



**Regional mixed migration summary for December 2016 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 caseload mentioned refers only to refugees or asylum seekers or trafficked persons it will be clearly stated.

Country	Events /trends /data /analysis																								
<p><b>Yemen</b></p>	<p><i>The conflict in Yemen entered its twenty-first month with shelling and fighting putting civilians at risk. As previously reported, due to the conflict, monitoring and data collection activities along the Red Sea and Arabian sea coasts continued to be affected, with a majority of monitoring exercises suspended. Therefore the data presented in this report concerning new arrivals in Yemen cannot be considered comprehensive or conclusive.</i></p> <p><b>Internal displacement:</b> Displacement and return dynamics in Yemen remain complex, with constant shifts, new displacement, and simultaneous return movements. The <a href="#">12<sup>th</sup> Taskforce of Population Movement Report</a> approximates that there are currently 2,007,216 internally displaced persons in Yemen. The majority of IDPs were displaced within the first 6 months of the conflict, and 84% are reported to have been displaced for more than a year. An approximate 1,027,674 persons have returned to their locations of origin.</p> <div data-bbox="268 943 1023 1355" data-label="Figure"> <table border="1"> <caption>Horn of Africa Arrivals in Yemen, 2006-2016</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Arrivals</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>2006</td><td>25,898</td></tr> <tr><td>2007</td><td>29,360</td></tr> <tr><td>2008</td><td>50,091</td></tr> <tr><td>2009</td><td>77,802</td></tr> <tr><td>2010</td><td>53,382</td></tr> <tr><td>2011</td><td>103,154</td></tr> <tr><td>2012</td><td>107,532</td></tr> <tr><td>2013</td><td>65,319</td></tr> <tr><td>2014</td><td>91,592</td></tr> <tr><td>2015</td><td>92,446</td></tr> <tr><td>2016</td><td>117,107</td></tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <p><i>Data source: UNHCR Yemen</i></p> <p>in 2015, coincide with unrelenting conflict in Yemen and persistent reports of human rights abuses, including abduction, physical violence and torture, and sexual violence. 2016 figures are also 9% higher than those recorded in 2012 – the previous record year.</p> <p><b>Continued arrivals from the Horn of Africa:</b> In December 2016, at least 5,603 migrants and asylum seekers (4,211 Ethiopians and 1,392 Somalis) arrived from the Horn of Africa to Yemen via the Red Sea, Arabian Sea and Gulf of Aden. Arrival figures in December were marginally higher than November, but seemingly still affected by ongoing deportations of new arrivals from Yemen (see below on migrant vulnerabilities), discouraging some from making the journey. Nevertheless, it is likely that the actual number of arrivals from the Horn into Yemen was higher during the period, due to the reduction of monitoring missions along Yemen’s coast.</p> <p><b>Red Sea arrivals:</b> An estimated 1,178 (1,138 Ethiopians and 38 Somalis) migrants and asylum seekers arrived on the Red Sea coast of Yemen in December. In a departure from recent movements over the past three months, arrival figures in December reflected a 49% increase on those in November. Migrants and asylum seekers arrived aboard 24 boats, which departed from Obock, landing in various towns in Lahj and Ta’iz governorates. A total of 18,458 migrants and asylum seekers travelled along this route in 2016. For the first time in three years, this reflects an increase in movements (a 31% increase on 2015), which have typically been declining with those on the move favouring a departure from Puntland across the Arabian Sea.</p> <p><b>Record Arabian Sea arrivals:</b> In December 2016, an estimated 4,425 (Ethiopian 3,071 and 1,354 Somali) migrants</p>	Year	Arrivals	2006	25,898	2007	29,360	2008	50,091	2009	77,802	2010	53,382	2011	103,154	2012	107,532	2013	65,319	2014	91,592	2015	92,446	2016	117,107
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**Record 2016 arrivals in Yemen from the Horn of Africa:** A record-breaking number of migrants and asylum seekers from the Horn of Africa arrived in Yemen in 2016. A total of at least 117,107 Ethiopian and Somali migrants and asylum seekers arrived between January and December – the highest ever since records began in 2006. An overwhelming majority of those travelling to Yemen were Ethiopian nationals (83%), with the remaining 17% coming from Somalia. Males continue to dominate the movements, accounting for 83%, with females making up 17%. The arrival numbers, which are 27% higher than those

and asylum seekers arrived in Yemen via the Arabian Sea. Arrivals along this route reached record levels in 2016, totalling at least 98,649 persons at the end of the year. This represents a 26% increase on arrivals in 2015 and is the highest arrival figure ever recorded on this route since records began in 2006. [Recent research](#) shows an increasing preference of migrants and asylum seekers from the Horn of Africa to travel to Yemen along the Arabian Sea.

