

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).

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

Syrian Refugees: With the conflict currently in its 6th year, ongoing fighting in Syria continues to displace thousands of Syrians both within and outside of the country. As at April 30, 2016 UNHCR had registered [4,836,638](#) Syrian refugees globally, marking an increase of 35,010 individuals (0.7%) from March 31, 2016. Of this total [OCHA's](#) most recent figures indicate that 2,749,140 Syrians are in Turkey; 1,048,275 are in Lebanon; 642,868 are in Jordan; 246,589 are in Iraq; 119,665 are in Egypt; and 29,116 are in other North African countries. Of the total UNHCR registered Syrian refugees [4,343,549](#) Syrians (90%) live in urban, peri-urban, or rural areas, while only 493,089 (10%) live in formal camps.

Violence and Internal Displacement: Despite reports that the Cessation of Hostilities (CoH), in effect since February 27, 2016, had substantially decreased the number of civilian deaths and violence in Syria over March, 2016, April saw a renewal of violence and the reported deaths of [1041](#) civilians. With an estimated [6.6 million](#) internally displaced by violence in Syria, OCHA reported that [41,790](#) individuals had been displaced in April, 2016 alone.

In April [Aleppo](#) experienced a surge of violence culminating in air strikes and mortars claiming the lives of over [300](#) people, destroying at least 6 hospitals (including the April 27th destruction of an ICRC and MSF supported [hospital](#) which killed one of the city's last remaining [pediatricians](#)), 6 schools, and various other infrastructure. This resulted in the displacement of an estimated [40,000](#) people and the closure of 6 nearby refugee camps along the Turkish-Syrian border. Most of these newly displaced people [moved](#) to A'zaz and the Bab al Salam border crossing where an estimated 75,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were already located. Ongoing fighting in the Al-Hasakeh Governorate has led to the displacement of at least [10,000](#) people between March and April.

Closing Borders: Though 4,836,638 Syrians have fled their country since the beginning of the conflict, [reports](#) indicate that the borders surrounding Syria are [increasingly](#) closed to Syrians and that very few legal routes to Europe remain open. Strict visa requirements in [Lebanon](#), limited admissions at the [Jordanian](#) border, and visa requirements for entry to [Turkey](#) by sea or air, coupled with a tightly controlled land border, are limiting the options for Syrians who want to exit their country.

In addition to the estimated [100,000](#) people stranded in Syria along the Turkish border, which has been closed for the past year, with some medical exceptions (see Turkey section), there are also an estimated [50,000](#) to 56,000 displaced Syrians stranded on a berm outside Syria's southern border with Jordan. At April 27, 2016 UNHCR had registered [31,401](#) of these individuals (see Jordan section). As at January 2016 there were roughly [450,000](#) Palestinian refugees in Syria and 39,500 Iraqi refugees (as at December, 2015).

On March 8, 2016 the [Balkan route](#) became closed to refugees and other mixed migrants following official border closures in FYROM, Croatia, and Slovenia, three countries along the Balkan route. These closures had effectively left at least [50,000](#) refugees and mixed migrants stranded in Greece at the end of April, 2016.

EU-Turkey Agreement: Under the EU-Turkey Agreement, which came into effect on [March 20, 2016](#), Turkey has been reclassified as a 'safe country' (despite [condemnation](#)) and any new arrivals in Greece after March 20 can be deported back to Turkey after a fast-tracked asylum process, including Syrians. In return for every Syrian [deported](#) to Turkey, one Syrian already in Turkey will be resettled in Europe. Turkey will also receive 6 billion Euros to improve conditions for Syrians in Turkey along with the loosening of European [visa](#) restrictions for Turkish citizens.

