Mediterranean Migrant Arrivals Reach 106,711 in 2019; Deaths Reach 1,246

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Geneva – IOM reports that 107,546 migrants and refugees have entered Europe by sea through 18 December, roughly a 5 per cent decrease from the 112,836 arriving during the same period last year.

Arrivals this year to Greece and Spain are at 60,363 and 24,976, respectively, (85,339 combined) accounting for just over 79 per cent of the regional total, with the balance arriving in much smaller numbers to Italy, Malta and Cyprus. Arrivals to Greece are running just shy of twice 2018's totals from this time, while arrivals to Spain are less than half last year's arrivals.

Deaths recorded on the three main Mediterranean Sea routes through 18 December stand at 1,246 individuals – or 56 per cent of the 2,219 deaths confirmed during the same period in 2018 (see chart below).

Mediterranean Developments

TOTAL ARRIVALS BY SEA AND DEATHS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN 2019-2018					
	1 JANUARY – 18 DECEMBER 2019		**1– 18 DECEMBER 2019**	**1 JANUARY – 18 DECEMBER 2018**	
Country of Arrival	**Arrivals**	**Deaths** (as of 11/12)	**Arrivals**	**Arrivals**	**Deaths**
Italy	11.155	743 (Central Med. route)	273	23.126	1.306 (Central Med. route)
Malta	3.405		97	1.194	
Greece	60.363	71 (Eastern Med. route)	4.135	31.023	167 (Eastern Med. route)
Cyprus	6.812*		N/A	1.013	
Spain	24.976	432 (Western Med. route)	945	56.480	746 (Western Med. route)
Estimated Total	**106.711**	**1.246**	**5.450**	**112.836**	**2.219**
Data on deaths of migrants compiled by IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre. All numbers are minimum estimates. Arrivals based on data from respective governments and IOM field offices. ***** This figure includes the number of **ALL** migrants' arrivals registered in Cyprus					

IOM Italy

IOM Rome's Flavio Di Giacomo cited official Ministry of Interior figures of 11,155 migrants have arrived in Italy by sea this year through 18 December, compared to 23,126 at this same time in 2018. IOM Libya has reported that through 15 December 8,613 migrants have been intercepted at sea and returned to Libya in 2019.

IOM Greece

IOM Greece's Eirnini Axarli reported that from Friday (13/12) through Thursday (19/12), the Hellenic Coast Guard (HCG) participated in at least 34 incidents requiring search and rescue

operations off the islands of Lesvos, Samos, Chios, Kos, Samothrace and the port of Alexandroupoli. The HCG rescued a total of 1,173 migrants and transferred them to the respective ports.

Those arrivals, plus others discovered off the islands of Symi, Farmakonisi and Leros bring to 60,363 the total number of irregular migrants arriving by sea this year (see chart below). Arrivals to Greece in 2019 very nearly match total arrivals from 2017 and 2018 combined and have averaged more than 270 per day since 1 July.

Arrivals by Sea in Greece

Country	01 Jan – 31 Dec 2014	01 Jan – 31 Dec 2015	01 Jan – 31 Dec 2016	01 Jan – 31 Dec 2017	01 Jan – 31 Dec 2018	01 Jan – 17 Dec 2019
Greece	34,442	853,650	173,614	29,501	32,742	60,363

* Unofficial data collected by IOM Greece and the Greek authorities of arrivals by sea.

IOM Greece further reported that through the month of November, a total of 58,200 irregular migrants entered Europe via the Aegean passage, the largest single group – Afghanistan nationals, with 24,429 – accounting for 42 per cent of all arrivals through 11 months of 2019. The next largest nationalities include Syria (14,640 arrivals), Iraq (3,168), Palestinian Territories (2,926), Democratic Republic of the Congo (2,834), Somalia (2,398), the Islamic Republic of Iran (1,925), Congo-Brazzaville (872), Cameroon (861), Pakistan (398), and Yemen (319).

Somalia seems to be a relative newcomer to this route, with just 141 migrants identified through April this year, but over 2,200 during the following seven months. Meanwhile small numbers of outliers from Latin America and the Caribbean continue to arrive in Europe via this Aegean 'backdoor', with a single Colombian national appearing on the Hellenic Coast Guard's list for the first time, along with recent arrivals from the Dominican Republic (31 thus far in 2019), Haiti (37), Venezuela (3), Peru (2), and Ecuador (1).

Missing Migrants Project
2019 is the sixth year of IOM's efforts to systematically record deaths on migration routes worldwide through its Missing Migrants Project (MMP). Since the beginning of 2014, the project has recorded the deaths of over 34,000 people, including 3,170 in 2019 (see chart below).

Due to the challenges of collecting information about these people and the contexts of their deaths, the true number of lives lost during migration is likely much higher. Missing Migrants Project records should only be viewed as indicative of the risks associated with migration, rather than representative of the true number of deaths across time or geography.

Migrant deaths in the Americas continue during what may be the deadliest year MMP has recorded in the hemisphere over the past six years. Through mid-December at least 659 men, women and children have died crossing the Americas, which compares with 583 during the same period last year.

Missing Migrants Project researcher Julia Black reported this week that her data record of deaths in the Americas does not include two categories of fatalities: deaths of migrants who died while in official detention either in the USA or in Mexico, and a smaller, newer category: deaths of asylum seekers who registered their requests with US authorities and then agreed to be sent across the border to Mexico to await their court appearances.

Of the first group, MMP reports that in 2019, at least 24 people died in US immigration detention centres or in hospital immediately after a stay in a detention centre, including at least four children. At last three others died under similar conditions in Mexico.

Of the deaths of people seeking asylum while waiting in Mexico under the US's new 'Remain in Mexico' policy, Black noted that although IOM does not collect comprehensive data on deaths which occur during asylum processing times, there have been at least three deaths so far since November this year. The remains of an unnamed Salvadoran man who, according to Mexican authorities, was waiting for permission to enter the US were found, gruesomely, in two suitcases in Tijuana on 20 November.

Brazilian Sirley Miranda died on 6 December while waiting with her two daughters in Mexico City for her asylum claim to be processed. Magaly Medina Calvo, a 57-year-old woman from Cuba who had two children living in the United States, died last week in a shelter in Mexico. Her first appointment at the US Asylum Court in El Paso, Texas was scheduled for 12 February next year.

Missing Migrants Project data are compiled by IOM staff based at its Global Migration Data Analysis Centrebut come from a variety of sources, some of which are unofficial. To learn more about how data on migrants deaths and disappearances are collected, click here.

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

Global Migrant Deaths
1 Jan – 19 December
(Source: Missing Migrants Project)

REGION	2019	2018
Mediterranean	1,246	2,228
Europe	123	115
Middle East	139	143
North Africa	319	723
Horn of Africa	99	276
Sub-Saharan Africa	331	576
Central Asia	0	52
Southeast Asia	143	105
South Asia	111	27
East Asia	0	3
North America	1	0
US-Mexico border	351	437
Central America	110	77
Caribbean	160	39
South America	37	30
TOTAL	3,170	4,831

For latest arrivals and fatalities in the Mediterranean, visit the here. Learn more about the Missing Migrants Project.

See contacts <u>here.</u>

Is it OK to say "apprehended?"