



**Regional mixed migration summary for April 2015 covering mixed migration events, trends and data for Djibouti, Eritrea, South Sudan, Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Puntland, Somalia, Somaliland and Yemen.**

**Terminology:** Throughout this report the term migrant/refugee is used to cover all those involved in the mixed migration flows (including asylum seekers, trafficked persons, smuggled economic migrants, refugees). If the case load mentioned refers only to refugees or asylum seekers or trafficked persons it will be clearly stated.

Country	Events /trends /data /analysis
<b>Yemen</b>	<p><i>Limited data is available from Yemen for April 2015 due to the prevailing security situation. Monitoring activities along the Red Sea and Arabian sea coasts have been considerably affected by the ongoing conflict, with many patrolling missions still suspended.</i></p> <p><i>Indications are that, due to reduced patrolling and lack of security on the coast lines, smugglers and traffickers may be operating in a largely unhindered context.</i></p> <p><b>Arrivals from the Horn of Africa to Yemen continue via the Red Sea:</b> Arrivals from the Horn of Africa across the Red Sea continued in April 2015 despite the worsening security situation in Yemen. According to DRC teams in Djibouti, most of the migrants/refugees setting off towards Yemen were unaware of the scale of the conflict and deteriorating security situation. Even those that were aware of the conflict alleged that they had been convinced to travel by the smugglers who told them that the conflict had ended.</p> <p>In April 2015, an estimated 594 migrants/refugees landed in Yemen via the Red Sea: 98% of these new arrivals were Ethiopian and 2% were Somali. This is a significant decrease compared to previous months: March 2015 in which 3,359 arrivals were recorded and February 2015 with 2,766 arrivals. Due to the suspension of patrolling missions and the closure of most migrant reception centres along the Red Sea coast during this period, it is likely that number of actual arrivals could be much higher and therefore these figures should be used cautiously.</p> <p>(No data on arrivals in Yemen via the Arabian Sea, from Somaliland/Puntland, was received as of the time of publishing this report. Offices within the UN enclave in Aden were occupied by armed Houthi elements in 28<sup>th</sup> April 2015 and it is likely that patrolling missions along the Arabian sea coastline have been suspended.)</p> <p><b>Internal Displacement:</b> UNHCR estimates that 334,000 Yemenis were displaced between 25<sup>th</sup> March 2015 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2015. This new displacement crisis increases the complexity of the wider internal displacement situation in the country where 300,000 people were already internally displaced before the current crisis. This brings the new total to an estimated 634,000 people displaced. IOM announced the launch of a Displacement Tracking Matrix in order to update and verify IDP data in Yemen. Meanwhile over 250,000 registered Somali, Ethiopian and Eritrean refugees/asylum-seekers in Yemen remain at risk (potentially).</p> <p>The actual scale of displacement is difficult to gauge due to limited access, indiscriminate violence, and overall fluidity of the situation. Some people are leaving major urban centres returning to their places of origin that are unaffected by fighting. Many of the internally displaced (IDPs) are staying with relatives, host families living in rented or abandoned houses, or have sought shelter in schools.</p> <p><b>Returns from Saudi Arabia:</b> IOM reported that its operations along the Yemeni and Saudi borders continue to be suspended due to insecurity. IOM reports also indicated that Yemeni nationals continued to be returned from Saudi Arabia.</p> <p><b>Departures to the Horn of Africa:</b> As of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2015, UNHCR reported that over 12,000 individuals of various nationalities had left Yemen by boat or through land borders since 27<sup>th</sup> March. Most arrived by boat at the ports of Obock (Djibouti), and Berbera and Lyghayaha (Somaliland) and Bossaso (Puntland). In April 2015, the governments of Somaliland, Puntland, and Djibouti announced that Yemeni nationals fleeing the conflict would be granted <i>prima facie</i> refugee status. However, agencies have reported that a sizeable number (so far, an unknown number) of Yemeni arrivals, particularly those who have Somali relatives, are unwilling to register as refugees and prefer to leave the port reception centres in the Horn of Africa, either seeking to live with family/relatives in the</p>

Horn of Africa, third countries of settlement, or to be self-sufficient.

