

EUROPE MONTHLY REPORT



At "PIKPA village" on the Greek island of Lesbos, six-year-old Adam draws with one of the many volunteers. 21 June 2017, Greece.

Trends and key figures

Since 01 January 2017 until May 2017, 70,877 people have arrived via the Mediterranean Sea to Europe. Arrivals to the Mediterranean Sea in this period comprised of 16.5 per cent children, 11 per cent women and 72.5 per cent men.

As of 31 May 2017, 7,274 refugees and migrants reached Greek shores, compared to 156,823 arriving in the same period last year (a 95 per cent decrease). Persons mainly originate from the Syrian Arab Republic (46.6 per cent) and Iraq (12.8 per cent).

Turkish authorities have reported rescues/interceptions. The total number of rescues/interceptions by the Turkish Coast Guard of persons mostly headed to Greece by sea reached 5,763 persons since the beginning of the year. According to the data released by the Turkish Land Forces, 8,374 persons were also intercepted at western land borders of Turkey since the beginning of 2017. While 7,816 persons were intercepted at the land border with Greece, 458 persons were intercepted at the Bulgarian land border.

So far in 2017, 60,228 refugees and migrants reached Italian shores - compared to 49,845 arriving in the same period last year (a 21 per cent increase). Persons arriving by sea mainly originate from Nigeria (15 per cent), Bangladesh (12 per cent), Guinea (10 per cent) and Côte d'Ivoire (9 per cent).

In Spain, 6800 persons have arrived by sea and land since January 2017 compared to 3887 in the same period last year, a 75 per cent increase. While most new arrivals were young men originating from sub-Saharan African countries (Guinea Conakry, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia and Cameroon), an increasing number of women was observed. Of arrivals in Spain so far this year, 61 per cent have arrived by sea and 39 per cent crossed into Spain via the land borders. Sea

Mediterranean
70,877

arrivals in 2017¹

1,729

estimated dead/missing in 2017¹

Greece
7,274

1,526 1,156 2,110
Mar Apr May

Italy
60,228

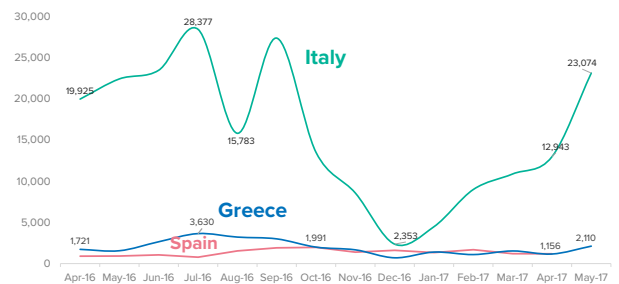
10,853 12,943 22,993
Mar Apr May

Spain²
6,800

1,197 1,198 1,289
Mar Apr May

Cyprus
302

157 40 0
Mar Apr May



New asylum applications in EU countries³

192,330 applications in 2017

1,235,335 applications in 2016

1,325,565 applications in 2015

¹ data.unhcr.org/mediterranean as of 31 May 2017.

² Includes land and sea arrivals in the Mediterranean and to the Canary Islands

³ Source: Eurostats. Partial data for Jan-Apr 2017. All data is provisional and last updated 14-Jun-2017.

arrivals in 2017 have increased by 98 per cent compared to last year and sea arrivals on the Andalusian coast have increased by 138 per cent compared to 2016.

At the Spanish land borders with Morocco, 2,658 persons have arrived in Ceuta and Melilla in 2017 (as of 31 May), a 48 per cent increase compared to the same period last year. The primary nationality among arrivals to Melilla (a total of 1,500) continues to be Syrians with around 700 having entered Melilla after claiming asylum with Spanish authorities at the border point between Morocco and Spain. Syrians continue to arrive mostly in family groups.

Since January 2017, 302 refugees and migrants arrived in Cyprus compared to 28 the same period last year.

In May 2017, 2,110 refugees and migrants arrived in Greece by sea compared to 1,721 in May 2016, while 23,074 arrived at the Italian shores compared to 19,925 in May 2016. In Spain in May 2017 there were 816 sea arrivals compared to 575 in May 2016. There were no arrivals on Cyprus in May.