**Ethiopian profiles, drivers and intentions:** A significant proportion of Ethiopian nationals continue to identify themselves as Oromo – 92% in December – significantly higher than levels reported in 2014. Ethiopians cited a number of economic reasons for migration, including poor livelihood opportunities, poverty, as well as a desire to secure well-paying jobs in Saudi Arabia. As in the past few months, new arrivals continued to report arrest and detention by Ethiopian government officials, for alleged involvement in student protests and the Oromo Liberation Front. 27 Ethiopians arriving in December had an intention to seek asylum in Yemen – 25 of whom were Oromo.

A majority (64%) of Ethiopian migrants and asylum seekers were either assisted or facilitated to enter Djibouti, with some relying on smugglers or other migrants who had made the journey before. New arrivals paid between 4,000-25,000 Ethiopian Birr (approx. USD 180 – 1,110), which for some included the cost of the sea crossing to Yemen. Almost all Ethiopians expressed an intention to travel onwards to Saudi Arabia to seek work opportunities.

**Somali profiles, drivers and facilitation:** Somali nationals originated from all three zones in Somalia and reported that drought was affecting most parts of the country and that many small businesses had lost their income. Additionally, some reported a loss of income due to reduced livestock exports. All transited through Loya Ade before crossing into Djibouti, paying between USD 100 and 300 for their trip, mostly covering the cost of the crossing to Yemen,

**Migrant vulnerability and ongoing deportations from Yemen:** Migrants and asylum seekers did not report many protection risks on the sea crossing from Djibouti to Yemen. Some migrants did however report that the Yemeni or Afari boatmen notified criminal groups on shore of their expected arrival.

Based with interviews with 370 Ethiopian nationals in Yemen a total of 3,081 human rights violations (either directly experienced or witnessed) were reported in December 2016. The number of violations reported this month (and in November and October) are particularly high given the relatively small number of interviews held and may indicate an increase in the perpetration of abuses. Interception and deportation of new arrivals from Yemen continues to be a major concern, and as mentioned above, appears to have resulted in decreasing arrival numbers over the past several months. 768 (25%) incidences of interception and deportation were reported in December, 692 of who were deported from Yemen to Djibouti. In one instance a large group of 497 (450 males and 47 females) were intercepted in Aden and deported back to Djibouti. A separate group of 195 Ethiopian males also faced the same fate.

It is unclear whether those arriving are being given an opportunity to claim asylum, raising concern over possible *refoulement*. One Ethiopian asylum seeker reported that he had intended on seeking asylum in Somalia and had an appointment scheduled for status determination. However, he fled to Yemen after he heard that three other asylum seekers had been kidnapped by undercover Ethiopian policemen, in coordination with Somaliland security officials, and taken back to Ethiopia.

As in previous months, newly arrived migrants and asylum seekers continued to report the presence of armed smugglers and/or suspected traffickers along the Yemeni coast. In December, those interviewed reported 902 cases of abduction, accounting for 29% of all reported violations. Reportedly, those captured are held for ransom in smuggling “dens” until they are able to raise enough funds to secure their release – between 2,000 to 10,000 Ethiopian Birr (approx. USD 89 - 440). In December two Ethiopian migrants, who arrived in Yemen in October, reported being kidnapped and subjected to inhuman treatment. They reported that the women in their group were sold onto other traffickers, except two who were raped daily.

Protection issues reported by migrants transiting through Djibouti on their way to Yemen are reported in the Djibouti country section below.

**Departures from Yemen:** As of 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016, an estimated total of 91,131 persons had fled Yemen to countries within the Horn of Africa (36,603 in Djibouti, 34,453 in Somalia, 13,309 in Ethiopia, and 6,766 in Sudan). Yemenis and Somalis continue to represent the largest proportion of people moving out of Yemen, accounting for 30% and 35% of movements respectively. Djibouti is the primary destination for Yemeni nationals, with 71% of those moving opting to travel to Djibouti. More recent figures were not available at the time of writing this report.