**Migrant vulnerabilities:** Despite the ongoing conflict, there were reports of criminal gangs still active along the Red Sea coasts and in April 2015, a significant number of new arrived mixed migrants was reported to have been abducted and held for ransom as per previous months during the last 2 years. On 26<sup>th</sup> April 2015, at least 30 Somali refugees were reportedly killed in unknown missile strike on a convoy travelling from Kharaz refugee camp to Aden. The UN estimates that the conflict in Yemen has killed more than 1,400 people, many of them civilians, since 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

In April 2015, a facility in Sana's facility which was hosting 600 irregular migrants was closed by authorities following structural damages to the building, caused by airstrikes. Migrants were released without coordination with UN agencies and partner NGOs, rendering the tracking of these irregular migrants difficult.

**Humanitarian assistance at risk of collapsing in Yemen:** Following over one month of heavy fighting in Yemen, a group of 22 major aid agencies in Yemen announced that their life-saving assistance risked coming to an abrupt end unless land, sea and air routes were opened immediately for the importation of fuel. The lack of fuel is directly contributing to the unfolding humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen and medical facilities have been stretched to the limit, with many closed and others unable to provide even basic services. Following this, a five-day humanitarian ceasefire agreement was announced by all parties to the conflict set to begin on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

**Means and modalities of travel:** With the land route to Saudi Arabia blocked by Houthi rebels, most migrants/refugees fleeing the conflict used boats to cross the Red Sea and the Arabian Sea into the Horn of Africa (Djibouti, Somaliland and Puntland). Passengers reportedly paid between 100US\$ and 200US\$ per trip, often using the same vessels that smuggle migrants/refugees from mainland Africa to Yemen.

During this period, IOM s assisted 573 third country nationals from over 30 countries to leave Yemen through four flight rotations. Three of those flights were organized from Sana'a to Khartoum, Sudan and one to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. IOM temporarily suspend its evacuation operations in Yemen, due to growing difficulties in operating flights out of Sana'a airport but resumed operations after assurances were received in regard to the facilitation of such operations on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2015. The Sana'a international airport was hit during airstrikes on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2015, reportedly damaging the runway which had an impact on flight operations.

**UNHCRs position on Returns to Yemen:** On 9<sup>th</sup> April 2015, UNHCR issued a position on returns to Yemen. The guidance summarised the situation and highlighted that while the environment in 'Yemen remains highly fluid and uncertain, UNHCR calls on all countries to allow civilians fleeing Yemen access to their territories'. UNHCR further recommended that States suspend forcible returns of nationals or habitual residents of Yemen to the country.

## Djibouti

**Departures to Yemen via the Red Sea:** In April 2015, an estimated number of at least 594 (587 Ethiopian and 7 Somali) migrants/refugees arrived in Yemen from Djibouti via the Red Sea. As mentioned, due to the reduced and limited scope of migrant monitoring teams in Yemen, it is likely that the number of actual arrivals was higher.

**Arrivals from Yemen:** IOM estimates state that as of 1st May 2015, 8,919 migrants/refugees of mixed nationalities and third country nationals arrived in Djibouti from Yemen via boats and charter flights. This number included approximately 1,500 Djibouti returnees who had been living in Yemen. New Yemeni arrivals were directed to Obock port by the authorities, where they were received by ONARS (the government refugee agency) at the Al-Rahma temporary transit centre, whilst Somali and Eritrean refugees were hosted at Holl Holl camp.

**Refugees from Yemen:** As of 5<sup>th</sup> May 2015, UNHCR and ONARS, registered 873 new arrivals from Yemen. Of these, 595 refugees were hosted in two temporary transit centres, the IOM Migrant Response Centre and at the Markazi camp in Obock. The refugees consist of Yemeni nationals who make up approximately 94% of the newly registered arrivals and to a lesser extent, Somalis, Syrians, Eritreans, Ethiopians and Palestinians. Not all Yemeni arrivals in Djibouti claim asylum, with some subsequently leaving Djibouti for other countries or preferring to live in Djibouti on their own or assisted by other Yemenis residing in Djibouti.

**Return of Irregular Migrants stranded in Obock:** IOM facilitated the voluntary return of 231 Ethiopian irregular migrants from Obock to Addis Ababa.

