Mediterranean Migrant Arrivals Reach 102,611 in 2018; Deaths Reach 2,043

Posted:
11/13/18
Themes:
Humanitarian Emergencies, Missing Migrants

Geneva – IOM, the UN Migration Agency, reports that 102,611 migrants and refugees entered Europe by sea in 2018 through 11 November, including 49,912 to Spain, the region’s most active destination point this year, with just under 49 per cent of all 2018 arrivals. This marks the fifth straight year arrivals of irregular migrants and refugees have topped the 100,000 benchmark – although in all previous years that arrival threshold was reached earlier in the year.

The 102,611 arrivals through 315 days of 2018 compares with total arrivals reported for 2017 at this same time last year of 156,372, and of 341,215 in 2016. Deaths on the Mediterranean in 2018 now stand at 2,043, compared with 3,001 a year ago, and 4,329 in 2016.

Mediterranean Developments

IOM Greece’s Christine Nikolaidou reported on Monday that over this past weekend a four-year-old Iraqi boy lost his life in a car accident in Northern Greece on Friday evening. He was one of more than two dozen migrants in a minivan involved in an accident with a truck on the Egnatia Highway in Vrasna, 80km east of Thessaloniki, Greece. IOM Greece said the youngster was one of four minors in the vehicle, and reported 27 people were injured, including two Iraqis who are believed to be smugglers. According to Greek authorities, migrants being transported were from Somalia, Bangladesh and Iraq.

Further research through the day Monday revealed Friday’s accident was the eighth fatal vehicle accident involving irregular migrants since early March, and the fourth to occur near the town of Kavala, on northern Greece’s main highway linking its second largest city, Thessaloniki, with the
Greece-Turkey border. A total of 25 individuals have died this year in such crashes, and 71 injured (see chart below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Casualties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17 March</td>
<td>Xanthi</td>
<td>2 dead, 7 injured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 May</td>
<td>Komotini</td>
<td>2 dead, 6 injured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 June</td>
<td>Kavala</td>
<td>6 dead (Syrians, Iraqis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 June</td>
<td>Alexandroupoli</td>
<td>3 dead, 7 injured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 October</td>
<td>Kavala</td>
<td>11 dead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 October</td>
<td>Kavala</td>
<td>13 injured (Pakistanis, Somalis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 November</td>
<td>Rodopi</td>
<td>11 injured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 November</td>
<td>Kavala</td>
<td>1 dead (Iraqi), 27 injured (Iraqis, Bangladeshis, Somalis)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IOM analysts say the vast majority of irregular migrants enter northern Greece through the Greek–Turkish borders in Evros, and their initial goal is to go to a big city, mainly to Thessaloniki or Athens. Their next steps – and their ultimate destinations – tend to be at the discretion of the smuggling networks they use. Almost every accident happens after a high-speed car chase with a police vehicle. Sources tell IOM smugglers usually employ underage migrants as drivers, usually youths of 15 to 17 years old. They tell these children that they cannot be arrested because of their age.

Deaths on the European mainland occur at a rate of about two per week, and highway accidents are a common migration hazard. So far this year 90 migrants have died crossing Europe, compared with 97 through all of 2017, 63 in 2016 and 136 in 2015 – a total of 387, with about 20 per cent occurring in Greece (82). Deaths in Greece this year account for more than half of all migrant fatalities on the continent, and half of those deaths occurred in cars (see chart below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEATHS</th>
<th>2018*</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total in Europe</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total in Greece</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*1 January - 11 November 2018

IOM’s Missing Migrants Project (MMP) reported Monday that 3,190 people have died or gone missing on migratory routes across the globe in 2018.

Besides Friday’s vehicle accident, there were reports in the Eastern Mediterranean of a boat capsizing in the early hours of 12 November, a boat in which 15 people from Afghanistan (including four women and their children) were trying to reach the Greek island of Lesvos. That vessel reportedly capsized off the coast of Dikili, Turkey. Two Afghan men managed to swim to shore and alert Turkish authorities. A search and rescue operation has been launched and is underway to search for the 13 missing migrants.
Missing Migrants Project reported three more people died or were lost at sea in the Western Mediterranean. Spanish authorities recovered the bodies of two Moroccans, one of them believed to be a minor, from a boat that reached Spain’s province of Málaga on 10 November. Authorities believe 13 others survived the journey. That same day, the body of a young man washed up on San Amaro beach in Ceuta, Spain’s enclave in North Africa. Initial police investigations indicate he was a resident of Ceuta’s migrant temporary stay centre (known as the “CETI,” Centro de Estancia Temporal de Inmigrantes, or Centre for Temporary Residence of Immigrants), who drowned while attempting to reach the Spanish mainland.