Deportations began by boat on [April 4](#), 2016, amid [protest](#), and as at April 27 a total of [386](#) people had been returned from Greece to Turkey. Though there are no specific numbers regarding the nationalities of the individuals deported, [reports](#) indicate that Pakistanis, Afghans, and Bangladeshis were among those returned to Turkey. No [Syrians](#) have been deported under the agreement, though [some](#) have returned to Turkey [voluntarily](#). The [Guardian](#) reports that some Syrians are being detained upon arrival in Turkey, without access to lawyers or family. On April 9, 2016 Greece announced that deportations would be [suspended](#) for a minimum of 2 weeks to improve the process.

The European Commission also reports that 135 Syrians have been resettled from Turkey to Europe, with the first refugees arriving in [Germany](#) and Finland on April 4. [FRONTEX](#) and the [European Commission](#) have released statements claiming that the EU-Turkey Agreement combined with border closures in FYROM and NATO's efforts in the Aegean have noticeably reduced arrivals in Greece.

Eastern Mediterranean Route: In April, 2016 UNHCR reported [3,650](#) arrivals by boat in Greece – an 86% decrease from March 2016. Of the recorded April arrivals, [1,268](#) were Syrian; 637 Pakistani; 580 Afghan; and 381 Iraqi. The average daily arrivals in April were 122 individuals a day, tapering down to only [dozens](#) a day by the end of the month. IOM reported [10 deaths](#) along the Eastern Mediterranean route in April 2016, a decrease of 35 people compared to the 45 deaths reported in March.

Other Routes to Europe: [Reports](#) indicate that more people arrived by sea to Italy ([9,149](#) individuals) than to Greece ([3,650](#) individuals) in April, 2016. This [does not](#), however, mark a significant shift by Syrians to the [Central Mediterranean](#) route to Europe. Despite the greater number of arrivals in Italy, [FRONTEX](#) notes that this represents a 13% decrease in arrivals when compared to March 2016.

According to [Bulgarian officials](#), the number of refugees and other mixed migrants crossing the Bulgarian border from Turkey has also dropped despite the closure of the Balkan route to Europe and [fears](#) that the EU-Turkey Agreement will significantly shift migration routes to the Bulgarian border. In the first quarter of 2016 Bulgarian officials detected roughly 2,800 irregular crossings at the Turkish border, a 20% decrease from the 3,500 detected during the same period in 2015. Bulgarian officials attribute the dropping numbers to increased [Turkish policing](#) at the border. As at March 31, 2016 [Iraqis](#) were the largest group apprehended by Bulgarian authorities at the border followed by Syrians, Afghans, and Pakistanis, among other groups. Nearly [30,000](#) refugees entered Bulgaria in 2015. People typically cross this densely forested border on foot or at official checkpoints by hiding in vehicles or buses. While this border removes the risks of travel by sea there are reports of [push-backs](#) and [violence](#) at the border.

Syrians in Brazil: For some Syrians leaving the Middle East does not mean travelling to Europe. A recent [RMMS](#) article highlights the growing number of Syrians who use special humanitarian visas, issued by Brazilian embassies in the Middle East, to travel to Brazil and claim asylum there. For some this is an [alternate](#) route to Europe wherein asylum applications are made in French Guiana with the goal of moving to France upon the granting of asylum. As at March, 2016 [2,250](#) Syrians had been granted asylum in Brazil and 8,474 special humanitarian visas had been approved.

Trafficking: IOM has released the results of a new [survey](#) conducted on human trafficking and exploitation prevalence on Eastern Mediterranean migrant routes. Of the 2,385 refugees and other mixed migrants interviewed 7.2 % answered 'yes' to at least one 'trafficking' or 'exploitive practice' indicator based on personal experience. The rates of these positive responses were highest among Afghans, but also Syrians, Iraqis, and Pakistanis.

The [sex trafficking](#) of Syrian women is an ongoing and growing concern in Lebanon as highlighted by the dismantling of the country's largest known [sex trafficking ring](#) in March 2016 (see Lebanon section).