	<p><b>Migrant vulnerabilities:</b> Despite the conflict, numerous migrants reportedly remained in Djibouti for several weeks trying to get temporary jobs to gain money to pay smugglers for the sea crossing and many others reportedly survived begging for money and/or food in the streets of Djibouti (city) and Obock. Migrants reported that they faced difficult living conditions in the country (particularly in Obock) with the main concerns being lack of food, sufficient water, especially for minors, and lack of sufficient shelter. The overall living conditions in Obock are difficult as it is a relatively remote area that has been severely affected by drought since 2008.</p>
<p><b>Somaliland</b></p>	<p><b>Arrivals from Yemen:</b> Somaliland continued to receive new arrivals fleeing from the war in Yemen. As of 5th May 2015, UNHCR reported that Somaliland received 1,573 arrivals from Yemen with Somalis making up an estimated 80% of the new arrivals, followed by Yemenis and to a lesser extent Ethiopians and Syrians. UNHCR reported that an estimated 80% of new arrivals per day left the reception centres voluntarily - the majority heading to other cities/regions in Somalia.</p> <p><b>Modalities of Travel:</b> Most of the new arrivals travelled using cargo ships and fishing boats and reported paying between USD 100 – 500 per person.</p> <p><b>Taskforce on Somali Returns from Yemen:</b> The IOM-UNHCR led task force continued to develop an inter-agency contingency plan targeting 100,000 arrivals to ensure preparedness for the oncoming months. Further IOM and UNHCR continued to liaise with the Federal Government of Somalia with regards to the potential evacuation of Somali nationals from Yemen. As of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2015, over 12,300 individuals had arrived in Djibouti, Somaliland and Puntland from Yemen.</p>
<p><b>Puntland</b></p>	<p><b>Arrivals from Yemen:</b> On 26th April 2015, the largest single arrival in Somalia occurred with 1,152 individuals from Yemen arriving in Bosasso, Puntland, bringing the total number of arrivals in Puntland to 3,225 as of 5<sup>th</sup> May 2015. Somalis comprised the majority of the new arrivals (3,147), followed by Yemeni nationals (59) with Ethiopians (12), Djiboutians (6) and 1 Kenyan.</p> <p><b>Refugees in Puntland:</b> The Government of Puntland issued a statement granting <i>prima facie</i> refugee status to Yemeni arrivals in Puntland. It is however unclear how many Yemeni's are seeking asylum with reports from agencies showing that some Yemeni arrivals, especially those of Somali origin prefer to return to their place of origin over staying at the reception centres.</p> <p><b>Secondary Movement:</b> Many of the arrivals (both Somali and Yemeni) prefer to leave the port reception centres and move on seeking family/relatives in other parts of Somalia or fend for themselves. On 5th May 2015, DRC supported the transportation of 44 individuals (29 female and 15 male) from Bosasso to areas in South Central Somalia specifically Gedo, Qoryoley, Afgooye, Baidoa, Dhobley and Belet-Weyne.</p>
<p><b>Somalia (South Central)</b></p>	<p><b>Somalia Taskforce on the Yemen Situation:</b> UNHCR and IOM are co-leading the inter-agency <i>Somalia Task Force on Yemen Situation</i>. The Task Force reports to the UN Humanitarian Coordinator, with members drawn from UN agencies, international and local NGOs. Regular coordination is taking place with the Task Force established by the Federal Government of Somalia led by Ministry of Interior and Federal Affairs (MOIFA). The Task Force is coordinating the humanitarian response to support arrivals from Yemen, and their return and reintegration to designated areas of return.</p> <p><b>Forced Eviction of IDPs:</b> Somali state security forces forcibly evicted approximately 21,000 displaced people in IDP settlements close to the capital, Mogadishu, in early March 2015. 44% of the households affected said they did not receive notice prior to the eviction and only 39% received a two-day notice. Many of those affected had fled their homes during the 2011 famine and fighting, and have been repeatedly displaced since then. It is estimated that over 1.1 million people throughout Somalia are displaced, including an estimated 370,000 in Mogadishu. Precise data is not available because the government has not officially registered displaced people.</p> <p><b>Somali Refugees in the Region:</b> In April 2015, there were 972,020 Somali refugees in the region hosted mainly in Kenya, Ethiopia, Yemen, Eritrea, Djibouti and Uganda.</p>