Death and missing: as of 31 May 2017, an estimated 1,778 people have died or gone missing while trying to reach Europe by sea, compared to 1,390 for the same period in 2016.

In Romania, the trend of decreasing arrivals from Serbia continues. In the period 01–24 May 2017, 197 persons, including some 79 children, crossed the border irregularly from Serbia, compared to 609 in April 2017.

In Hungary, a gradual increase can be detected in the number of readmission transfers to Romania. In the period 01 January 2017 to 22 May 2017 a total of 244 people were transferred under the readmission agreement with Romania.

During the second half of May there was an increasing land arrivals in Gorizia (Italy-Slovenia) which resulted in the local reception system reaching full capacity, with some 120-140 refugees and migrants sleeping rough. Onward movement is reportedly decreasing in the Brenner area also due to joint controls by Italian and Austrian police carried out on trains travelling towards the border.

Relocation: according to the European Commission (EC), 20,283 asylum-seekers have been relocated from Greece and Italy as of 31 May 2017: 13,825 from Greece (out of 66,400 originally foreseen, 22 per cent of the total) and 6,458 from Italy (out of 39,600 originally foreseen, 16 per cent of the total) respectively.

Returns: in May, 87 people were returned from Greece to Turkey on the basis of the EU-Turkey Statement, which included 14 Syrians on 10 May, and 73 other third country nationals (14 on 10 May; 35 on 11 May; 22 on 12 May; 06 on 17 May; 10 on 25 May). With the latest returns, the total number of returnees under the EU-Turkey Statement reached 1,181 persons.



