Geneva – The International Organization for Migration (IOM) reports that 19,830 migrants and refugees have entered Europe by sea through 22 May, roughly a 30 per cent decrease from the 28,325 arriving during the same period last year. Arrivals to both Spain and Greece account for 86 per cent of all arrivals, with the balance arriving this year in Italy, Malta and Cyprus.

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IOM Spain

IOM Spain’s Ana Dodevska reported on Thursday (23/05) that sea arrivals in the Western Mediterranean are now at 7,666 men, women and children through 22 May. (see chart below). That is close to the total for this same period last year when, through 2018’s first five months, Spanish authorities tallied arrivals of 8,150 irregular migrants by the Western Mediterranean route.

With nine days remaining to report arrivals, irregular migration activity in these waters appears to have tapered off significantly after a fast start earlier this year. May arrivals through three weeks are 950, Dodevska reported, much fewer than the total arriving in May 2018, when 3,523 entered Spain via this same route (see charts below).
IOM Greece

IOM Greece's Christine Nikolaidou reported on Thursday (23/05) that from Monday (20/05) up to date, the Hellenic Coast Guard (HCG) confirmed at least seven incidents requiring search and rescue operation off the islands Farmakonisi, Kos, Agathonisi, Lesvos, Samos and Kos. The HCG rescued a total of 238 migrants and transferred them to the respective ports.

Those arrivals, plus another 40 reported between 20 May and 22 May, bring to 9,430 the total number of sea arrivals to Greece this year (see chart below). Greece's 2019 arrivals now are nearly 1,000 greater than 2019 arrivals to Spain, yet still trail last year's Greece arrival totals at this same period in 2018.
Missing Migrants Project

2019 is the sixth year of IOM's efforts to systematically record deaths on migration routes worldwide through its Missing Migrants Project. Since the beginning of 2014, the project has recorded the deaths of 31,947 individuals, including 999 in 2019 (see chart below).

Due to the challenges of collecting information about these people and the contexts of their deaths, the true number of lives lost during migration is likely much higher. Missing Migrants Project records should only be viewed as indicative of the risks associated with migration, rather than representative of the true number of deaths across time or geography.

During the past week in the Western Mediterranean, the Spanish NGO Caminando Fronteras reported that three women went missing in a shipwreck in the Gibraltar Strait on 22 May. The boat had
departed around 4am on Monday morning from Larache, Morocco with the aim of reaching the shores of Cádiz. The Moroccan Navy found the boat in distress two days later, but tragically three women, one of them pregnant, had already fallen overboard. Their bodies could not be recovered. Authorities rescued 69 survivors and brought them back to Morocco.

Another shipwreck was documented on the route to Spain’s Canary Islands, where a boat carrying 23 migrants capsized off the coast of Arguineguín, Gran Canaria on 16 April. The remains of a mother and her baby have been recovered, while another woman remains missing.

This past week was marked by several tragedies in different regions of the world. In the Indian Ocean, three people lost their lives on the often-overlooked migration route from the islands of Comoros to the French archipelago of Mayotte, when the boat in which they were travelling capsized on 19 May east of Petite-Terre, Mayotte. Fourteen survivors were rescued by authorities, who also recovered the remains of two people. One person remains missing.

These are the first deaths recorded on this sea crossing in 2019. This route claimed the lives of at least 18 people in 2018 and 31 in 2017.

Migrating by irregular means not only to, but also within, the European continent can also be very dangerous for migrants. Recently, two young men, believed to be from Afghanistan, lost their lives while transiting through Serbia.

On 21 May, a truck driver stopped at a car wash facility in Futog, western Serbia, near the border with Croatia, and discovered four
men hiding in the back of his truck who seemed to have lost consciousness. They were immediately taken to the hospital. Tragically, two of them have passed away and the other two remain in critical condition. At least nine migrants have lost their lives on the Western Balkans route since the start of the year. In 2018, 41 of the 116 recorded deaths during migration in Europe occurred in the Western Balkans, higher than figures recorded by MMP in any other year on this route.

In northern France, a young Eritrean migrant was killed in a vehicle accident on 20 May, when he was walking on the side of the A16 motorway from Calais to Dunkerque. This is the third death during migration recorded in northern France in 2019 and the second documented in the Calais area.

On the US-Mexico border, a 32-year-old Mexican man drowned in the Rio Grande/Río Bravo on 17 May, near Ciudad Acuña, Coahuila, Mexico. This latest tragedy brings to 38 the number of lives lost recorded by the MMP team in the Río Bravo since the beginning of this year.

In New Mexico, a man was found dead near the border wall on 19 May, on the side of New Mexico State Road 9. On the Canada-US border, reports emerged of the death of a 32-year-old Dominican man when he was trying to cross the border near Lake Champlain, Québec on 16 April.

He reportedly was trying to reunite with his 11-year-old daughter, who lives with her mother in Philadelphia.

Not counting this last death, to date at least 271 people have lost their lives in the Americas in 2019, compared with 100.
Missing Migrants Project data are compiled by IOM staff based at its Global Migration Data Analysis Centre 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, click here. Learn more about the Missing Migrants Project. See contacts here.

https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/MedUp/generic_medup_contacts.jpg