	<p><b>Somali Voluntary Returns:</b> Since the start of UNHCR's voluntary returns pilot project for Somali refugees in Kenya, 2,048 individuals travelled back to Somalia. In April 2015, the returns project was temporarily suspended due to the bad condition of roads caused by the ongoing heavy rains in the region.</p> <p><b>Somali smugglers convicted in Italian Court:</b> On 27<sup>th</sup> April 2015, media reports <a href="#">stated</a> that a court in Sicily convicted 20 Somalis of migrant-smuggling. Prosecutors said that the defendants were part of an international migrant-smuggling ring that demanded "large sums of money" from migrants from Kenya and Somalia to enter Italy. They then helped them continue their journey to destinations in northern Europe, especially Sweden.</p>
<p><b>South Sudan</b></p>	<p><b>South Sudan leads in internal displacement globally:</b> A new Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) report published in April 2015, showed that five countries contributed to 60% of the number newly displaced people globally in 2014. South Sudan is one of these top five countries that include Iraq, Syria, Democratic Republic of Congo and Nigeria. There were over 1.5 million IDPs in South Sudan as of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2015.</p> <p><b>Ongoing civil conflict continued to fuel displacement and movement across borders:</b> The humanitarian situation in South Sudan continued to deteriorate while the security situation remained fluid and uncertain. Civil conflict continued despite negotiations between the Government of the Republic of South Sudan (the Government) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (in Opposition) under the auspices of the regional Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Both parties were reported to have repeatedly violated cease-fire agreements. UN OCHA estimates that over 1.5 million South Sudanese have been displaced internally, while more than 500,000 people crossed the borders to seek refuge in Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, and Uganda. In April 2015, UNHCR renewed its call to States to suspend forcible returns of South Sudanese nationals.</p> <p><b>Asylum seekers gain recognition:</b> Media reports stated that South Sudan would grant asylum certificates to about 500 foreign nationals currently sheltering in the UN base in Juba. 515 foreigners from Eritrea, Somalia, and Ethiopia have been living in the UN base with other internally displaced people since the start of the South Sudan Civil War in December 2013.</p>
<p><b>Sudan</b></p>	<p><b>Sudan discusses anti-trafficking strategy:</b> The scale of trafficking trade in Sudan reached USD 3 million per annum in 2013 and 2014, according to findings stated during a meeting of the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking that met to formulate a national strategy for combatting human trafficking.</p> <p><b>Displacement in Darfur:</b> UNOCHA published latest figures on internal displacement in Darfur. As of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2015, there were 50,605 verified IDPs and 143,102 unverified IDPs. (Given that many reports of displacement are not yet confirmed, unverified figures should be regarded as tentative).</p>
<p><b>Eritrea</b></p>	<p><b>Secondary movement of Eritrean Refugees:</b> There has been an increasing number of Eritrean refugees in Sudan and Ethiopia transiting southwards towards Juba (South Sudan) or westwards towards Libya with the aid of smugglers. Growing numbers of the predominantly young refugees in Ethiopia and Sudan have become frustrated with the shortage of services and absence of self-reliance opportunities in the camps. Limited funding for the Eritrean refugee programme in both countries has resulted in a lack of secondary and post-secondary education, as well as vocational training and job opportunities. Deprived of any prospects for a better future and feeling that they have nothing to lose, many pay smugglers to get to Libya and attempt to cross into Europe via the Mediterranean on overcrowded and unsafe boats.</p> <p><b>British guidelines on Eritrean asylum-seekers discredits Eritreans' refugee claim:</b> Guidelines issued by the British Home Office in March 2015, namely: '<a href="#">Country Information and Guidance Eritrea: National (incl. Military Service)</a>' and '<a href="#">Country Information and Guidance Eritrea: Illegal Exit</a>', determined that deserters from the Eritrean Army do not have a valid claim for asylum stemming from life-threatening danger in Eritrea, and therefore do not deserve refugee status in other countries. According to these new guidelines, Compulsory National Service in Eritrea no longer constitutes persecution, or degrading or inhuman treatment, nor does it constitute forced labour. The two documents are results of an official visit made by a UK delegation in December 2014 to Eritrea.</p>

