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Mediterranean Migrant Arrivals Reach 36,670 in 2019; Deaths Reach 686

Geneva – IOM reports that 36,670 migrants and refugees have entered Europe by sea through 24 July, roughly a 35 per cent decrease from the 54,978 arriving during the same period last year.

Arrivals this year to Greece and Spain are at 17,991 and 12,443, respectively (30,434 combined), accounting for almost 83 per cent of the regional total, with the balance arriving in much smaller numbers to Italy, Malta and Cyprus. Arrivals to Greece are running approximately 16 per cent ahead of 2018's totals from this time. Arrivals to Spain are almost 41 per cent lower.

Deaths recorded on the three main Mediterranean Sea routes through almost seven months of 2019 are at 686 individuals – or about 45 per cent of the 1,508 deaths confirmed during the same period in 2018.

 Mediterranean Developments Table I					
TOTAL ARRIVALS BY SEA AND DEATHS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN 2018-2019					
Country of Arrival	1 JANUARY - 24 JULY 2019		1 - 24 JULY 2019	1 JANUARY - 24 JULY 2018	
	Arrivals	Deaths	Arrivals	Arrivals	Deaths
Italy	3,552	426 (Central Med. route)	773	18,107	1,109 (Central Med. route)
Malta	1,443		191	243	
Greece	17,991 (AS OF 2307)	54 (Eastern Med. route)	3,584	15,528	90 (Eastern Med. route)
Cyprus	1,241		0	108	
Spain	12,443	206 (Western Med. route)	1,968	20,992	309 (Western Med. route)
Estimated Total	36,670	686	6,516	54,978	1,508
Data on deaths of migrants compiled by IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre. All numbers are minimum estimates. Arrivals based on data from respective governments and IOM field offices.					

Open chart [here](#)

These fatality figures, however, do not include casualties from a shipwreck reported off Libya late Thursday. Survivors initially reported at least 100 people had drowned. Nationalities named among some 50 survivors included Eritrean, Sudanese, Palestinian and Bangladeshi. Several children were reportedly drowned. All were traveling with between 250 and 300 people who left Libya this week in a single wooden boat. Approximately 150 survivors were rescued by fishermen and returned to the shore by the Libyan Coast Guard.

IOM Italy

According to IOM Rome's Flavio Di Giacomo, who was citing official Ministry of Interior figures, 3,552 migrants have arrived by sea to Italy in 2019.

IOM Spain

IOM Spain's Ana Dodevska reported on Thursday sea arrivals to Spain, through 10 July have reached 12,443 men, women and children.

While monthly arrivals to Spain are lower this year over all (see chart below), fatalities on the Western Mediterranean route remain high – with 206 deaths reported through 25 July, compared to 309 at this time in 2018. Several tragedies in the Mediterranean were documented since last week's update.

On 23 July in the Western Mediterranean, the remains of a 30-year-old North African man were recovered off the coast of El Tarajal, in Ceuta, the small Spanish exclave in North Africa. He lost his life while trying to swim around the heavily guarded border fence. A day later, on 24 July, the remains of a young man were found floating at sea off the coast of Al-Hoceima, Morocco.

Since the beginning of 2019, 686 people have been recorded dead or missing in the Mediterranean. If reports of a shipwreck in the Central Mediterranean on 25 July are confirmed, the number of people who have tragically lost their lives during this sea crossing this year would exceed 800.

Canary Islands

Twenty years ago, today, the first documented wreck of a boat carrying migrants to the Spanish Canary Islands occurred. On 26 July 1999 a boat carrying more than a dozen migrants sunk just 300 meters from the coast of Las Palmas, taking at least nine people.

Since that first tragedy, more than 2,000 people have died or gone missing en route to the Canary Islands, according to estimates by the [Missing Migrants Project](#), based at IOM's Berlin Global Migration Data Analysis Centre, and an investigation conducted by Spain's radio network Cadena Ser. Due to the length of the overseas journey, it is likely that many more disappear without a trace.

In 2019, at least 54 people have lost their lives during this sea crossing. Most recently, six Moroccans died on 27 June after attempting to reach the Canary Islands from Sidi Ifni, including two women and one young infant. Days before, on 23 June, another shipwreck occurred off the coast of Dakhla. The bodies of only four victims of the estimated 25 deceased were recovered from the sea.

Tragically, it is likely that hundreds of families still are searching for news of those lost en route to the Canary Islands. The thousands of people who have lost their lives on this route are too often buried without a name, when they are buried at all: the bodies of more than 200 people remain missing at sea since 2014 alone.

Sephora Sahé is one exception: the 13-month-old, who lost her life off the coast of Gran Canaria this May, was buried by her mother, Ruth, in a cemetery on the island. Ruth's cousin, Justine, was also lost while searching for her daughter after disembarking a patera (small boat). While the daughter, aged 8, survived, Justine's body was found days later.

The West African migration route to the Canary Islands has been in use since at least 1994, with just over 100,000 irregular arrivals recorded by the Spanish authorities in these 25 years. Though crossings to the Canary Islands have not made up a major portion of migrants arriving irregularly in Spain for the past decade, the number of arrivals has increased since 2015, leading to fears that more people are disappearing on this dangerous overseas journey.

On this sobering anniversary, IOM emphasizes that even one death is too many. The 2,000 lives lost on this route over the past 20 years are just one example of a global crisis of migrant deaths.