JORDAN

Arrivals: According to Jordan's Inter-Sector Working Group more than [6000 Syrians](#) were admitted to Jordan in April. As at April 19, 2016 UNHCR had registered [642, 868](#) Syrians in Jordan with no figures available for the end of the month. This represents an increase of 5,230 registered individuals (0.8%) since March 31, 2016. Of this group 80.4% (516,973 individuals) live in urban, peri-urban or rural areas (a 0.5% decrease from March) and 19.6% (125,895 individuals) live in camps (a 0.1% increase from March). Jordanian leadership, however, estimated in February that the number of Syrians in the country was closer to [1.4 million](#).

[ECHO](#) reports that the number of admissions to Jordan per day remained steady at roughly 100 people until the beginning of April when it increased to 200-250 people per day. These admissions occur primarily through Jordan's North-eastern border with Syria at Hadalat and Rukban where thousands of Syrians are stranded on a berm outside the border (see 'Syrians at the Border' section below). On April 5, 2016 the Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army reported the reception of [406 Syrians](#) over the previous 24 hour period.

Additionally, as at April 15, 2016 UNHCR had registered [54,990](#) Iraqis in Jordan marking an increase of 404 individuals (0.7%) in the first 15 days of April. Jordan's most recent Population Census, however, indicated that [130,911](#) Iraqis were living in Jordan at the end of 2015. In the most recent available figures ([March 31](#)) UNHCR had registered 3,033 Sudanese, 3,852 Yemenis, and 774 Somalis in Jordan.

Departures: On March 23, 2016 the [Jordan Times](#) reported that only 2% of Syrians who have reached Europe or lost their lives at sea departed from Jordan. Though there are no precise figures for the number of refugees and other mixed migrants leaving Jordan, as at April 12, 2016 [ACAPS](#) reported that young Syrian men in particular are continuing to leave Jordan to travel to Europe, often via Istanbul. In January alone a reported 291 refugees travelled abroad from Jordan. In February, 2016 CARE International suggested that [half a million](#) Syrians in Jordan will consider going to Europe if they cannot find jobs or other assistance. Access to livelihoods, however, is improving, according to UNHCR which reports that new government measures have led to the employment of [78,000](#) Syrians as at April 26.

[ACAPS](#) also reports that returns to Syria from Jordan have continued throughout 2016 though at slower rates than in 2015 due to deteriorating security conditions. Syrians have been [motivated](#) to return by deteriorating quality of asylum in Jordan and lack of livelihood opportunities, among other reasons. [Al Jazeera](#) reports that moving to Europe, or resettling in any other country, is not the goal of all Syrians as indicated by the 1 in 4 people in Jordan's Zaatari camp who turned down the opportunity to resettle in Canada. Many Syrians, according to the [article](#), are instead waiting to return to Syria.

Syrians at the Border: Thousands of people continued to be stranded at the [berm](#) outside Jordan's North-Eastern borders at Rukban and Hadalat in April. With [6,104](#) shelters identified on the Syrian side of the border estimates of the number of people, primarily Syrians, range from roughly [50,000](#) to more than [56,000](#) individuals. UNHCR had registered [31,401](#) of these individuals as at April 27, 2016. Of this group [53%](#) are reportedly minors. A reportedly arid, desert environment, diplomats have described [conditions](#) at the berm as 'horrendous' for the thousands of Syrians who have waited at the border for months. Limited [humanitarian access](#). Reports of [deaths](#), [violence](#), [riots](#), inadequate medical services, and the diversion of humanitarian assistance, are all common.

In April daily admissions at the border increased from roughly 100 individuals per day to [200-250](#) admissions daily. Jordanian [authorities](#) describe a holistic approach to mitigating the suffering of refugees, but maintain that [rigorous inspections](#) at the border are in place to ensure [Jordanian security](#), with government officials likening this process to the security screening procedures of European countries. Syrians are often transported to the border by smugglers leading them on a [journey](#) of up to 21 days over rough roads and through government held territory, often with limited food and water.