	<p>The latest statistics and overview of the displacement situation arising out of the Yemen crisis can be found on the UNHCR data sharing and information <a href="#">portal</a>. Overall the number of persons fleeing Yemen in 2016 is far lower than the numbers recorded in 2015.</p>
<b>Djibouti</b>	<p><b>Departures to Yemen:</b> In December 2016, an estimated 1,178 (1,138 Ethiopians and 38 Somalis) migrants and asylum seekers arrived along the Red Sea coast of Yemen, marking a 49% increase on arrivals in November. New arrivals landed aboard 24 boats in various towns in Lahj and Ta'iz governorates. Due to the reduction of monitoring missions along Yemen's coast, it is likely that the actual number of arrivals from the Horn of Africa to Yemen was higher during the period.</p> <p><b>Migrant vulnerability:</b> Migrants and asylum seekers transiting through Djibouti also face the risk of deportation. In one report, 20 Ethiopian males who were on their way to Obock were intercepted at Lac Asal and deported back to Ethiopia, where they restarted their journey back to Obock on the same day. Another group of 4 Somali males were intercepted and returned to Somalia through Loya Ade. Other concerns raised in December include the death of three persons, detention, and robbery and assault at the hands of smugglers and residents in Lac Asal.</p>
<b>Somalia/ Somaliland</b>	<p><b>Somali migrant smuggling network dismantled:</b> A criminal network suspected of smuggling some 500 migrants from Somalia to different destination countries in the European Union was busted by authorities in France and the Netherlands in collaboration with Europol's European Migrant Smuggling Centre. The network, comprised of Somali nationals residing in France and Italy, was reportedly responsible for smuggling Somali nationals from Italy to EU Member States, including Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Germany, and other northern European countries. Between January and November 2016, 7,138 Somali nationals are reported to have arrived in Italy via the Mediterranean Sea, a 37% decline reported arrivals during the same period in 2015.</p> <p><b>Somali refugees in the neighbouring countries:</b> At the end of December 2016, there were 897,119 Somali refugees and asylum seekers in neighbouring countries in the region. Figures indicate that the majority of are being hosted in Kenya, Yemen and Ethiopia.</p> <p><b>Internal displacement:</b> According to UNHCR, there are approximately 1.1 million internally displaced persons across the whole of Somalia (Somaliland, Puntland and South Central Somalia).</p>
<b>South Sudan</b>	<p><b>Regional displacement:</b> As of 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2016, UNCHR reported that there were 1,175,778 South Sudanese refugees being hosted in neighbouring countries in the region. The situation in South Sudan remains very precarious and violence and conflict continue to drive displacement. Almost half (579,729) of those displaced are being sheltered in Uganda. Other refugees have fled to Ethiopia (282,101), Sudan (263,245) and Kenya (50,703).</p> <p>In mid-December, South Sudanese president Salva Kiir announced that he plans to establish a national committee of eminent persons that will steer an inclusive dialogue aimed at establishing lasting peace in the country. Violence resurged in South Sudan in July 2016.</p> <p><b>Internal displacement:</b> UNHCR figures estimate that there were 1.8 million internally displaced people in South Sudan as of 31 December 2016.</p> <p><b>Refugees in South Sudan:</b> According to UNHCR, there were 262,560 refugees being hosted in South Sudan at the end of December 2016. The large majority (92%) of the refugees are from neighbouring Sudan.</p>
<b>Sudan</b>	<p><b>Irregular migration through Sudan:</b> Sudan's pro-government militia, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), reported that it had intercepted <a href="#">1,500 irregular migrants</a> over the last seven months as they attempted to cross the Sudanese-Libyan border. This month, the RSF reported that they had arrested over 300 migrants heading to Libya across the desert. Sudan is a key transit point for migrants travelling from neighbouring countries in the Horn of Africa as they head north towards Libya, Egypt and Europe.</p>

