

Mediterranean Migrant Arrivals Reach 43,584 in 2019; Deaths Reach 844

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Themes:

Humanitarian Emergencies, Missing Migrants

Geneva – The International Organization for Migration (IOM) reports that 43,584 migrants and refugees have entered Europe by sea through 13 August, roughly a 31 per cent decrease from the 63,142 that arrived during the same period last year.

Arrivals this year to Greece and Spain are at 22,283 and 14,168, respectively, (36,451 combined) accounting for almost 84 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 30 per cent ahead of 2018's totals from this time. Arrivals to Spain are about 46 per cent lower.

Deaths recorded on the three main Mediterranean Sea routes through almost eight months of 2019 are at 844 individuals — or about 55 per cent of the 1,541 deaths confirmed during the same period in 2018. ([see chart below](#)).

Mediterranean Developments

TOTAL ARRIVALS BY SEA AND DEATHS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN 2018-2019					
Country of Arrival	1 JANUARY – 13 AUGUST 2019		1 – 13 August 2019	1 JANUARY – 16 AUGUST 2018	
	Arrivals	Deaths	Arrivals	Arrivals	Deaths
Italy	4,269 (as of 13/08)	579	402	19,302	1,111
Malta	1,623	(Central Med. route)	40	243	(Central Med. route)
Greece	22,283 (as of 12/08)	57	2,832 (as of 06/08)	17,139	106
Cyprus	1,241	(Eastern Med. route)	0	108	(Eastern Med. route)
Spain	14,168 (as of 11/08)	208 (Western Med. route)	842	26,350	324 (Western Med. route)
Estimated Total	43,584	844	4,116	63,142	1,541
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.					

Most recently, one man was found dead in a boat recovered by the Maltese Armed Forces. Three survivors were rescued in the operation; however, one other man is now in critical condition in hospital.

IOM Spain

IOM Spain's Ana Dodevska reported on Monday sea arrivals to Spain, through 11 August have reached 14,168 men, women and children, with July producing the largest number of new arrivals since January ([see chart below](#)).

MONTHLY BREAKDOWN - SEA ARRIVALS IN SPAIN 2015 - 2019

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
January	4.104	1.400	1.049	492	264
February	936	1.102	535	222	44
March	588	867	842	351	280
April	1.088	1258	900	451	243
May	1.340	3523	835	575	512
June	2.419	6926	2.352	715	414
July	2.851	7855	2.164	458	409
August	842	6406	2.203	934	417
September		8054	1.486	1.248	621
October		11010	3.616	1.110	1.059
November		5111	4.061	854	557
December		5013	2.065	752	492
TOTAL	14.168	58.525	22.108	8.162	5.309

IOM Greece

IOM Greece's Christine Nikolaidou reported on Wednesday (14/08) that over eight days (07-14/08), the Hellenic Coast Guard (HCG) confirmed at least eighteen incidents requiring search and rescue operation off the islands of Lesbos, Samos, Chios, Kos, Leros and the port of Alexandroupolis. The HCG rescued a total of 643 migrants and transferred them to those respective ports.

Those arrivals, plus another 1,499 at various islands and ports arriving during the days 8-12 August brings to 22,283 the total number of irregular migrants and refugees IOM has recorded arriving by sea to Greece this year ([see chart below](#)).

Arrivals by Sea in Greece

Country	01 Jan – 31 Dec 2014	01 Jan – 31 Dec 2015	01 Jan – 31 Dec 2016	01 Jan – 31 Dec 2017	01 Jan – 31 Dec 2018	01 Jan – 12 Aug 2019
Greece	34,442	853,650	173,614	29,501	32,742	22,283

IOM's Nikolaidou also shared new data on arrivals to Greece through the month of July. In descending order, the top ten arrivals to Greece of irregular migrants via sea from Turkey are Afghanistan, Syria, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Palestinian Territories, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Somalia, Congo, Cameroon and Ghana ([see chart below](#)).

Afghanistan	7,727
Syria	3,483
Democratic Republic of the Congo	1,514
Iraq	1,385
Palestine	1,375
The Islamic Republic of Iran	925
Somalia	703
Congo	628
Cameroon	505
Ghana	189

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 (MMP). Since the beginning of 2014, the project has recorded the deaths of 32,629 individuals, including 1,675 in 2019, as of 14 August ([see chart below](#)).

Global Migrant Deaths	
Jan 1 – August 14	
<i>(Source: Missing Migrants Project)</i>	
REGION	2019
Mediterranean	844
Europe	35
Middle East	80
North Africa	91
Horn of Africa	85
Sub-Saharan Africa	9
Central Asia	0
Southeast Asia	0
South Asia	14
East Asia	3
North America	1
US-Mexico border	251
Central America	81
Caribbean	151
South America	30
TOTAL	1,675

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.

In Europe, the first known death has occurred of someone trying to reach the UK across the English Channel irregularly. On 9 August, an Iranian woman was tragically lost at sea. Nineteen others, including 4 children, were travelling on the same rubber boat and were rescued by authorities.