LEBANON

Refugees in Lebanon: The most recent UNHCR figures, from March 31, 2016, indicate that [1,048,275](#) Syrian refugees were registered in Lebanon at that time (the government of Lebanon claims that the

number is closer to [1.5 million](#)) giving it the [highest](#) concentration of refugees compared to population in the world. The number of registered Syrians in Lebanon has been in [decline](#) since April 2015 when [1,185,241](#) Syrians were registered by UNHCR. The decline is due to the ongoing [inactivation](#) of refugee registration in Lebanon's refugee database as well as the government ordered [suspension](#) of new registrations, [restrictive](#) entry [visa requirements](#) and prohibitive [residency renewal](#) fees pushing many Syrians into becoming undocumented. According to the Lebanese Social Affairs [Minister](#), the country is, in effect, no longer receiving refugees, though scattered [reports](#) indicate that some Syrians are crossing the border [irregularly](#).

[OCHA](#) reports that in April, 2016 there were 277,985 Palestinian refugees from Lebanon (PRL) in the country as well as 40,807 Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS). These figures have not altered from OCHA's March reports. Though there are no official camps for Syrians in Lebanon, according to UNRWA roughly [53%](#) of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon live in 12 recognized camps. According to [ACAPS](#), entry for PRS into Lebanon is almost entirely limited to third country transit.

Additionally, as at April 2016 OCHA estimates that [35,000](#) Lebanese citizens, who had been living in Syria, have returned to Lebanon since the beginning of the conflict. IOM and the Lebanese High Relief Commission have registered only [28,574](#) of these individuals. Described by IOM as "Lebanese [returnees](#)" these Lebanese citizens had lived in Syria prior to the crisis and have a recognized legal status in Lebanon though they are among the most vulnerable populations.

Departures: Prior to January 2016, [thousands](#) of Syrians and other mixed migrants were passing through and exiting Lebanon each [week](#) by boat (from Tripoli) or plane to Turkey and then onward to Europe with a peak of nearly [6000](#) departures per week in September 2015. New [visa requirements](#) for Syrians entering Turkey from a 3rd country by air or sea, implemented in January 2016 (see Turkey section), have made transiting through Lebanon to Turkey nearly [impossible](#) for Syrians.

IOM reports indicating that between January 1 and March 31 of this year, [309 Lebanese citizens](#) arrived by sea in Greece after departing from Turkey. This figure has [not](#) been updated in April. In 2015, however, Lebanese nationals made up [0.2%](#) of sea arrivals in Greece. Interviews conducted with family members and local officials before the implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement (see Turkey section) indicated that Lebanese citizens travelled legally to Turkey, by ferry or airplane, before connecting with smugglers and continuing by boat to Greece using the same routes as Syrian refugees and other mixed migrants. IOM has [documented](#) small numbers of Lebanese citizens entering [FYROM](#) and Finland in the first 4 months of 2016.

Trafficking: [Sex trafficking](#) of Syrian women is an ongoing and growing concern in Lebanon as highlighted by the dismantling of the country's largest known [sex trafficking ring](#), as 75 trafficked Syrian women were freed in March 2016. The women, many of whom were trapped for [years](#), had been raped, beaten, and mutilated after being tricked into coming to Lebanon. Many of the women were orphans or came from vulnerable families and were particularly [targeted](#) by traffickers. This is the latest Lebanese [crackdown](#) on human trafficking rings in the country. Lebanese authorities have also launched an investigation into the trafficking of Syrian [children](#) in Lebanon after an American journalist claimed he had purchased 4 Syrian children in order to save them.

TURKEY

Arrivals: The most recent UNHCR figures for Syrians in Turkey are from April 11, 2016 and indicate [2,749,140](#) registered Syrians in the country, a 1.2% increase (33,351 individuals) from the prior figures on March 3, 2016. Additionally, there are more than [200,000 Iraqi refugees](#) in Turkey, in addition to smaller Afghan and Iranian populations.