Last week, a boat carrying between 43 and 46 migrants from Morocco capsized off the coast of Cádiz, causing the deaths of at least 21 people. So far, the remains of 18 people have been located at sea or have washed up on the shore of Caños de Meca, with five bodies recovered on 12 November. The Missing Migrants Project team estimates that 55 people have drowned in the Western Mediterranean while attempting to reach Spain since the beginning of the month.

IOM Spain’s Ana Dodevska reported Monday total arrivals at sea in 2018 have reached 49,912 men, women and children who have been rescued in Western Mediterranean waters through 11 November (see charts below).
The land arrivals to Ceuta and Melilla have remained the same since the last update.

IOM Greece’s Antigoni Avgeropoulou said that from Friday (9 November) to mid-day Monday, the Hellenic Coast Guard (HCG) reported there were at least seven incidents requiring search and rescue operations off the port of Alexandroupolis and the islands of Lesvos, Samos and Leros. The HCG rescued a total of 242 migrants and transferred them to the respective islands.

Those arrivals – plus others off Chios, Farmakonisi, Symi, Rhodes, Kos – bring to 28,252 the total number of arrivals by sea to Greece through 7 November (see chart below).

Worldwide, IOM’s Missing Migrants Project reported Monday that 3,190 people have died or gone missing on migratory routes across the globe in 2018 (see chart below).

Beyond the Mediterranean this week MMP also reported five migrants were killed on the Iraq-Turkey border, and 16 more were injured in a vehicle accident near Saray, in Turkey’s eastern province of
Van. No information regarding the country of origin, sex or age of the deceased was released by Turkish authorities.

In the Americas, two men who had left their homes in Central America to migrate north lost their lives while transiting through Mexico on 6 November. One man was killed when he fell of the train he was riding near Tepeji del Río, Hidalgo, while the second man drowned in the Río Bravo near Guerrero, Coahuila.

Missing Migrants Project data are compiled by IOM staff but come from a variety of sources, some of which are unofficial. To learn more about how data on migrants’ deaths and disappearances are collected, click here.

For latest arrivals and fatalities in the Mediterranean, please visit: http://migration.iom.int/europe
Learn more about the Missing Migrants Project at: http://missingmigrants.iom.int
For more information, please contact:
Joel Millman at IOM HQ, Tel: +41 79 103 8720, Email: jmillman@iom.int
Flavio Di Giacomo, IOM Coordination Office for the Mediterranean, Italy, Tel: +39 347 089 8996, Email: fdigiacomo@iom.int
Kelly Namia, IOM Greece, Tel: +30 210 991 2174, Email: knamia@iom.int
Atigoni Avgeropoulou, IOM Greece, Tel: +30 210 99 19 040 (Ext. 166), Mobile: +30 69 48 92 98 09, Email: aavgeropoulou@iom.int
Christine Nikolaidou, IOM Greece, Tel: +30 210 99 19 040 (Ext. 248), Email: cnikolaidou@iom.int
Dimitrios Tsagalas, IOM Cyprus, Tel: + 22 77 22 70, E-mail: dtsagAalas@iom.int
Ana Dodevska, IOM Spain, Tel: +34 91 445 7116, Email: adodevska@iom.int
Massaia Meryem, IOM Morocco, Email: mmassaia@iom.int
Hicham Hasnaoui, IOM Morocco, Tel: + 212 5 37 65 28 81, Email: hhasnaoui@iom.int
Christine Petré, IOM Libya, Tel. +216 29 240 448, Email: chpetre@iom.int
Myriam Chabbi, IOM Tunisia, Mobile: +216 28 78 78 05, Tel: +216 71 860 312 (Ext. 109), Email: mchabbi@iom.int
Mircea Mocanu, IOM Romania, Tel: +40212115657, Email: mmocanu@iom.int
Ivona Zakoska, IOM Regional DTM, Austria, Tel: +43 1 5812222, Email: izakoska@iom.int
Julia Black, IOM GMDAC, Germany, Tel: +49 30 278 778 27, Email: jblack@iom.int