	<p>The RSF has previously <a href="#">claimed that the EU does not appreciate its efforts</a> in fighting migrant smuggling and human trafficking through the country, and called for the international community to <a href="#">lift economic sanctions</a> as a pre-condition for its continued cooperation in doing so. While not directly related to migration, the United States in December ordered an easing of sanctions against Sudan, for its cooperation with the international community on counter-terrorism efforts. The easing of sanctions will take effect after six months and will be dependent on the progress of Sudan's actions on a number of parameters.</p>
<b>Ethiopia</b>	<p><b>Refugees in Ethiopia:</b> As of 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016, there were 783,401 refugees and asylum seekers registered in Ethiopia. The majority of refugees are from South Sudan (328,145), Somalia (245,949) and Eritrea (162,176). According to UNCHR 81,078 Eritrean refugees previously registered as living in the camps are believed to have spontaneously settled in Ethiopia. This figure is subject to verification.</p> <p><b>Ethiopian migrants returned from Mozambique:</b> A group of 34 Ethiopians, who had become stranded in Mozambique as they journeyed to South Africa, were supported to return home with the assistance of IOM. The migrants travelled from southern Ethiopia through Kenya and Tanzania, crossing into Mozambique through an unpatrolled border crossing in the north of the country. They became stranded after the open truck in which they were travelling collided with another vehicle, killing seven other migrants. The migrants, all males aged between 21 and 39 years and three unaccompanied minors aged between 15 and 17, were headed for South Africa and each paid around USD 3,500 to smugglers to facilitate the journey.</p>
<b>Kenya</b>	<p><b>Refugees in Kenya:</b> As of 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016, there were 501,999 registered refugees and asylum seekers in Kenya, including refugees from Somalia (66%), South Sudan (18%) DRC (6%) and Ethiopia (5%). Figures from December were not ready in time to update this report.</p> <p><b>Voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees:</b> As in November, the pace of refugee returns from Dadaab refugee camp to Somalia continued to increase in December. 3,192 Somali refugees were supported to return to Somalia during the month (a 49% increase on the previous month), bringing the total number of refugees undertaking repatriation in to 33,725 persons. According to UNHCR, the number of flights to Mogadishu, Kismayo and Baidoa have been increased, and road movements (which were temporarily suspended) will resume in January increasing the capacity for returns. Return movements in 2016 have been plagued by bad weather, and a refusal by the Jubbaland administration in Somalia to receive more returnees.</p>
<b>Israel</b>	<p><b>Israel raises height of fence on Egyptian border:</b> The Israeli government has raised the height its border fence with Egypt by another three metres to eight metres tall. Construction of the original wall began in 2012 and was completed in 2014, in the hopes that it would stop irregular migration, drug and weapons trafficking and terrorist infiltration into the country. According to the Ministry of Defence, erecting the fence resulted in a drastic drop in the number of African migrants arriving in Israel – 213 in 2015. But a number of successful irregular entries in 2016 prompted the additional height. According to the ministry, the wall and additional detection devices, had “<a href="#">significantly curbed the flow</a> of illegal infiltration into Israel, with only 11 successful attempts to cross the fence throughout 2016”.</p> <p><b>Asylum seekers forced to set aside a fifth of their salaries:</b> A new amendment to Israel's anti-infiltration law will require African asylum-seekers to deposit 20 per cent of their salary into a fund that will only become available to them when they leave Israel. Employers of African asylum seekers will also be required to set aside an additional 16 per cent of the salary. The law, which will take effect from April 2017, also provides for a substantial portion of the fund to be confiscated if the then-failed asylum-seeker does not leave the country by the designated date set by the government. <a href="#">Reportedly</a>, the aim of the law is to make the employment of asylum-seekers more expensive and to offer a bigger incentive to leave Israel.</p> <p>Human rights organisations have warned that the amendment will exacerbate poverty among asylum-seekers and have called on the Interior Ministry to halt on applying the law. The latest figures from the Population and Immigration Authority estimate that more than 40,000 irregular migrants currently reside in Israel.</p>