Despite claims by [Turkish officials](#) that Turkey [maintains](#) an 'open door' policy for [emergency situations](#), border closures in [March 2015](#), and strict [visa requirements](#) for Syrians entering by air or sea, have made the border very difficult, if not impossible, to cross. Those refugees and other mixed migrants who do cross are often doing so irregularly and with the help of [smugglers](#). Turkish legislation, however, ensures the non-penalization of irregular Syrian entry. NGOs working along the Turkey-Syria border have reported that only [critical medical cases](#) are being legally [allowed](#) into Turkey.

Departures to Europe: The [Turkish Coast Guard](#) reported 36 'irregular migration' cases, in the seas surrounding Turkey, in April 2016 involving 1,717 'irregular migrants,' 6,813 less individuals than the March, 2016 total. The Coast Guard also reported the apprehension of 1 'organizer' of irregular migration. UNHCR reported [3,650](#) April sea-arrivals in Greece (almost exclusively from Turkey), 23,321 less arrivals than in March 2016. Of the recorded April arrivals, [1,268](#) were Syrian; 637 Pakistani; 580 Afghan; and 381 Iraqi. The average daily arrivals in April were thus only [122](#) people each day, down 86% from [859](#) arrivals per day in March. By the end of April numbers were as low as [50-60](#) arrivals per day. [April 5](#), 2016 was recorded by IOM as the first day with 'zero' arrivals since last year.

These declining numbers are attributable to the closing of the Balkan Route (FYROM, Croatia, and Slovenia closed their borders to refugees on March 8 – see 'Syria' section for more detail) and the EU-Turkey Agreement (see below) which came into effect on March 20. Initially the agreement did little to stop the flows of refugees and other mixed migrants to Greece, with 15 boats filled with more than 800 people each reaching Lesbos on [March 20](#) alone, but within a [week](#) arrivals had dwindled to hundreds or less each day.

According to [Bulgarian officials](#), the number of refugees and other mixed migrants crossing the Bulgarian border from Turkey has also dropped despite the closure of the Balkan route to Europe and the implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement. In the first quarter of 2016 Bulgarian officials detected roughly 2,800 irregular crossings at the Turkish border, a 20% decrease from the 3,500 detected during the same period in 2015. Bulgarian officials attribute the dropping numbers to increased [Turkish policing](#) at the border. As at March 31, 2016 [Iraqis](#) were the largest group apprehended by Bulgarian authorities at the border followed by Syrians, Afghans, and Pakistanis, among other groups.

Afghan refugees are also among those leaving Turkey for Greece with a reported [580](#) Afghans arriving in Greece by sea in April 2016, 90% less than the 6,133 recorded by UNHCR in March 2016. In the early months of 2016, [Afghans](#) entered Turkey through Iran en route to Europe via Greece and Bulgaria.

EU-Turkey Agreement: On [March 18, 2016](#) the European Union and Turkey made a controversial deal intended to stop the flow of refugees and other mixed migrants to Europe. Under the [agreement](#) all 'irregular migrants' arriving in Greece after midnight on March 20, 2016 will be deported to Turkey, in exchange for [\\$6.8 billion](#) in refugee aid to Turkey, visa-free travel for Turkish citizens in Europe's Schengen zone by June, and a 'speeding-up' of talks concerning Ankara's accession to the EU. The deal also means that for every Syrian deported from Greece to Turkey, the EU will [resettle](#) one Syrian living in a Turkish refugee camp. The agreement came into force on March 20 and has been met with significant backlash concerning the [legality](#) of the agreement and the extent to which [Turkey](#) qualifies as a [safe third country](#). These concerns were fuelled by [reports](#) of the forcible return of Afghan asylum seekers to Afghanistan hours after the EU-Turkey deal came into force. In early April [riots](#) erupted in Greece among refugees and other mixed migrants, in protest of looming forced returns to Turkey.