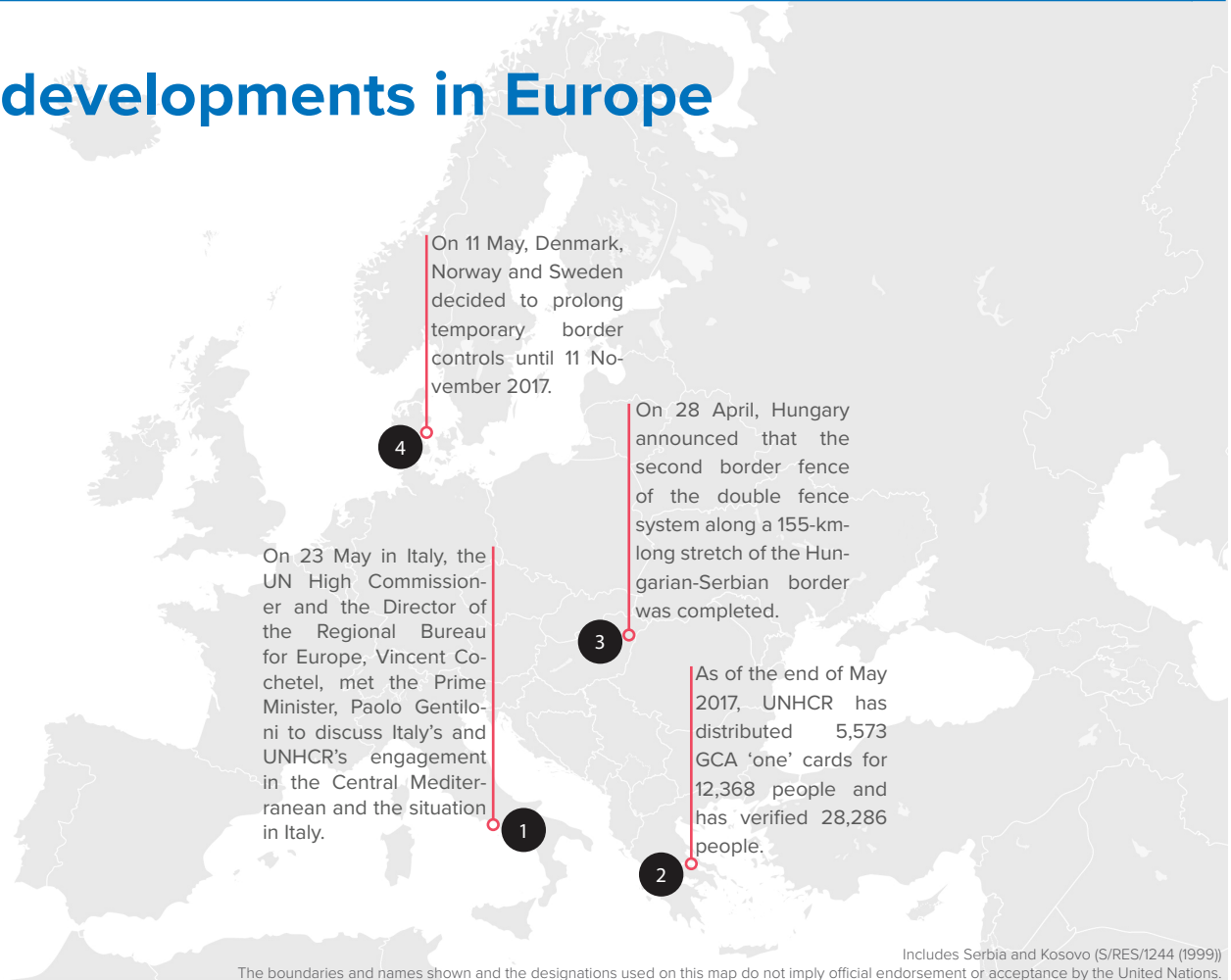
Key developments

On 07 May the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, issued a [news comment](#) on Mediterranean crossings over that weekend. The High Commissioner stated that “saving lives must be the top priority for all and, in light of the recent increase in arrivals, I urge further efforts to rescue people along this dangerous route. This is a matter of life or death which appeals to our most basic sense of humanity and should not be called into question.” He called for action to be taken before people are caught and exposed to horrendous abuses at the hands of smugglers in Libya and other transit countries, and before they board unsafe boats to cross the Mediterranean.

1 On 23 May in **Italy**, the UN High Commissioner and the Director of the Regional Bureau for Europe, Vincent Cochetel, met the Prime Minister, Paolo Gentiloni, the Minister of Interior (MOI), Marco Minniti, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Angelino Alfano, and the MOI Chef de Cabinet, Mario Morcone. The discussion focused on Italy’s and UNHCR’s engagement in the Central Mediterranean and the situation in Italy.

In Italy, the MOI-led monitoring of reception facilities nationwide set off in May, (AMIF-funded “MIRECO”-Monitoring and Improvement of Reception Conditions). This aims at

Key developments in Europe



strengthening the monitoring of adult and unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) in first- and second-line reception centres. UNHCR led the first set of monitoring visits in a number of government reception facilities and supported MOI and Prefectures by handing over the monitoring methodology developed so far. Furthermore, UNHCR is currently piloting a Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) safety audit tool, with a view to conducting SGBV risk assessments in a number of government reception facilities, with a specific focus on large facilities where there is likely a heightened SGBV risk.

On the **Italy-France** border, the lack of UASC reception is resulting in some UASC sleeping rough by the river and in others declaring to be adults in order to gain access to the Red Cross-run transit centre. A UASC facility (23 places) is due to open soon and the Prefecture is considering the possibility to open an UASC area within the transit centre. UNHCR continues to provide persons in transit with information on asylum and relocation, on a mission basis and through capacity-building of local NGOs.

2 In **Greece**, UNHCR is progressing with the verification of people and distribution of cards across Greece within the framework of the Greece Cash Alliance (GCA). As of the end of May 2017, UNHCR has distributed 5,573 GCA 'one' cards for 12,368 people and has verified 28,286 people.

As part of UNHCR's Urban Accommodation Scheme, UNHCR presented to the municipality of Athens the management of a renovated five storey building in Athens on 25

May 2017 as a gesture of appreciation to the municipality of Athens who collaborated in creating over 20,000 reception places for the relocation candidates and vulnerable asylum-seekers in Greece in 2016. By the end of May 2017, 18,520 places were available in the Urban Accommodation Scheme through apartments, buildings, hotels, facilities for unaccompanied children and through the host family programme. In the second half of the month, 147 people were transferred and accommodated from the islands to the mainland. Also in May, UNHCR initiated discussions for prospective agreements with the Municipalities of Trikala, Karditsa, and Larissa and Nea Philadelphia – Nea Chalkidona for their participation in the Accommodation Scheme, which would provide some additional 1,200 accommodation places.

