

This summary of inter and intra-regional displacement and displacement-induced mobility is produced by DRC Middle East and North Africa regional office drawing widely on available sources. It covers events, trends and data for the Middle East region (Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq, Libya, Tunisia,).

A note on terminology: Throughout this report the term migrant/refugee is used for all persons involved in mixed migration flows (including asylum seekers, trafficked persons, migrants, refugees) with the exception of Syrians who are recognised as persons in need of international protection. If the group mentioned refers only to refugees or asylum seekers or trafficked persons or migrants it will be clearly stated.

SYRIA

Forced Displacement: As of October 27, 2015, [UN](#) figures estimate a total of 4,180,180 Syrians (including Palestinian refugees from Syria) are currently outside the country compared to 4,045,650 on September 30 (a difference of 134,530 people). Ongoing conflict, including [increased mortar and rocket shelling](#) in Damascus, Homs and Lattakia, continues to result in large-scale internal [displacement](#). At least [6.5 million](#) people are now internally displaced, with [ACAPS](#) reporting that at least 100,000 people have been displaced in October alone. [UNRWA](#) estimates 280,000 Palestinian refugees are also internally displaced in Syria.

Migratory routes: There has been a [607%](#) increase in new migrant/refugee arrivals in Greece between 2014 and 2015 (as of September 2015). The Eastern Mediterranean-Western Balkans route is used most by Syrians, though a smaller number (approximately 5% of the total new arrivals recorded in Italy) have been reported on the Central Mediterranean route, departing from Libya by boat (see Libya/Tunisia section).

Departures along the Eastern Mediterranean-Western Balkans Route: In October 2015 [210,265](#) refugees and migrants crossed the Mediterranean from Turkey to Europe of which Syrians accounted for an estimated 64% of arrivals. [REACH](#) reports that Syrians are using multiple routes to get to Europe with most travelling by land or air to Turkey (Syrians do not require visas for Turkey) and then paying smugglers for boat passages to Greece. A smaller number have this month reportedly travelled north and attempted to cross from Erdine in Turkey to Bulgaria or Greece. The majority of Syrian refugees are young men who departed alone, though a small numbers of families, single women, and unaccompanied minors (UAMs) are reportedly entering Europe. As at October 30, [IOM](#) has recorded that at least 435 people died at sea on this route.

Reasons for Departure: A recent [survey](#) of Syrian refugees in Germany indicates the main reported reason for leaving Syria was to flee imminent threats to life and to the lives of family members (armed conflict, kidnapping, lack of food etc.). The majority of respondents attributed their fears of violence to the Syrian Army and allied groups. [REACH](#) data also confirms that many Syrians heading for Europe directly from their country of origin are leaving due to recruitment by armed groups. Family members in Europe and the availability of support and services are also major draws. Increased demand for boats to Europe may also be due to the [reported decrease](#) in travel costs, due to increased supply of smugglers and legal transportation in Europe, currently at 2700-3400 USD for the entire journey.

Refugee Returns: In Jordan, UNHCR reported an average of 103 people returning to Syria daily in September, though this number only accounts for those who returned with the help of UNHCR. [ACAPS](#) estimates at least 15,500 Syrians have returned from Iraq in 2015 with 2,470 returning in September 2015. 73,500 people have returned from Turkey in 2015.

JORDAN

Arrivals: As of October 31, 2015 [UNHCR](#) had registered 630,176 Syrian refugees in Jordan, though the government estimates that a total of 1.4 million Syrians are residing in the Kingdom. In September, an average of 64 Syrians

were arriving in Jordan every day and by the first week of October the daily average was [63 individuals](#). 1,289 Syrian refugees were registered as arriving in Jordan between September 17 and October 31 with 30, 821 Syrians having arrived in Jordan in 2015 (as of [mid-October](#)).

[51,499](#) Iraqis were also registered in Jordan, as of October 31, 2015; 6,415 of whom arrived in 2015. There were also 3,480 Sudanese individuals and 3,989 other persons of concern in October 2015. The [Sudanese community](#) estimates their population in Jordan to be roughly 5,000 but data on the movements of this population is limited.

Departures: There are anecdotal reports of Syrians leaving Jordan in order to try and reach Europe. People with funds and travel documents have the option of taking a plane to Istanbul from Jordan and then travelling by boat to Greece, others cross the Nasib border to Syria and either return to their homes (see following section) or travel by foot to [Turkey](#) and onwards to Europe. Reported [reasons for departure](#) include high cost of living, decreasing humanitarian aid and lack of employment opportunities in Jordan. The journey from Jordan to Europe cost between 3400 - 5700 USD in [September](#) of this year.