Since the start of the year, at least 251 people have died while attempting to cross the US-México border. MMP recorded 291 deaths on this border in the same period in 2018. However, it is important to note that deaths along this border often are recorded retroactively, largely because remains may not be found until long after people die due to the vast and harsh terrain.

Since MMP's last update, on 4 August, the remains of 15 people were recovered in inland Texas, and three were recovered after they drowned crossing the Río Bravo, which follows virtually the entire border between México and the US state of Texas. So far, the identities of only six of these victims are known, including Yessica Carolina Castillo Buezo, a 35-year-old Honduran woman, who was found on a ranch northeast of the Falfurrias Border Patrol Checkpoint in Brooks County, Texas.

In California, the death of a young man was recorded after his remains were found on 20 July near El Centro, Imperial County, where he is believed to have died from hypothermia. The deaths of four more people were recorded in California since the last update. All were drowned while trying to cross into the All-American Canal into Imperial County since the beginning of the year.

In Central America, at least two people died while migrating on 4 August: an unidentified man who fell from a train that was travelling through Veracruz México, and Braudilio Acosta Gutierrez, from Honduras, who was shot in the municipality of El Progreso, in Guatemala when he intervened during a robbery. He was travelling with his 19-year-old son, who survived him.

Further south, on 8 August, a Venezuelan man died when he fell from the truck on which he was riding near Calarcá, east of Bogota, Colombia.

Americas' Migratory Routes Reach Grim Milestone: Over 500 Deaths so far in 2019

In total, at least 514 people have lost their lives in the Americas in 2019, compared with 384 recorded through this point in 2018 – an increase of just over one-third.

This is the earliest point in any of the past six years that IOM's Missing Migrants Project has reached a threshold of 500 or more deaths in the Americas. In prior years, the 500-death mark was reached in either September (2016), October (2017, 2018) or December (2015), or, in the case of 2014, not at all, as only 495 deaths were recorded of migrants in transit in the Americas that year.

Women (67 deaths) and children (40) made up just over one-fifth of all deaths recorded in the Americas in 2019, although remains also were recovered from 137 sites where the age and gender of the deceased has yet to be determined.

Nearly half of all deaths – 247 through 15 August – have been recorded on the US-México border. The rest were reported either further south, in Central America (which for the MMP project includes much of México and the isthmus lying between Panamá and Guatemala), or near Caribbean Sea islands or South America. Deaths counted in those three regions were, respectively, 80, 151 and 30.

The turmoil in Venezuela – where over four million migrants have left the country since 2015 – may account for much of 2019’s fatalities surge in recorded fatalities.

This year IOM has reported 89 confirmed fatalities of Venezuelan nationals, whose deaths were recorded across South and Central America as well as in the Caribbean Sea.

Venezuelans are second only to “Unknown” as the most counted nationality, which has 178 victims – many of which were found this year as remains in the desert long after their deaths or lost at sea, meaning that their identities and nationalities may never be confirmed.

Those nationalities that have been confirmed include Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, México, Nicaragua and Ukraine ([see chart below](#)).

Colombia	1
Cuba	6
Dominican Republic	9
Ecuador	6
El Salvador	26
Guatemala	55
Haiti	59
Honduras	42
India	1
Mexico	39
Nicaragua	2
Ukraine	1
Venezuela	89
Unknown	178

The Missing Migrants Project counted deaths so far in 2019 in the following states: Bahamas (31), Dominican Republic (17), Turks and Caicos (19), Trinidad and Tobago (52) and Curacao (32) in the Caribbean. In México (76), Guatemala (2) and Panamá (2) in Central America; in Colombia (27), Brazil (2) and Perú (1) in South America.

MMP also chronicled a wide range of causes of death of these many migrant men, women and children.

Drowning – with 259 victims – was the leader, accounting for just over half of all deceased. More victims appear to have drowned at sea than along any of the treacherous river crossings many migrants risk, not only along the US-México border, but also along borders in Central and South America.

Highway accidents (65) also has been a very common cause of death this year, while mishaps along railway routes (21) are blamed for almost as many deaths as dehydration or exposure (22). Crimes of violence – including homicide – are linked to 19 deaths, with about the same number of fatalities in 2019 attributed to sickness or lack of medical attention. Over 100 cases note a cause of death as “unknown”, also linked to the fact that many migrants’ bodies are not found for weeks or months after their death.

This total, does not include at least 11 deaths in custody in the Americas—either in US detention centres or in México. Because some of these victims were long-term residents of these centres, these cases are counted separately from the Missing Migrants totals.

MMP is also aware of at least 50 cases in México and in Panamá’s Darién jungle where credible reports of deaths have yet to be corroborated. Some of these cases involve eyewitnesses who report they have seen bodies that have yet to be recovered.

In other cases, bodies have been found, but it is not yet known whether these victims are properly categorized as migrants in transit, or migrants settled in the area, or nationals of the country who were not migrants at all.

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](#). The report [Fatal Journey Volume 4](#), published 28 June, includes an overview of five years of Missing Migrants Project data (2014-2018) and an update on what is known about deaths during migration in 2019.

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

See contacts [here](#).