<p><b>Other regional news and news from other regions</b></p>	<p><b>Egypt stops more than 12,000 from irregularly migrating:</b> Egyptian border patrol and coast guard forces have reportedly stopped 12,192 persons of various nationalities, in 434 instances, from irregularly entering or leaving the country in the course of 2016. During 2016, Egypt emerged as an increasingly popular departure point for migrants and asylum seekers attempting to reach Europe via the Mediterranean Sea.</p> <p><b>Egypt's new anti-human smuggling law criticised:</b> Egypt's new anti-human smuggling legislation, which was passed by Egypt's parliament in October 2016, was recognised as a milestone in Egyptian law as the first in the country's history to criminalise persons involved in human smuggling and one that is in line with the standards set out in the "Smuggling Protocol" of the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime. However, Human Rights Watch have <a href="#">raised concern</a> with the law which, in one article states that criminal liability lies with smugglers and not migrants (who are regarded as victims), but later states that they may be prosecuted "if they commit offenses punishable under Egyptian laws". Entering Egypt without permission can be a crime. Human Rights Watch have called on the government to issue regulations to clarify the law and to remove the ambiguity surrounding whether migrants can be prosecuted.</p> <p><b>Italy pushes for Libya cooperation:</b> The Italian government has stepped up talks with Libya over a deal to stem migrant and asylum seeker flows across the Mediterranean Sea. However, <a href="#">reports</a> indicate that the positions of the two governments "far apart". Italy recently reopened its embassy in Tripoli after two years, as part of a broader effort to curb migrant and asylum seeker departures. The embassy will <a href="#">reportedly</a> start granting Libyans Schengen visas in February. As Europe scramble to find a working solution to the influx of migrants and asylum seekers from Africa, Malta's Prime Minister has <a href="#">called for</a> the establishment of an EU-Turkey type deal for Libya.</p> <p><b>Mediterranean Sea arrivals:</b> In stark contrast to the record number of migrant and asylum seeker arrivals witnessed in 2015, the total number of persons arriving in Europe at the end of 2016 was 357,367 persons. The overall reduction, calculated at 65%, has largely been attributed to the effective closure of the Eastern Mediterranean route from Turkey to Greece with the signature and coming into force of the EU-Turkey migrant deal. Arrival figures in Greece dropped from 856,723 in 2015 to 173,450 in 2016 – an 80% decline. Nonetheless, recent <a href="#">analysis</a> suggests that hundreds of thousands of people may have arrived irregularly during the period and will not have been captured in official records.</p> <p>On the Central Mediterranean route, a record total of 181,141 persons are reported to have arrived in Italy during the course of 2016. This represents an 18% increase on arrivals in the whole of 2015 and an almost 7% increase on arrivals in 2014. Despite the prevailing myth that the increase on the Central Mediterranean route corresponds with the reduction in arrivals along the Eastern Mediterranean route, a closer look at arrival data reveals that the upward trend in Italy is as a result of an increased presence of West African nationals (see more on the debunking of this myth in a new RMMS feature article below). 8,428 persons arrived in Italy in December 2016, a 38% decline on arrivals in November, and a 13% reduction on arrivals in December 2015.</p> <p><b>Migrant deaths:</b> 2016 was a record year for migrant and asylum seeker deaths. According to <a href="#">IOM's Missing Migrants Project</a>, at least 7,495 persons lost their lives globally while migrating by land and sea in 2016. 68% (5,079 persons) of these deaths occurred on the Mediterranean Sea, of which 4,576 (90%) occurred on the Central Mediterranean route. This route is highly frequented by migrants and asylum seekers from the Horn of Africa (as well as West Africa).</p> <p><b>Burundian refugees in neighbouring countries:</b> Burundi continues to struggle with political instability that is driving displacement. As of 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017, there were 327,853 Burundian refugees being hosted in countries in the region. The majority of the refugees are in neighbouring Tanzania (177,335), with other refugees in Rwanda (83,691), DRC (31,310), and Uganda (29,975) including other countries.</p>
<p><b>New Research, reports or documents</b></p>	<p><b><a href="#">The Italian Connection: Getting the analysis right using data not myths:</a></b> Amidst the unprecedented focus on and coverage of migration flows to Europe, two common misconceptions prevail. First, that the increased usage of the Central Mediterranean route to Italy is related to shift away from the Eastern Mediterranean route. And second, that this shift is in turn related to the EU-Turkey deal. This feature article by RMMS aims to provide some additional analysis on the record number arriving in Italy in 2016 and debunks the fiction that migration has moved from the Eastern to Central route.</p> <p><b><a href="#">Migration trends to watch in 2017:</a></b> 2016 has been a tumultuous year for migration and migration policy. In this featured article, IRIN plots the migration policy trends for 2017. These include: Europe outsourcing migration policies, populism and its effects on domestic immigration policy, and forced returns.</p>

**A Minor Miracle: A New Global Compact on Refugees:** In a speech to the Andrew & Renata Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law, University of South Wales, Sydney, Assistant High Commissioner for Protection Volker Türk described the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants as a minor miracle. This feature article by RMMS gives a short introduction and reproduces the speech as delivered by Mr Türk.

**Study on the onward movement of refugees and asylum seekers from Ethiopia:** This report, commissioned by UNHCR and undertaken by the Danish Refugee Council in Ethiopia, aims to better understand the phenomenon of onward movement of refugees and asylum seekers out of Ethiopia. It provides an in-depth examination of all aspects of the irregular migration journey, including motivations and intended destinations, how those on the move facilitate their journeys, and the role of the diaspora.

**Global Report on Trafficking in Persons:** In this 2016 edition, UNODC investigates how migrant and refugees can be vulnerable to trafficking in persons en route or at their destination. The report consists of three main analytical chapters: 1) providing a global overview of the patterns and flows of trafficking in persons; 2) presenting an analysis of trafficking in persons in the broader perspective of migration and conflict; and 3) providing in-depth analyses by region.

**2016 Africa Report on Internal Displacement:** This report by IDMC, is the first of its kind that focuses exclusively on internal displacement on the African continent. It finds that in 2015 alone, 3.5 million people were newly displaced by conflict and rapid-onset disasters. At the end of 2015 it is estimated that at least 12.4 million people were living in ongoing displacement, more than double Africa's 5.4 million refugee population.

*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.*