[Deportations](#) began on [April 4](#), 2016, amid [protest](#), and as at April 27 a total of [386](#) people had been returned by boat and plane from Greece to Turkey. Though there are no specific numbers regarding the nationalities of the individuals deported, [reports](#) indicate that Pakistanis, Afghans, Sri-Lankans, Moroccans, and Bangladeshis were among those returned to Turkey. The [BBC](#) reports that 13 of the people returned to Greece were not registered by Greek authorities, despite expressing an interest in claiming asylum. On April 9, 2016 Greece announced that deportations would be [suspended](#) for a minimum of 2 weeks to improve the process.

The European Commission also reports that 135 Syrians have been resettled from Turkey to Europe, with the first refugees arriving in [Germany](#) and Finland on April 4. [FRONTEX](#) and the [European Commission](#) have released statements claiming that the EU-Turkey Agreement combined with border closures in FYROM and NATO's efforts in the Aegean have noticeably reduced the number of arrivals in Greece. Turkey and the EU have hailed the agreement as a [success](#), citing the decreased number of refugees and other mixed migrants arriving in Europe and claiming to have broken the business model of smugglers. [Greece's](#) Prime Minister has also defended the agreement against controversy, by noting the decreasing flows of refugees and other mixed migrants to Greece.

Readmission Agreement with Pakistan: On [April 7](#), 2016 Turkey approved a readmission agreement with Pakistan, an agreement that has been delayed since it was signed in 2010. The move will allow

Turkey to [send back](#) migrants from Pakistan. Turkish government officials have announced that they will also consider [similar agreements](#) with Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Bangladesh, Algeria, Morocco, Eritrea, and various other countries.

Refugee and Migrant Vulnerability: Turkish border guards have been accused of shooting and killing [8 Syrians](#) trying to reach safety in Turkey. The accusations are based on mobile phone footage from [The Times](#) depicting survivors of the incident [fleeing](#) down a mountain path, as well as a lawyer's description of the incident as he witnessed it. Turkish authorities have [denied](#) the claims. These accusations follow reports in March that [16 Syrians](#) had been killed by Turkish border guards as they tried to cross into Turkey in the past 4 months. Amnesty International claims that Syrian refugees are being [shot at](#) the Turkish border on a daily basis. Some Syrians have described [beatings](#) at the Turkish border, others recounted experiences of being detained or expelled.

Along the Turkish-Bulgarian border '[voluntary border patrols](#)' made up of 'ordinary Bulgarians' are increasing in number. During these patrols organized groups of Bulgarian citizens patrol the forests of the green border between Bulgaria and Turkey in order to detain and report refugees and other mixed migrants to the authorities. These efforts have been lauded by Bulgarian police despite reports that some groups are forcing migrants back across the border to Turkey. In April, [video footage](#) from Strandja, a mountainous area in Bulgaria near the Turkish border, shows vigilantes from a voluntary border patrol tying up three Afghan men in the forest.

IOM reported [10 deaths](#) at sea along the Eastern Mediterranean route in April 2016, a decrease of 35 people from the 45 deaths reported in March. At least [five](#) of these individuals perished in a shipwreck near Samos on April 9, 2016.

Syrians at the Border: As at April 18, 2016 MSF estimated that more than [100,000](#) people are stranded in Syria near the border with Turkey. Escalated fighting in Aleppo has cause more than 40,000 Syrians to flee to A'zaz and the Bab al Salam border crossing where an estimated [75,000](#) IDPs were already located (see Syria section). Authorities maintain that the border remains open for "[emergency situations.](#)" Turkish officials claimed 10,000 people had been allowed to cross the border but Amnesty International has [contested](#) this claim.

IRAQ

Refugees in Iraq: As at April 30, 2016 UNHCR had registered [246,589](#) Syrians in Iraq, an increase of 466 (0.2%) individuals since March 31, 2016. Of this group 61% (149,775) live in urban, peri-urban, or rural locations, while 39% (96,814) live in camps in Iraq. At the end of April 2016 [97%](#) of Syrians in the country lived in the Kurdistan Region - Iraq (KR-I).