<p><b>Ethiopia</b></p>	<p><b>Refugees and asylum seekers:</b> Ethiopia remained Africa's largest refugee-hosting nation with 682,761 refugees and asylum seekers from neighbouring countries as of April 2015. Refugees and asylum-seekers are generally expected by the Ethiopian government to reside in camps, although some are permitted to reside in urban areas for medical, security, or humanitarian reasons. The government's "Out of Camp Policy" provides many refugees the opportunity to live in the capital, Addis Ababa and other locations if they have the necessary means to support themselves. There are officially 5,900 registered refugees in Addis although the actual number may be higher.</p> <p><b>Refugees from Yemen:</b> As of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2015, 51 Yemeni nationals and 64 Somali nationals fleeing Yemen were registered as asylum seekers or refugees in Ethiopia.</p> <p><b>Upsurge in refugees from South Sudan:</b> UNHCR <a href="#">reported</a> that the number of South Sudanese refugees who fled to Ethiopia since fighting broke out in South Sudan in mid-December 2013, passed the 200,000 mark in April 2015 with the agency expecting more arrivals amidst the resurgence of fresh conflict across the border. There was an increase in new South Sudanese arrivals from some 1,000 people a month in the first quarter of 2015 to more than 4,000 refugees registered in April 2015. 71% of the new South Sudan arrivals were female. UNHCR reported that it was registering more than 10,000 new arrivals at various entry points in the Gambella region. Most of the new arrivals reported that they were fleeing renewed fighting in Upper Nile and Jonglei states and some young men also reported that they were fleeing from alleged forced conscription.</p> <p><b>Ethiopian migrants killed in Libya and South Africa:</b> Authorities in Ethiopia have confirmed many of the migrants shown being shot and beheaded in a video purportedly made by the 'Islamic State' group in Libya were its citizens. It appears they were killed for being non-Muslims. The security situation in Libya since the revolt in 2011 has grown increasingly precarious, as rival governments and armed groups battle for control. Several armed jihadist organizations in Libya have pledged allegiance to the 'Islamic State' group, which controls large parts of Syria and Iraq. Media reports have also <a href="#">alleged</a> that the militant group kidnaps irregular migrants in the southern Libyan desert.</p> <p>In April 2015, 3 Ethiopian migrants were also killed in South Africa, targets of reported xenophobic attacks against foreigners.</p>
<p><b>Kenya</b></p>	<p><b>Kenya retracts plans to close Dadaab Refugee Camp:</b> The Kenyan government backtracked on plans to close down Dadaab, Kenya's largest refugee camp, after intense pressure from the international community and after meetings with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr António Guterres. After the Somali-based militant group Al-Shabaab launched an attack on Kenya's Garissa University that killed 148 people in April 2015, Kenyan authorities had pledged to shut the camp down, fearing that it had become an asset for Al-Shabaab militants getting into the country. The plan to send the refugees back was one of many proposed changes, including plans to build a 'security wall' between the two countries.</p> <p><b>Refugee Status Determination process taken over by Government:</b> In April 2015, the final handing over of the Refugee Status Determination from UNHCR to Kenya's Department of Refugee Affairs (DRA) took place. The Kenyan government appointed a six-member team, the Refugee Appeals Board (RAB), which is expected to determine cases.</p> <p><b>Refugees in Kenya:</b> Kenya is host to 589,994 refugees and asylum seekers, 55,569 of them in Nairobi (urban refugees). The largest number of refugees and asylum seekers remain Somali nationals (420,499), followed by South Sudanese (92,846), and Ethiopians (21,234). Tens of thousands of undocumented migrants from neighbouring countries and further afield continue to reside in Kenya, predominantly in urban areas.</p> <p><b>Refugee Returns to Kenya:</b> IOM announced that a group of 700 Kenyans who fled the country at the height of the 2007-08 Post-Election Violence would be voluntarily repatriated from Uganda. The group is among the 1,350 Kenyans still living in Uganda after fleeing the country when violence erupted following the disputed Presidential election in 2007. About 6,500 Kenyans fled the 2007-2008 post-election violence following disputed presidential election results. Shortly after the violence ended, they began returning home in groups, leaving about 1,350 refugees still hosted by Uganda.</p>

