Koni, [apologised](#) at a press conference on October 10th for the “unfortunate events suffered by migrants,” the Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) published a statement [reporting](#) that the number of refugees and migrants in Tripoli’s DCs had more than tripled since the wave of arrests. Moreover, “during the raids on their homes, many of those captured were reportedly subjected to severe physical violence, including sexual violence.” Since the arrests, MSF visited two DCs where new detainees were being held: Shara Zawiya and Mabani. The report noted that in the Shara Zawiya DC, which has a capacity of 200-250 people, they saw more than 550 women and children in cells, including pregnant women and newborns. Reportedly, one sanitation facility was shared by around 120 detainees. For Mabani DC, similar situations of overcrowding in sheds and cells were reported, while reports also exist of women and children being held in the open air, without shade or shelter, and with no or limited access to food. A 24-year-old Cameroonian migrant quoted by [AP said](#): “They put us into crowded cells where we couldn’t even breathe. There was no food, no water, no oxygen.” A [report](#) published in November by OHCHR described the extreme situation in the DCs and their place within the Libyan administrative system, arguing that “the killing, enslavement, torture, imprisonment, rape, persecution and other inhumane acts committed against migrants [in Libya] are part of a systematic and widespread attack on this population, as part of a state policy that can be likened to crimes against humanity.”

Faced with an increased high risk of arrest and detention, many refugees and asylum seekers were reported gathering outside the UNHCR Community Day Centre (CDC) in Tripoli to seek “help, information and evacuation”, according to a UNHCR representative's statement quoted by [InfoMigrants](#). While on October 3rd, UNHCR handed out food and provided financial and hygiene assistance for the most urgent cases, the following day it reported having to suspend, until further notice, the activities of the CDC in view of an “increase in the number of spontaneous arrivals” and “escalation of tensions involving violence and disruptive behaviours”, according to an [announcement](#) on Facebook. Furthermore, [UNHCR](#) announced working on developing alternative solutions to keep providing medical, psychological, and legal assistance to persons of concern in Tripoli. On October 10th, [UNHCR continued](#) to advise asylum seekers and refugees to refrain from approaching the CDC and avoid large concentrations of crowds in Tripoli for their own safety, and instead to use provided hotlines. In December, UNHCR announced the permanent closure of the CDC, after being blocked for two months to provide adequate support to those in need.

⁶ See MMC’s Quarterly Mixed Migration Updates for 2021 [Q2](#) and [Q3](#).

⁷ EuroMed Rights, the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, the Libya Platform and the Association for Juridical Studies on Immigration (ASGI).

Highlighted New Research and Reports

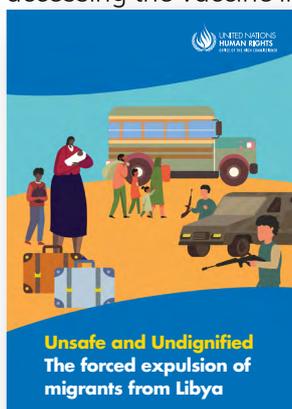


[COVID-19 and Vaccination in Libya: An assessment of migrants' knowledge, attitudes & practices](#)

IOM | November 2021

This report sheds light on what migrants in Libya know about the COVID-19 pandemic and their beliefs and practices in relation to COVID-19, with an aim to inform risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) activities. It also provides an overview of migrants' perception and attitude towards

COVID-19 vaccines, their willingness to get vaccinated and perceptions on potential barriers faced in accessing the vaccine in Libya.

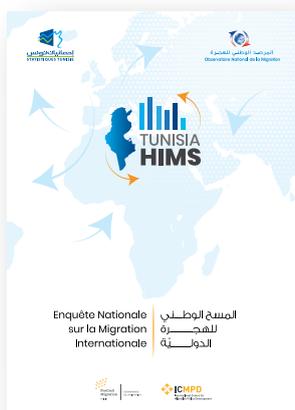


[Unsafe and Undignified: The forced expulsion of migrants from Libya](#)

OHCHR | November 2021

This study focuses on the functioning of migrant detention centres (DCs) in Libya as continued spaces of arbitrary detention and human rights violations and abuses up until 2021. Moreover, new evidence through official data provided by the Libyan authorities, together with remote monitoring and analysis undertaken between January 2019 and December 2020 by OHCHR finds that migrants in Libya are "routinely at risk of arbitrary or collective expulsion"

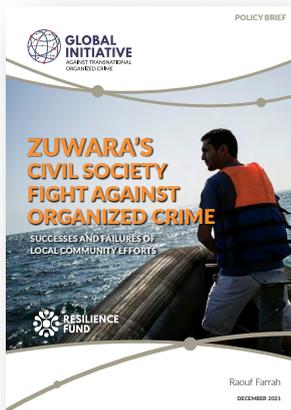
without an individual assessment of their circumstances or protection needs.