Returns to Syria: [UNHCR](#) reports that in July an average of 66 refugees were returning to Syria each day. In August this spiked to 129 individuals per day before decreasing to 103 daily in September. It is unclear if these individuals were moving with the intention to go to Europe. Returnees have cited dire financial circumstances, inability to work, and World Food Program cuts to assistance as reasons for their return. For more information see a [BBC](#) article detailing the “terrible choices” many Syrians in Jordan are being forced to make.

Closed Borders: [Reports](#) indicate that the Jordanian border, while officially open to refugees, has been closed to Syrians on a number of occasions, with Iraqis and Palestinians fleeing Syria prevented from crossing the border by Jordanian [authorities](#). Only a limited number of Syrians are allowed to cross the border on a daily basis.

LEBANON

Arrivals: As of October 31, 2015 UNHCR had registered 1,075,637 Syrian refugees in Lebanon. At least 20,127 non-Syrian refugees (including Palestinians) have also been registered in the country. UNHCR has been officially requested to [halt registration](#) of Syrians by the Government of Lebanon in an attempt to limit the number of refugees in the country. Prior to the cessation of registrations in early May, the Lebanese government instructed UNHCR to de-register 1,471 people who had been registered as refugees between January and May of 2015 (See [Al Jazeera](#) and [Al Monitor](#)). [Visa requirements](#) for Syrians have also been intensified. [UNFPA](#) is still documenting movement between Syria and Lebanon.

Departures: Syrians transit through Lebanon, taking boats from Tripoli to Turkey and then continuing on into Europe. [UNHCR](#) estimates that, in September 2015, 6000-7000 Syrians were travelling through Tripoli per week. [Reports](#) calculate that the cost of travel to mainland Europe from Lebanon is currently between 3500 and 4500 USD.

Authorities' Response: Lebanon is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention and the government insists that it is neither a country of asylum nor a final destination for [refugees](#). It refers to Syrian refugees as ‘displaced’ individuals,’ or ‘persons registered as refugees by UNHCR.’ In 2014, the [Council of Ministers](#) implemented visa requirements to restrict the entry of Syrians, and reduce the number of refugees, in Lebanon. This effectively represented the first restriction on border crossings for Syrians since Lebanese independence was gained in 1943.

TURKEY

Arrivals: As of October 2, 2015 UNHCR reports that there are 2,072,290 Syrians in Turkey, up from the 1,938,999 registered on 25 August 2015. Syrians in Turkey register with the GDMM (General Directorate of Migration Management) under Temporary Protection arrangements.

Country of Transit: Turkey acts as the main point of departure for Syrians and other refugees who are heading to Europe, across the Mediterranean via Greece, also known as the [Eastern-Mediterranean Route](#). [REACH](#) reports that the average length of stay in Turkey is 4-12 days for Syrians in transit, with the cities of Izmir and Bodrum serving as the main points of departure. Between January 1 and [October 30th](#) 2015, Greece received 601,079 refugees and migrants by boat, with the majority departing from Turkey. Syrians make up 64% of this total with the remainder of arrivals originating from Afghanistan (22%), Iraq (7%), Pakistan (3%) and Somalia (1%). Reports indicate that small numbers of Syrians are also arriving in [Cyprus](#).

Reasons for Departure: [Human Rights Watch](#) released an article detailing the reported reasons that people leave Turkey to seek safety in Europe. Many Syrians expressed their belief that they may never be able to return to Syria and as such Europe was deemed preferable to Turkey. For those who had lived in Turkey for years, the inability of many people to work, difficulties in accessing education and an increasingly negative sentiment towards refugees were all cited as reasons to leave.

Refugee and Migrant Vulnerability: Unseaworthy dinghies and boats are being used by smugglers to ferry thousands of refugees and migrants across the Mediterranean from Turkey to Europe. The Turkish Coast Guard reported 64,928 people rescued at sea in 2015 (as of October 11) and 264 deaths at sea (as of October 13). [IOM](#) reported at least 435 deaths at sea on the Eastern Mediterranean route at the end of October. In comparison, the daily [public ferry](#) from Bodrum, in Turkey, to Kos, in Greece, costs 20 EUR.

Turkey and the EU: The EU is in [talks](#) with Turkey to fund a 3 billion EUR action plan aimed at stemming the rising number of refugee and migrant arrivals in Europe. The funding would be used to increase the capacity of the Turkish coastguard, address smuggling networks and facilitate the acceptance of returnees to Turkey. Part of the negotiations includes discussions about visa liberalization for Turkish nationals and efforts to push forward Turkey's protracted bid for EU membership. The [agreement](#) would also entail legislation enabling refugees living in Turkey to access employment as well as improved access to education and healthcare.