	<p><b>Detention of Migrant/Refugees:</b> During the reporting period, media reports show that 159 irregular migrants of Ethiopian origin were arrested and detained and charged with being in the country unlawfully, residing outside a designated area, and failure to register as a refugee. The areas of arrest were Moyale and Garissa. Despite the fact that Kenya has concluded a reciprocal Visa Abolition Agreement with Ethiopia dispensing the need for a visa, reports of arrest of Ethiopian irregular migrants has become commonplace. Police and border officials have in the past failed to distinguish between economic migrants and asylum seekers, generally categorizing all as economic migrants as seen in the various charges presented in court. Between January and April 2015, over 500 Ethiopian irregular migrants were deported from Kenya.</p>
<p><b>Israel</b></p>	<p><b>‘Voluntary’ repatriation encouraged amongst migrants in detention facilities:</b> As part of an initiative to encourage irregular migrants leave voluntarily, media reports stated that the Israeli government would proactively encourage migrants detained at Holot detention facility to leave. Any migrant who declined would reportedly be transferred to Mishmoret detention facility after a hearing. According to an April 2015 report by two Israeli NGO’s, 9,026 African asylum seekers “voluntarily” left Israel in 2013 and 2014. 1,205 of them reportedly left to countries (such as Sudan, Rwanda and possibly Uganda) that are not their countries of origin (Sudan / Eritrea.)</p> <p>State authorities claim to have secured transfer arrangements for asylum seekers who ‘voluntarily’ agree to leave Israel to two third countries – Rwanda and Uganda. Such agreements have remained secret and the identities of the receiving countries have not been formally verified; though the media reported that the Rwandan President Kagame <a href="#">confirmed</a> that an agreement existed between Rwanda and Israel to accept migrants whilst Uganda has denied the existence such an agreement.</p> <p><b>Forced repatriation of African migrants:</b> In April 2015, Israel’s Attorney General approved the deportation of Eritrean and Sudanese asylum seekers to two African countries, based on the Foreign Ministry’s assertion that their lives were not in danger in these countries. According to an Israeli NGO, Hotline for Refugees and Migrants, at least 14 asylum seekers have thus far been requested to leave or face the likelihood of indefinite detention. Israel has upped pressure on refugees in 2014 and 2015, first by detaining hundreds of Sudanese and Eritreans in a desert prison complex in the Negev desert and then offering them cash to return to a third country, usually Rwanda or Uganda. In April 2015, there were media <a href="#">reports</a> that an Eritrean returnee, attempting to cross to Europe, and who had been repatriated from Israel to either Rwanda or Uganda in 2014, and who later travelled to Libya, was killed in Libya by militants claiming to members of the ‘Islamic State’ group.</p> <p><b>Citizens of Ethiopian origin demonstrate over alleged police discrimination:</b> Hundreds of Israeli citizens of Ethiopian origin took to the streets to protest against perceived state discrimination. The protests were prompted by an incident in which police were caught on video assaulting an Israeli soldier of Ethiopian origin. Ethiopian Jews migrated to Israel in two large waves of migration in the 1980s and early 1990s after the chief rabbinate of Israel recognized them as Jews in 1975. The arrivals continued until 2013 when Israel ended the program of mass repatriations from Ethiopia. They are estimated to number around 135,000, approximately 1.5% to 2% of the overall population.</p>
<p><b>Other Regional news</b></p>	<p><b>Irregular migration to Europe via the Mediterranean on the rise:</b> April 2015 saw a surge in both the numbers of migrants/refugees reaching Europe from North Africa and an increase in rescues of stranded migrants/refugees and deaths at sea. Between January and April 2015, over 35,000 people attempted to cross the Mediterranean to reach Europe from Africa.</p> <p>This rise in numbers may be attributed to the political chaos in Libya which presents an opportunity for smugglers to operate in a relatively lawless environment as border security is all but nonexistent, corruption is rampant, the coast guard rarely leaves port, and the proliferating human smuggling operations are increasing. This security vacuum has made it easier for smugglers to transport people through the country. As a result, the number of people fleeing war and poverty in Africa and the Middle East with the objective of reaching Europe via the Mediterranean Sea has surged since 2014. Mild spring weather and calm summer seas are expected to push total arrivals in Italy for 2015 to 200,000, an increase of 30,000 compared to 2014, according to the Italian government’s Interior Ministry.</p>

**High Numbers of Fatalities in the Mediterranean:** April 2015 saw a historic rise in the number of fatalities of migrants attempting to cross over from the North African coast to Europe with 1,300 deaths at sea during the month. In one single incident, more than 800 people lost their lives when a boat sank on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2015 - the deadliest capsizing recorded so far in the Mediterranean. The overloaded vessel crashed into a cargo ship shortly after leaving Libya, causing panic on board. The deceased migrants/refugees were Eritrean, Syrian and Senegalese.

Between January 2015 and April 2015, over 1,750 migrants/refugees are estimated to have drowned in the Mediterranean out of an estimated 35,000 attempting the journey. According to IOM, this represents a 180% increase in fatalities from the same period in 2014. Most incidents occurred along the route between Libya and Italy.