Increased tension in the islands of Chios and Leros was observed, resulting in a number of security incidents generally linked to discontent from asylum-seekers and local communities, including due to uncertainty with the length of stay of refugee and migrant populations on the islands.

While people continue to move irregularly through the Western Balkans mostly seeking to reach other European Union Member States, a reversed movement has also been noticed of people reporting that they are seeking to return to Greece, including many who only return to the **former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** to continue attempting onward movements. A variety of reasons have been reported as being behind the movement of persons from Serbia to Greece through the former Yugoslav Republic of

Macedonia including those seeking to access the relocation programme in Greece; poor living conditions in transit centres; job opportunities in Greece during the summer season; lack of resources to continue the irregular journey; access family reunion from Greece; and re-connecting with smugglers or finding new ones.

Following the voluntary relocations from Belgrade (**Serbia**) city centre that the authorities have organized in the preceding weeks, presence of refugees/migrants in the city remained low, estimated around 350 persons. The barracks behind the train station, which had accommodated hundreds in abysmal conditions over the winter, were finally demolished to give way to urban re-development.

3 On 28 April, **Hungary** announced that the second border fence of the double fence system along a 155-km-long stretch of the Hungarian-Serbian border was completed. On 03 May the Prime Minister's Office stated that negotiations with the EU Commission on Hungary's revised asylum legislation have been unsuccessful. The Hungarian Government has reconfirmed its intention to maintain the current border and transit zone arrangements, and if necessary, to defend these measures in legal proceedings with the Commission.

On 17 May 2017, the EC followed up on an infringement procedure against Hungary initiated in 2015. With a [letter of formal notice](#), the EC underlined [incompatibilities](#) between the new Hungarian asylum law and the EU Asylum Procedures Directive, the Reception Conditions Directive and the Return Directive. The concerns raised by the EC are similar to those [expressed by UNHCR](#) after the adoption of the new asylum law. On 11 May, UNHCR Strasbourg made a Statement during the [18th meeting](#) of the [Lanzarote Committee](#) (Committee of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection of children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse) on the main child protection concerns relating to the current situation in Hungary.

[UNHCR and the NGO Food Sweet Food announced](#) on 11 May that the [Refugee Food Festival](#), a civil society led initiative born last year to showcase refugees' cooking talents and facilitate their integration, is expanding to thirteen major European cities in 2017. Between 15 and 30 June, more

than 50 restaurants will open their kitchens to refugee chefs from Afghanistan, Eritrea, Iran, Somalia, Syria and Ukraine to name a few. Other cities have expressed their interest and might follow. The French-born initiative started last year through a partnership between the NGO Food Sweet Food and UNHCR, with the support of partners, citizens, local authorities, restaurants and private businesses.

4 On 11 May, **Denmark, Norway and Sweden** decided to prolong temporary border controls until 11 November 2017.

In **Lithuania**, a proposal has been submitted to the Parliament from the Ministry of Social Affairs to bring social assistance to beneficiaries of subsidiary protection to the same level as nationals. UNHCR has actively advocated for this change.

Statelessness: As part of the project supported by UNHCR in **Kosovo**⁶ (S/RES/1244 (1999)) and **Montenegro** aimed at facilitating late birth registration, biometric mobile team of the Kosovo Civil Registration Agency conducted from 03-05 May a visit to displaced persons from Kosovo in Montenegro, processing and issuing birth extracts and other necessary personal documents.

On 04-05 May, at a two-day conference in Budapest, supported by UNHCR and attended by over 120 government officials, staff of NGOs, UNHCR and academia, the European Network on Statelessness launched the publication "[Protecting Stateless Persons from Arbitrary Detention; an Agenda for Change](#)". The Conference also highlighted the situation [in Bulgaria, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, the UK and Ukraine](#), where the European Network on Statelessness (ENS) conducted research on the topic. Stateless persons throughout Europe continue to be subjected to prolonged, sometimes indefinite, and repeat detention and the Agenda for Change sets out five recommendations for States to end their arbitrary detention: offer alternatives to detention, develop statelessness determination procedures, protect vulnerable persons from discrimination, facilitate integration of stateless persons and improve recording and reporting.