IRAQ

Displacement: Ongoing clashes between the so-called Islamic State, Iraqi Security Forces, and local militia groups, along with international airstrikes, continue to result in major displacement throughout Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). [IOM](#) reported that there were 3.2 million Iraqi IDPs on October 16 with [87%](#) of people displaced from the governorates of Anbar, Ninewa and Salah al-Din. Between August 27 and September 29 the number of IDPs increased by 24,000 individuals.

Refugees in Iraq: As of October 27, 2015 UNHCR had registered 245,134 Syrian refugees in Iraq. This is down from 247,352 registered on September 28. Iraq also hosts refugees of Palestinian, Iranian and Turkish origin.

Departures: Since January this year, 22,514 registered refugees have left Iraq for [Europe](#). In 2015 [Greece](#) has seen the arrival of 601,079 refugees and migrants by boat, 6% (roughly 36,000) of whom are Iraqi. [REACH](#) estimates the cost of travel from Iraq to mainland Europe is between 5000 and 9000 USD. In September, [2,470](#) Syrian refugees returned to Syria from KRI, reportedly influenced by the high cost of living and unemployment in the country. Over 15,500 people have returned to Syria from Iraq in 2015 and an estimated 180,000 Iraqi refugees are residing in neighbouring countries (primarily Turkey and Jordan).

LIBYA and TUNISIA

Conditions in Libya: [Ongoing conflict](#) has left an estimated 2.44 million people in Libya in need of protection. With a total population of 6.3 million people, this includes 434,000 IDPs, 100,000 refugees and asylum claimants and 150,000 migrants. These numbers are estimates as many UN agencies and INGOs have restrictions on access to Libya due to security concerns. Though there is limited data on country of origin for refugees and migrants in Libya, 27% of [arrivals by sea](#) in Italy this year were Eritrean, 14% were Nigerian, 8% Somali, 6% Sudanese, and 5% Syrian (along with smaller percentages of various other nationalities), with the majority of arrivals to Italy departing from Libya.

Departures: Libya acts as the main point of departure for refugees and migrants from the Horn of Africa and Western African routes who are heading to Europe via Malta or Italy across the Mediterranean. [FRONTEX](#) categorizes this as the 'Central Mediterranean Route' and has recorded 128,619 "illegal border crossings" in Italy and Malta from January to September, 2015 with 8,129 arriving in October (as at 19 October). The majority of refugees and migrants on this route originate from Eritrea, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, and Syria. [UNHCR](#) reports that in 2015, 89% of sea arrivals in Italy departed from Libya. In June, 2015 [Save the Children](#) estimated that 150,000 "migrant workers" and 37,000 refugees were searching for passage to Europe in Libya.

The number of Syrians taking this route has dropped by almost 80% compared to the same time period in 2014 due to the imposition of visa restrictions on Syrians entering Libya. Previously Syrians would cross through Libya from

Egypt but this route has become extremely dangerous due to the presence of non-state actors. Egypt has also introduced visas for Syrians entering the country.

Refugee and Migrant Vulnerability: As of October 30 [IOM](#) reported at least 2,860 deaths by sea along the Central Mediterranean route in 2015, making it the world's deadliest sea-crossing in terms of absolute figures (435 deaths have been recorded on the Eastern Mediterranean route this year). Use of this route is particularly dangerous as smugglers use unseaworthy boats and dinghies, and often insufficient fuel, to maximise their profits. In October alone there have been at least 8,129 arrivals by sea in Italy and a recorded [152](#) deaths along this route, mainly close to the Libyan coastline. On [October 25th](#), at least 40 bodies, thought to be drowned refugees and migrants, were discovered off the coast of Western Libya. An unknown number of people die crossing into Libya through the border with Sudan.

EU Response: In October 2015 the EU announced intentions to intercept people-smugglers by boarding and seizing vessels in the Southern Mediterranean. The operation, known as EUNAVFOR MED, targets smugglers in Libya, though it is restricted to operating in international waters due to its lack of mandate from the Libyan government and UN.

Proposed Legislation in Tunisia: In September 2015 [UNHCR](#) reported 928 registered refugees and asylum seekers in the country, the majority from Syria with lesser numbers from Côte d'Ivoire and Sudan. Many refugees and migrants are returned to Tunisia after being rescued at sea following departure from Libya. UNHCR recorded 7 boats rescued off the coast of Tunisia with over 900 survivors disembarked in Tunisia (as at September 2015). Since 2012, UNHCR has been assisting Tunisia in preparing two draft texts of asylum legislation. Currently awaiting parliamentary approval, as asylum law is [expected](#) to be implemented in 2016.