[Enquête Nationale sur la Migration Internationale](#)

INS, ONM and ICMPD | December 2021

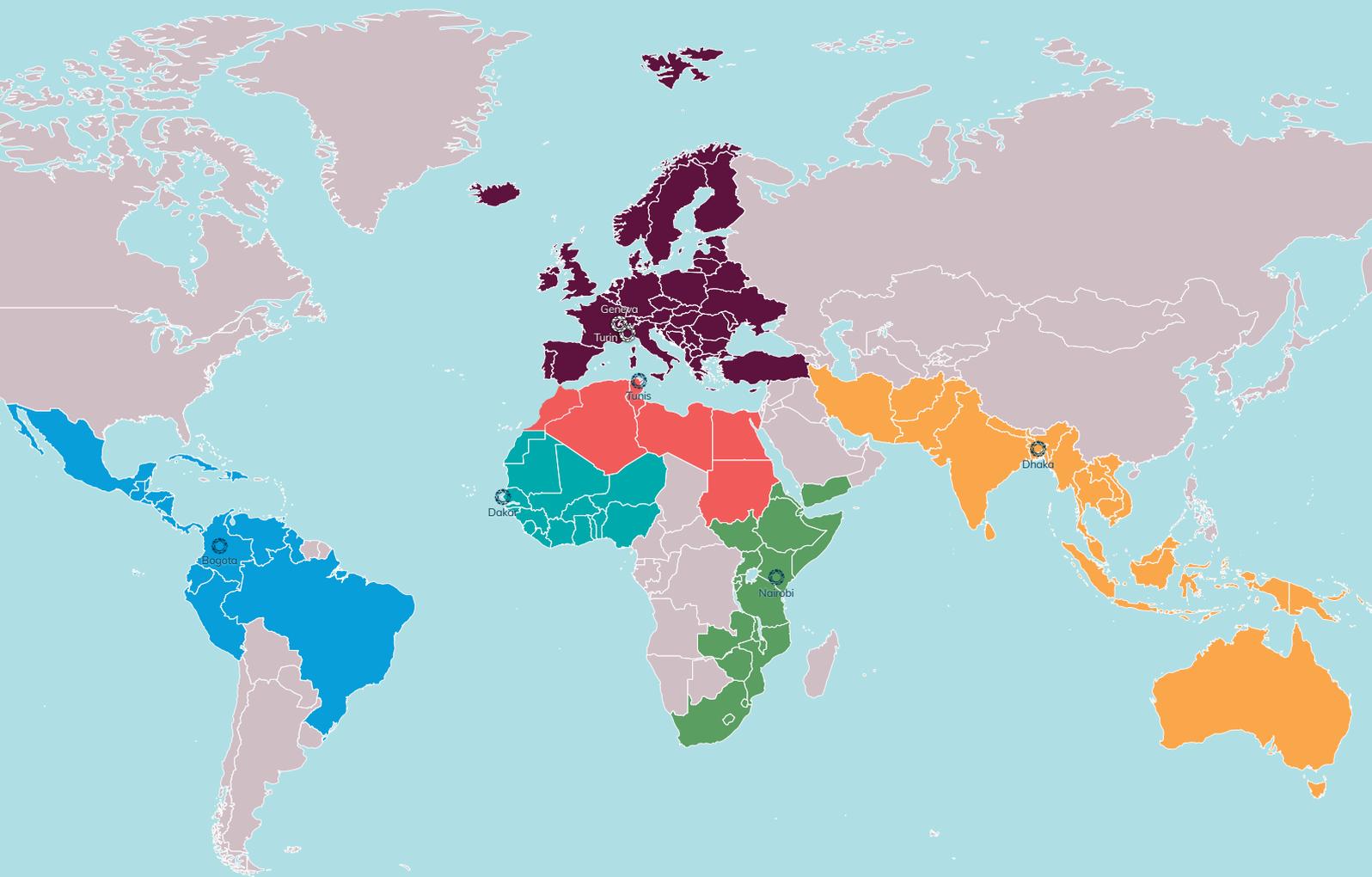
The report presents the main results of the first nation-wide survey on international migration to, in and from Tunisia, with data from the survey collected between July 2020 and March 2021. The survey is part of the Mediterranean programme of coordinated surveys on international migration (MED-HIMS) carried out by ICMPD. It aims, essentially, to fill data gaps and to identify and develop a set of relevant indicators to strengthen the Tunisian information system and inform all stakeholders on international migration.



Zuwarah's Civil Society Fight against Organized Crime

Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime | December 2021

The report investigates the role of civil society in the city of Zuwarah, northwest Libya, in criminal governance. In 2014-2015, CSOs in Zuwarah took an impressive stand against human trafficking, providing assistance to migrants, raising awareness of the impact and dangers of trafficking, and building on elites to strengthen local taboos against human trafficking. Although community efforts continue to combat criminal governance, the momentum of 2014-2015 has been lost. Civil society in Zuwarah has the means to revive its stance against criminal governance. To do so, the report notes that it needs more political recognition, more support from international actors and better cooperation between local actors with clearer boundaries between law enforcement and CSOs.



The MMC is a global network consisting of six 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). Global and regional MMC teams are based in Geneva, Turin, Dakar, Nairobi, Tunis, Bogota and Dhaka.

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