**Armed threats in the Mediterranean during rescue operations:** On 13<sup>th</sup> April 2015, Frontex and Italian patrol boats experienced armed threats at sea during rescue operations when armed smugglers fired into the air to recover an empty migrant boat after an Italian tugboat and an Icelandic Coast Guard vessel deployed by Frontex rescued a group of migrants. The Frontex vessel did not engage the people smugglers with force and allowed the smugglers to return to Libya with the empty migrant boat.

**Smuggler Economics:** Reports from IOM reveal that operators of vessels used to transport migrants/refugees charged Africans the equivalent of \$400 to \$700 per person per trip. Syrian migrants/refugees are charged the equivalent of \$1,500 per person to cross the sea. [Media](#) reports also stated that smugglers along the Mediterranean make an average of 80,000 euros (\$90,000) from each boatload, according to an ongoing investigation by an Italian court.

**EU to triple funding for search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean:** Days after one of the deadliest recorded accidents in the Mediterranean killed over 800 migrants attempting to make their way into Europe, the EU held an emergency summit and agreed to contribute more boats and patrol aircraft to current Mediterranean rescue efforts. Tripling the funding to an estimated 120 million euros (\$130 million) puts Triton at par with Italy's Mare Nostrum mission that was canceled in 2014. The high loss of life in April 2015 prompted renewed criticism of Triton, which began operations in November 2014 after Italy's costly Mare Nostrum rescue mission came to an end.

**The African Union's opposes EU plans to outsource migrant reception centres:** Amidst media reports that the EU was trying to persuade Niger, Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco and Turkey to pre-screen migrants/refugees and assess asylum claims, Africa's envoy to the European Union, Ambassador Ajay Kumar Bramdeo [criticised](#) these plans. Mr Bramdeo referred to the alleged plans as 'a dangerous approach' and further stated that the EU would be "shirking its own responsibility in receiving refugees and migrants".

**Over 50,000 Burundians flee in fear of possible election-related violence:** As of 5<sup>th</sup> May 2015, UNHCR reported that over 50,000 Burundians had fled to neighbouring countries including Rwanda and Tanzania amidst waves of growing unrest linked to protests against the Burundi president's plans to run for a third term in office. The unrest raised fears that the country, after a decade of peace, would slide back into conflict. A judge of the Constitutional court – which was about to decide on the legality of a hugely contested third term for the president Pierre Nkurunziza, fled the country in April and subsequently, the remaining judges ruled that the incumbent could run for re-election. Several regional leaders including the African Union Chairperson have publicly opposed the president seeking a third term in office. Rwanda and Tanzania are both hosting refugee camps receiving new Burundi arrivals.

**Xenophobic attacks against migrants in South Africa:** 6 people, including 3 Ethiopian migrants, died as a result of violence that erupted in April 2015, allegedly targeting non-South African nationals. 5,000 foreign nationals/migrants were displaced as a result of the violence that started in Durban, on South Africa's east coast and were hosted in temporary camps with others leaving South Africa for Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe via bus. The targets of the widespread violence were reportedly African immigrants, especially those from Zimbabwe and Somalia. In 2008, xenophobic violence resulted in the deaths of over 60 people across the country.

**Ongoing Syrian displacement:** Turkey became host of the world's largest community of Syrians refugees/asylum seekers. According to UNHCR, Turkey's Syrian refugee population was more than 1.7 million as of April 2015, and the large unregistered Syrian population may mean the true figure is even higher. UNHCR reported the number of Syrian refugees/asylum seekers to be over 3.9 million globally as of April 2015. The number of Syrians arriving in Europe seeking international protection continues to increase, although it remains comparatively low, with around

5% (200,000) of Syrians who have fled the conflict seeking safety in Europe. This low number may be due to reluctance of European countries to take in Syrian refugees/asylum seekers. In Italy, as of April 2015, 10% of migrant/refugee arrivals were Syrian whilst in Greece almost 60% of new arrivals were Syrian nationals.

In April 2015, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. António Guterres, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for International Migration and Development Peter Sutherland, and the Director-General of IOM, William Lacy Swing, called on European states to take collective action to the crisis including: proactive and well-resourced search and rescue operations as well as making firm commitments to receive significantly higher numbers of refugees through EU-wide resettlement.