Though there are no more recent figures, UNHCR reported that in March [3,114 Syrians](#) entered Iraq via the Peshkabout border between Syria and KR-I on 15 day visitor or medical visas. None were permitted to apply for asylum. The Peshkabout [border](#) was where most Syrians [crossed](#) into Iraq, however it has been [closed](#) since March 16, 2016. In recent months reports have indicated that some Syrians are leaving Iraq to return to Syria with UNHCR recording the return of [803](#) people in February, 2016.

At the end of March, 2016, UNHCR indicated that there were [55,700 non-Syrian](#) refugees in Iraq though their nationalities were not disclosed.

Displacement: Throughout April 2016, ongoing military operations by the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and allied armed groups in areas held by the so-called Islamic state have led to the new displacement of roughly [80,000](#) Iraqis since the beginning of March. More specifically, intensified military operations in central Anbar governorate have displaced roughly [60,000](#) people in March and April, 2016, while conflict in Makhmur, in Erbil governorate, have newly displaced 5,100 people in April with estimates up to [6,000](#). A total of [741](#) Iraqis were killed by violence, armed conflict, and acts of terrorism in Iraq in April, 410 of whom were civilians.

Despite these new internal displacements, the total number of IDPs in Iraq has decreased by 84,948 (2%) since March 2016 to the April 28 total of [3,333,384](#) individuals. This is due to a 19% increase in returnees, as recorded by IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix, indicating that [656,778](#) individuals have

returned to their location of origin in Iraq, as at April 28, 2016. The highest percentage of these returns is to [Salah al-Din](#) governorate, followed by Ninewa and Diyala primarily due to improved security conditions. [43%](#) of the total IDP population in Iraq were hosted in Baghdad, Anbar, and Dahuk governorates in April 2016, with the largest number hosted in [Anbar](#).

Iraqi refugees continue to enter neighbouring Jordan with [54,990](#) registered by UNHCR as at April 15, 2016. This marks an increase of 0.7% (404 people) in the first 15 days of April. Figures from Jordan's December 2015 Population Census, however, indicate that [130,911](#) Iraqis were living in Jordan at the end of 2015. The most recent UNHCR figures, from June 2015, estimate that roughly [180,000](#) Iraqi refugees are living in neighbouring countries like Turkey and Jordan.

Returnees: Last month, reports indicated a growing number of Iraqis [voluntarily returning](#) to Iraq after travelling to Europe and facing [unemployment](#), [disappointment](#) and struggle. Though there are no new figures for April, in February 2016 alone, IOM assisted over [1,000 Iraqis](#) to return. The number of returnees is likely higher than this figure as many people return to Iraq [without assistance](#).

Iraqis Going to Europe: In April 2016, UNHCR documented the arrival by sea of some [3,650](#) refugees and other mixed migrants, [11%](#) of whom were Iraqi (402 individuals). In March 2016, only 9% of Greece's [26,971](#) arrivals by sea were Iraqi (2,427 individuals). Thus while the percentage of Iraqis, as compared to total arrivals in Greece, has grown the actual number of Iraqis arriving in Greece has dropped by 83%, likely due to the implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement on March 20, 2016 (see Turkey section). Iraqis use the same routes as Syrians and other mixed migrants, typically travelling to Turkey and continuing to Greece by sea, or Bulgaria by land.

[IOM](#) continues to report the presence of Iraqis at borders and in reception centres along the Balkan route to Europe (Bulgaria, Slovenia, FYROM, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia, Norway) though updated information on arrivals is not available for April. Iraqis are also being held in reception centres in Greece or [stranded](#) at the Greece-FYROM border due to the closure of the Balkan route to Europe.

A recent [IOM](#) report, based on the results of questionnaires distributed to Iraqis in Europe, illuminates the varied motivations, routes, and challenges faced by Iraqis when making the journey to Europe. Among respondents, the primary reason for departure from Iraq was 'no hope for the future' with others indicating that general security concerns, unemployment, targeted violence, and the opportunity to join family members were amongst their motivations.