EU related developments

On 12 May, Frontex' [Consultative Forum](#) on Fundamental Rights, which UNHCR is co-chairing, published its Annual [Report](#). The report focuses on the activities undertaken by the Consultative Forum in 2016. It presents observations and recommendations on fundamental rights matters linked to the Agency's activities, which were shared with Frontex and its Management Board.

On 18 May, a Justice and Home Affairs Council took place in Brussels. Among other issues, EU Home Affairs Ministers [discussed](#) the reform of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), focusing on the issues of

responsibility and solidarity. The Presidency [committed](#) to continuing efforts to "take forward work on the topic". UNHCR's comments on the European Commission's proposal for a recast Dublin Regulation are available [here](#).

On 30 May, the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) of the European Parliament adopted their [position](#) on the EC proposal for a recast Eurodac Regulation. The European Parliament and the [Council](#) now need to agree on a common position for the recast Regulation to be adopted.

Key documents from the web portal

UNHCR Bureau for Europe
January-April 2017

DESPERATE JOURNEYS

Refugees and migrants entering and crossing Europe via the Mediterranean and Western Balkans routes



In spite of several measures to prevent irregular entries to Europe and irregular movement between European states, refugees and migrants continue to enter the region as well as transit or irregularly cross Europe. In addition, there are very limited access to safe and legal pathways to enter Europe, including for those through international protection, and a number of challenging conditions in some EU countries where refugees first arrive and slow relocation efforts, and more are still observed to be crossing borders irregularly, despite the multiple risks this entails.

Compared to the first four months of 2016, it has become even more difficult to cross European borders, with several European states having introduced additional measures and practices to prevent irregular entries, including of people seeking international protection. While this has resulted in a significant reduction in persons crossing into Europe from Turkey to Greece by sea, it has also meant that people are now crossing through Europe.

As a result of dangerous routes to and through Europe, high numbers of refugees and migrants continue to die at Europe's borders as well as on the way to Europe. In the first four months of 2017, the number of deaths and missing at sea has increased by 5 per cent compared to the same period in 2016, with 1,778 refugees and migrants reported dead or missing at sea. A further 76 persons have also died at sea in the Eastern or Western Mediterranean in the same period. In addition, at least 26 in the region have continued border restrictions, at least 26

With very limited opportunities for resettlement and other complementary protection, while those needing to seek international protection in the EU face many challenges, many will continue to seek safe alternatives to try to enter Europe irregularly.

UNHCR is working with the EU to explore ways to improve the EU Emergency Relocation Mechanism, and is also working with the EU to explore ways to improve the EU Emergency Relocation Mechanism, and is also working with the EU to explore ways to improve the EU Emergency Relocation Mechanism.

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency
2016

EUROPE RESETTLEMENT



Overview

In 2016, 18,175 refugees were resettled to 20 countries in Europe, a 63% increase compared to 2015.

Between 2000 and 2016, Europe's proportion of resettlement globally has increased from approximately 15% to more than 30%. However, in Europe as a whole in 2016, only 25 refugees were resettled per million inhabitants*. In contrast, the United States of America, Canada and Australia combined resettled 445 refugees per million inhabitants, 18 times higher than Europe. These three countries also accounted for 90% of resettlement globally in 2016.

The vast majority of refugees resettled in Europe in 2016 are from Syria (43.5% or 8%), followed by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Afghanistan, Eritrea and Somalia (8.5% or 1.5%), 4.8% or 0.9%, 4.0% or 0.7%, 3.9% or 0.7% respectively). In total, 53% of refugees resettled in Europe in 2016 originate from one of these five countries. Contrary to the projected refugee situation noted above, the resettlement of Syrians are still concentrated in 2016, increasing significantly in scale in 2016.

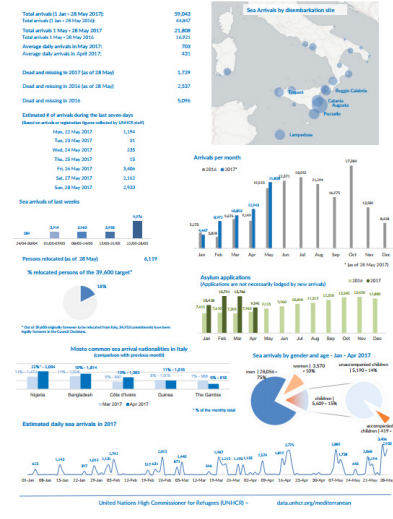
The countries in Europe admitting the most refugees via resettlement in 2016 were the UK, Norway, Sweden, France, Germany, Italy and Finland (5,180 or 29%, 3,290 or 18%, 1,890 or 10%, 1,420 or 8%, 1,240 or 7%, 1,045 or 6% and 945 or 5% respectively and in total comprise 83% of the resettlement admissions to Europe.