**New  
Research,  
reports or  
documents**

**Global Detention Project: The Detention of Asylum Seekers in the Mediterranean Region:** With the recent tragic surge in the number of deaths at sea of asylum seekers and other migrants attempting to reach Europe, enormous public attention is being focused on the treatment of these people across the Mediterranean. An important migration policy employed throughout the region is detention, including widespread deprivation of liberty of asylum seekers and other vulnerable groups. The report focuses on eight key countries in Europe and North Africa. While there are clear differences in treatment from one side of the Mediterranean to the next, looked at collectively, the protection environment across all the countries in the region is bleak. Not surprisingly, the conditions of detention asylum seekers face in North African countries are often stark and challenging. However, in Europe, there are also serious shortcomings. In fact, as this background report, reception and detention conditions in three of Europe's main asylum receiving countries (Greece, Italy, and Malta) are so inadequate that many of their EU counterparts have been forced to halt returns to these countries under the Dublin III Regulations. Click [here](#) to read this report.

**Frontex Annual Risk Analysis 2015:** Frontex released its Annual Risk Analysis 2015 on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2015. This report presents a European summary of trends and developments along the external borders of the Member States of the EU. The analysis is based on information provided to Frontex by the EU Member States and Schengen Associated countries throughout 2014, as well as information collected during Frontex Joint Operations and from open sources. Click [here](#) to read the report.

**The Anti-Trafficking Review: Special Issue - Fifteen Years of the UN Trafficking Protocol:** 2015 marks the 15th anniversary of the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. This fourth special issue of the Anti-Trafficking Review embraces this occasion with an evaluation of the impact of this landmark instrument of international law on the grave social, political and economic problems it targets. The topics include evidence of harm or benefit resulting from the Protocol's implementation, analysis of the workability and usefulness of the Protocol's definition of trafficking as a practical tool, and work on the immigration control impact of the Protocol. Authors have also considered the relationship between the anti-trafficking agenda and other human-rights-related agendas such as women, labour, refugee and migrant rights. To read this issue click [here](#).

**Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre: Global Overview 2015:** The Norwegian Refugee Council's Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) published its annual Global Overview which covers people forced to flee their homes by international or internal armed conflict as well as generalised violence. This report is based on data and analysis gathered between January and December 2014 in 60 countries and territories across the world. One of the findings of this report is that as of the end of 2014, 38 million people around the world had been forced to flee their homes by armed conflict and generalised violence, and were living in displacement within the borders of their own country. This represents a 15 per cent increase on 2013, and includes 11 million people who were newly displaced during the year, the equivalent of 30,000 people a day. Click [here](#) to read the report.

**EU Immigration and Asylum Law (Text and Commentary): Second Revised Edition:** Since 1999, the EU has adopted legislation harmonizing many areas of immigration law, in particular rules on borders, visas, legal migration, and irregular migration. The much-enlarged and fully updated second edition of this book contains the text of and detailed commentary upon every significant measure in this field proposed or adopted up until 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011. It includes commentary on the EU visa code, the Schengen Borders Code, the Frontex Regulation, the Returns Directive, the Directives on family reunion, long-term residents and single permits for migrant workers, and many more besides. This volume completes this new edition of EU Immigration and Asylum Law, which consists of a 3-volume set. It is the essential guide for any lawyers, academics, civil servants, NGOs and students interested in this area of law. Read more [here](#).

**Migration Policy Institute: Rethinking Global Protection: New Channels, New Tools:** This April 2015

publication by the Migration Policy Institute and commissioned by the Transatlantic Council on Migration, looks at the place of humanitarian protection founded on the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees in light of contemporary displacement situations. The international refugee protection regime is seen to be under strain as a result of high numbers of displaced people globally. The report identifies main sources of strain on the system including territorial basis of asylum, and limitations of existing policy frameworks that limit mobility by regular channels leaving irregular migration as the only resort for many. Potential solutions to the current challenges requiring incorporation of developmental approaches to traditional care and maintenance programming as well as opening channels of international mobility to forced migrants could be effective in creating a dynamic and sustainable response. Click [here](#) to read this publication.

*This information sheet is distributed to over 1,200 agencies, academic institutions, donors, embassies, journalists, government officials / departments, international and multi-national organisations and related non-government organisations. Sources: Data is sourced from a wide variety of collaborators, partners, international and local organisations, media outlets and individuals in the region. The key refugee agency – UNHCR – and migration agency – IOM- are frequently the origin of specific refugee or migrant return-related data. RMMS is a unit/project within the Danish Refugee Council and also uses data and information generated by DRC activities. RMMS makes its own independent editorial decisions as to what sections and what data is included in this monthly update.*