ISRAEL/OPT

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

OTHER REGIONAL NEWS

Internal Displacement in Afghanistan: [OCHA](#) reports that in the first four months of 2016 roughly 118,000 people have fled their homes due to ongoing fighting and violence. This figure indicates that roughly 1,000 Afghans have been displaced [each day](#) in 2016. Many of these people have been displaced multiple times and a quarter of the total displaced population is in areas that are difficult for [aid workers](#) to access. While thus far in 2016, Afghans have made up [25%](#) of arrivals by sea in Greece, for many the cost of travel (including smugglers' fees) is [prohibitive](#). According to UNHCR there are more than [1 million](#) IDPs in Afghanistan.

Violence at Idomeni Border Crossing: On [April 10](#) violence erupted at the Greece-FYROM border when police fired tear gas, stun grenades, and [rubber bullets](#) at a group of roughly 500 refugees and other mixed migrants attempting to break through the border fence. According to MSF some [300](#) people were treated for breathing problems, cuts and bruises. The unrest began following rumours that the border was soon to be opened. More than [11,000](#) people are stranded at a makeshift camp near the Idomeni border crossing to FYROM.

Clashes in Lesbos: [Clashes](#) broke out in Moria refugee camp in Lesbos, Greece after Syrian and Afghan teenagers started shouting for 'freedom.' The outcry began during the visit of the Greek migration

affairs minister and Dutch junior justice minister on [April 26](#), and was followed by a police officer kicking a minor, according to witnesses. Violence and the use of tear gas by police were also reported.

Deaths at Sea: Reports indicate that more [400-500](#) refugees and other mixed migrants may have perished when a boat [capsized](#) in the Mediterranean between Libya and Italy on April 19, 2016. [41](#) survivors were rescued by a Filipino cargo ship off the coast near Libya. The survivors reported that passengers came from Egypt, Sudan, Somalia, and Ethiopia.

See also **MHUB Monthly Trend Bulletins** (accessible [here](#)).

NEW RESEARCH, REPORTS OR DOCUMENTS

In April **IOM** released its Global Migration Trends 2015 [Factsheet](#). The document covers key migration related trends in 2015 including the number of refugees globally, demographic breakdown of refugees and migrants, public opinion concerning migration, voluntary returns, deaths and missing migrants, and remittances among other topics.

The **Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre**, has similarly published its 2016 Global Report on Internal Displacement (accessible [here](#)) covering estimates and analysis of “people internally displaced by conflict, generalised violence and disasters” for the year 2015. The report includes internal displacement associated with violence and conflict, as well as lesser known drivers like criminal violence, drought and development projects.

The **Norwegian Refugee Council** (NRC) has released two new reports regarding the future of young people in the Middle East. The [first](#), ‘A Future in the Balance: How the Conflict in Syria is Impacting on the Needs, Concerns and Aspirations of Young People Across the Middle East’ explores the ways in which limited opportunities, discrimination, exploitation, and harassment are affecting young people in the countries neighbouring Syria. The [second](#), accompanying report looks at young people in Lebanon, and the specific challenges they face.

A new **IOM** publication, entitled ‘Egyptian Unaccompanied Migrant Children: A Case Study on Irregular Migration,’ highlights the plight of Egyptian children migrating to Europe. The report looks at smuggling networks and the motivations behind unaccompanied children migrating to Europe in order to address a significant information gap in this topic. (The report is accessible [here](#).)

A new [joint-report](#), produced by **CARE, Mercy Corps, Oxfam, the International Rescue Committee, the US Institute of Peace, World Food Program, US fund for UNICEF, and Save the Children**, calls for an increased global response to unprecedented human suffering. The report outlines a set of recommendations for host countries, donor countries, and aid organizations to address the suffering of 60 million people who are in dire need around the globe.

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

To be added to DRC's monthly migration summary mailing list, please contact Nicole Maine at nicole.maine@drc-mena.org. Past reports can be accessed at <https://drc.ngo/where-we-work/middle-east-and-north-africa>