Half of those individuals resettled in Europe in 2016 were children* with the remainder predominantly young adults (less than 35 years old). Just over half (51%) of those resettled are male*. The demographics of all commonly accepted nationalities remain very similar, with two exceptions: a slightly greater percentage of adult Eritreans (62%) and a slightly greater percentage of female Afghans (65%), were resettled.

UNHCR is working with the EU to explore ways to improve the EU Emergency Relocation Mechanism, and is also working with the EU to explore ways to improve the EU Emergency Relocation Mechanism.

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency
Italy weekly snapshot - 28 May 2017

Italy weekly snapshot - 28 May 2017



Desperate Journeys

Refugees and migrants entering and crossing Europe via the Mediterranean and Western Balkans routes

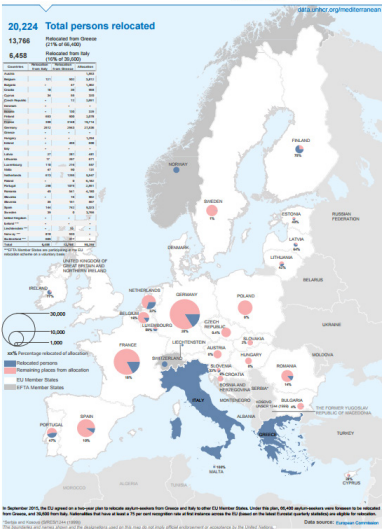
Europe Resettlement

Summary of resettlement to Europe in 2016 highlighting Europe's contribution to global resettlement.

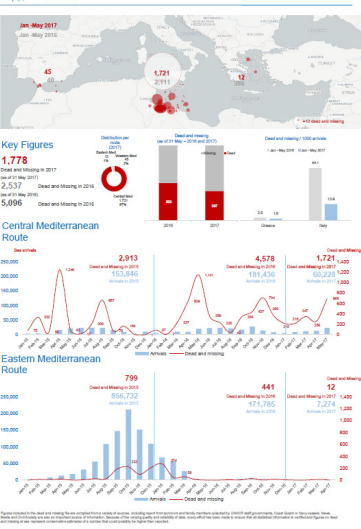
Italy Weekly snapshot

Weekly data snapshot of the refugees and migrant arriving to Italy by sea.

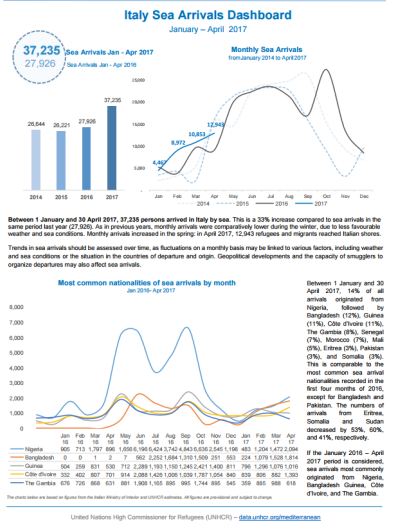
UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency
EU EMERGENCY RELOCATION MECHANISM
As of 30 May 2017



UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency
MEDITERRANEAN: Dead and Missing at sea
May 2017



UNHCR Regional Office of Southern Europe
Italy Sea Arrivals Dashboard - April 2017



Relocation in Europe

Snapshot of the number of refugees and migrants relocated within Europe, totalling 20,224⁵ within the EU Emergency Relocation Mechanism.

Dead and missing at sea

In the first five months of 2017, 1,778 refugees and migrants have died or are missing at sea (30% less than the same period in 2016).

Sea Arrivals to Italy

In the first four months of 2017, 37,235 people arrived in Italy during this period (33% more than the same period in 2016).



Sign up for the latest information products.

Timeline overview