"Solutions are urgently needed to prevent further deaths, and to aid the families left behind by the tens of thousands who have disappeared in search of a better life," said Frank Laczko, Director of IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre. "IOM's new project assessing the needs of families searching for missing migrants is an important first step, but more action must be taken to swiftly address these issues."

For the latest data on migrant deaths and disappearances, visit the Missing Migrants Project website [here](#).

Raw data can be downloaded from missingmigrants.iom.int/downloads.

For more information please contact Marta Sanchez Dionis at IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre. Tel.: +49 30 278 778 43; Email: msanchez@iom.int.

IOM Greece

IOM Greece's Christine Nikolaidou reported on Thursday (25/07) that from Friday (19/07) to date, the Hellenic Coast Guard (HCG) reported at least 13 incidents requiring search and rescue operations off the islands of Lesbos, Karpathos, Leros, Kos, Samothraki, Symi and the port of Alexandroupolis. The HCG rescued a total of 376 migrants and transferred them to the respective ports.

Those arrivals, plus others over the dates 17-23 July, brings to 17,991 the total number of irregular migrants and refugee IOM has recorded by sea to Greece this year (see chart below).

ARRIVALS BY SEA - GREECE					
01 Jan - 31 Dec	01 Jan - 31 Dec	01 Jan - 31 Dec	01 Jan - 31 Dec	01 Jan - 31 Dec	01 Jan - 23 July
2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
34,442	853,650	173,614	29,501	32,742	17,991

* Unofficial data collected by IOM Greece and the Greek authorities of arrivals by sea.

IOM Greece reports that 3,792 irregular migrants arrived across the Aegean in June, an average of about 126 per day. That rate has picked up to about 156 per day through 23 July – for 3,584 migrants so far this month – with just over a week to go.

IOM Greece also shared data this week on the nationalities arriving by sea through the first half of 2019. According to data provided by the Hellenic Coast Guard, the ten largest nationalities arriving irregularly by sea were:

Afghanistan	5,675
Syria	2,005
Iraq	1,210
Palestine	1,177
Democratic Republic of the Congo	1,155
Iran	604
Somalia	462
Congo	407
Cameroon	366
Ghana	145

Through June, arrivals from Afghanistan comprised over a third of all arrivals in this manner. Just in the month of June, moreover, there were 1,968 arrivals from Afghanistan, or nearly half that month's total. The next largest national group in June was Syria with 489 arrivals, followed by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with 368.

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 32,399 individuals, including 1,442 in 2019 (see chart below), although 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.

This week, the Missing Migrants Project team learned that in the Eastern Mediterranean, an 8-year-old Iraqi girl went missing off the coast of Bodrum on 23 July, when the boat in which she was travelling with eight others capsized while attempting to reach the Greek island of Kos. The survivors included one Palestinian man and seven Iraqi nationals, including three men, one woman and three children.

On the border between Turkey and Iran, 16 people died in a vehicle accident on 18 July, including six women and five children. A further 50 people survived the crash, which took place in Turkey's eastern province of Van.

Whether attempting the perilous sea crossing to Caribbean islands or travelling by foot across Colombia and Brazil, at least 88 Venezuelans have lost their lives since the start of 2019, a death toll now more than double the 42 deaths documented in all of 2018. In total, at least 468 people have lost their lives in the Americas in 2019, compared with 304 recorded through this point in 2018.

In South America, on 18 July, a 19-year-old Venezuelan woman was hit by a truck in Colombia's province of Santander. She was walking by the side of the road, joining the many Venezuelans who have fled their country on foot in recent years.

On the US-Mexico border, at least 20 people have died during the month of July. Most recently, an 11-year-old Honduran girl died in the attempt to cross the Río Bravo near Piedras Negras, in Mexico's northern state of Coahuila on 20 July. Since 1 January 2019, the MMP team has documented 62 drownings in the Río Bravo, compared to 53 recorded in the same period of 2018.

Also on the Río Bravo, MMP learned of the death of a 20-year-old Cuban man, reported on 18 July near Reynosa, Tamaulipas. On 19 and 20 July, two migrants died in Ciudad Juárez, in Mexico's state of Chihuahua: one was stabbed, while the other suffered multiple medical complications due to the lack of water and food during his journey to the border.

On 21 July, the remains of a man were found in a canal located in a ranch in Maverick County, Texas. After crossing the US-Mexico border, migrants often attempt to circumvent Border Patrol interior checkpoints in their efforts to continue northwards. It is during these treks through heavy brush that many migrant deaths occur. The remains of four people were recovered from private ranches located around a United States Border Patrol checkpoint in Falfurrias at the

beginning of July. IOM estimates that at least 213 people have died on the US–Mexico border in 2019.

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](#).

GLOBAL MIGRANT DEATHS		
Jan 1 – July 24		
<i>(Source: Missing Migrants Project)</i>		
REGION	2019	2018
Mediterranean	686	1508
Europe	25	68
Middle East	79	85
North Africa	90	424
Horn of Africa	70	170
Sub-Saharan Africa	7	359
Central Asia	0	52
Southeast Asia	0	3
South Asia	14	72
East Asia	3	20
North America	1	0
US/Mexico border	213	231
Central America	74	40
Caribbean	151	19
South America	29	14
TOTAL	1442	3065

For latest arrivals and fatalities in the Mediterranean, click [here](#). Learn more about the [Missing Migrants Project](#).

See contacts [here](#).