ISRAEL and OPT

Please see the [RMMS: Horn of Africa and Yemen – Monthly Summary](#) for more information.

OTHER REGIONAL NEWS

Afghan Arrivals in Europe: There are no official figures regarding the number of Afghans that have left for Europe this year, but [UNHCR](#) reports that 16% of individuals who arrived in Europe, by sea, in 2015 were Afghan nationals. An article published by [Deutsche Welle](#) details the unemployment and insecurity that is driving Afghans to make the journey to Europe. [Reports](#) indicate that Afghan authorities are struggling to keep up with the demand for passports by those who want to leave the country and claim asylum in Europe.

Blocking the Balkan Path: Hundreds of thousands of refugees, many from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, are being stranded as they attempt to cross the Balkan countries en route to other EU states ([BBC](#)). Slovenia has restricted the daily number of individuals allowed to cross its Croatian border to 2,500, leaving hundreds of refugees and migrants stranded in the rain. Many are being forced to sleep in the open or on trains held at the border. Meanwhile Hungary has closed its borders with Serbia and Croatia. DRC reports that the registered number of Syrians in Serbia this year reached 229,297 on October 15, with 51,054 registered in September alone (up from 4,425 in April and 37,195 in August).

Claims of Syrian Nationality: Many people arriving in Greece are claiming to be Syrian due to perceived preferential treatment from aid agencies and governments towards Syrians. FRONTEX, working in Greece, is developing new ways to determine the nationality of arrivals ([IRIN](#)). There are also reports of an established market of fake Syrian passports in Turkey ([Business Insider](#), [Al Jazeera](#)).

UN in Libya: The UN is sponsoring a plan for a unity government to end violence in Libya. According to [Al Jazeera](#), the plan would usher in a cabinet and prime minister, as well as three deputy prime ministers from the east, west and south of Libya. The rival House of Representatives and General National Congress would both hold a place in the proposed government.

NEW RESEARCH, REPORTS OR DOCUMENTS

REACH published two reports at the end of September detailing the livelihoods and humanitarian needs of people

inside Syria (accessible [here](#)), and the migration trends of Syrian refugees traveling towards Europe (accessible [here](#)). The reports highlight the challenges Syrians face in their country of origin and which act, in many cases, to spur individuals and families to seek asylum in Europe.

The **WANA Institute** has released a [report](#) entitled *Forging New Strategies in Protracted Crises: Syrian Refugees and the Host State Economy* which addresses the economic impact that Syrian refugees have had in Jordan. The report highlights the skills and opportunities that refugees can offer a state, but stresses the importance of considering the interests of the state in finding durable solutions.

A new **OXFAM** [briefing](#) analyzes the funding contributions made to the Syrian crisis by the world's top donor countries. The report presents indicators developed to guide countries to a 'fair share' commitment for 2015, and reveals that in 2014 almost half of the world's top donors failed to provide their share of aid to the crisis.

Mercy Corps has produced a report focused on refugee youth in Europe (accessible [here](#)). Though the report is centred on those who have arrived in Greece, it addresses the plight of young people as they travel to Europe and the factors that motivate them to seek asylum there. The report provides key recommendations for policy makers, humanitarian organizations, and other non-state actors with regard to youth protection.

A September [report](#), published by the **Carnegie Endowment for International Peace**, outlines the challenges Jordan faces with regards to its large Syrian population. A stressed economy, negative public impact, and underfunded humanitarian appeals are addressed in the report which calls for the prioritization of national development and humanitarian aid, the maintenance of protection space for Syrians, access to livelihoods, and the empowerment of Jordanian municipal actors.

ARDD, a Jordanian NGO, has established a 'Don't Go...Protect, Inform, Act' campaign designed to inform refugees of their rights in the MENA region and to make them aware of the risks on the trip to Europe. The report, addressed to refugees, policy maker, and states, can be accessed [here](#).

MHub has released a [report](#) concerning the plight of young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers detained in Libya. The research, *Detained Youth: The fate of young migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in Libya* is based on interviews with resettled refugees in Europe and focuses on drivers of migration, the journey to Libya, the conditions of detention and life after detention.

ICRC released a [booklet](#) detailing the activities and services that it offers to migrants and their families in various places around the world. These include services for individuals in detention facilities and the restoration of family connections for those who have lost contact with loved ones.

In October **IOM** launched its 2015 World Migration Report (accessible [here](#)). The report looks at the relationship between migration, migrants and cities, and reveals that 1 in 5 migrants live in the world's 20 largest cities.

RMMS has released its September monthly summary of mixed migration issues and news in the Horn of Africa and Yemen region (accessible [here](#)).