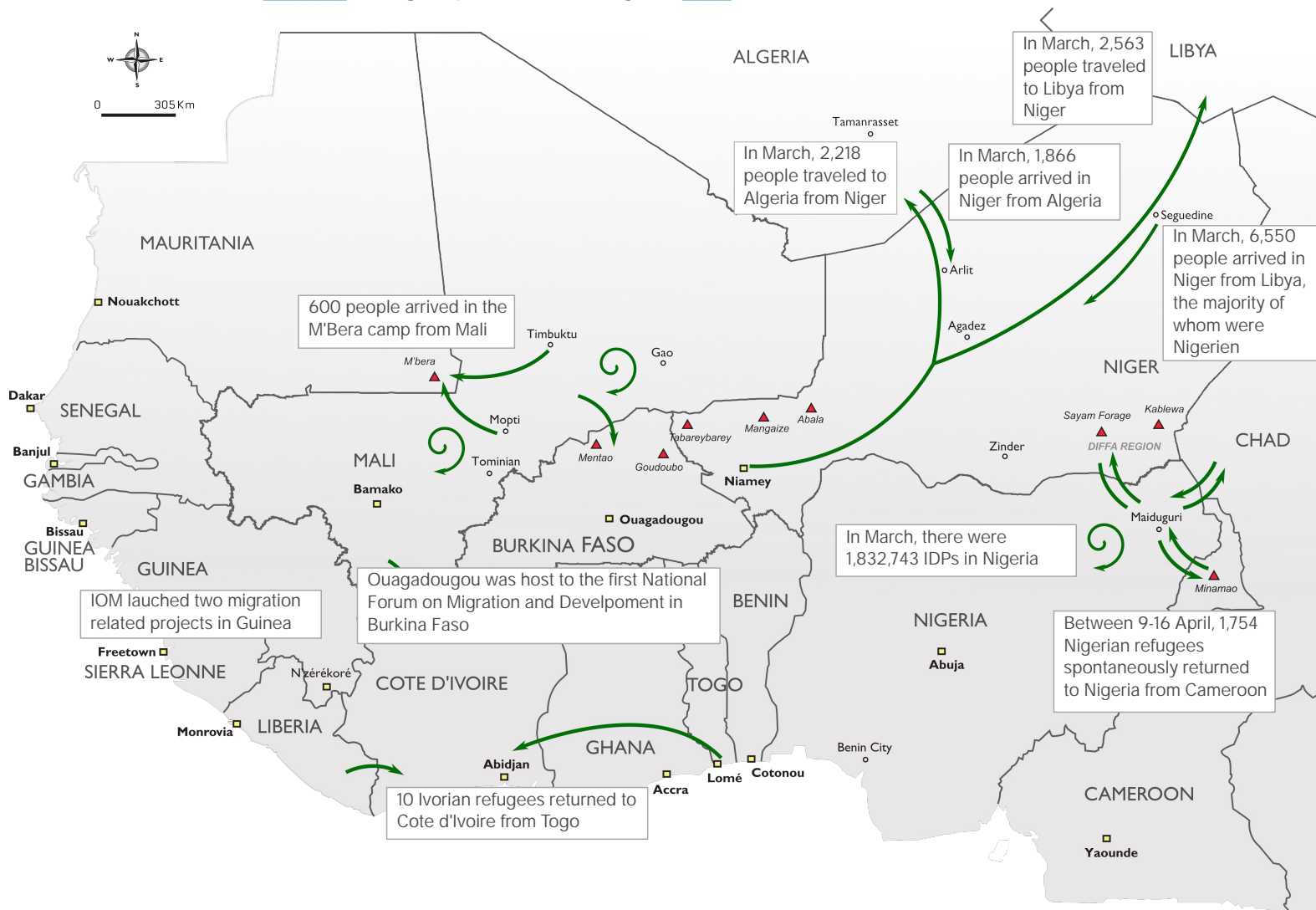


West Africa Monthly Mixed Migration Summary

Covering mixed migration events, incidents, trends and data for the West Africa region.

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Highlights in April

- The Government of Burkina Faso hosted the first National Forum on Migration and Development in Ouagadougou, with the theme 'Economic and Social Development in Burkina Faso: what contribution of the diaspora?' The forum, supported by the Swiss Government, aimed to stimulate discussion around the contribution of Burkinabe migrants living abroad to the economic and social development of Burkina Faso.
- In a statement delivered at the end of the council of ministers in April, the Ivorian government called into question the number of Ivoirians arriving in Italy by sea via the central-Mediterranean route, stating that of the 13,000 presumed Ivoirians in Italy, only 2,000 had been formally identified as being from Cote d'Ivoire. According to the government, many of those identified as Ivorian in

Italy are actually from other countries in the sub-region, or had lived temporarily in Cote d'Ivoire prior to migrating.

- Between January and April 2017, West Africans accounted for some 55% of arrivals in Italy by sea, with 14% of the total arrivals from Nigeria, 11% from Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea respectively, 8% from Gambia, 7% from Senegal, and 5% from Mali. In 2017, there has been a marked decrease in the numbers of people arriving in Italy by sea from Eritrea (-53%), Somalia (-60%) and Sudan (-40%) compared to the first four months of 2016. However, the numbers of migrants and refugees from Bangladesh has risen significantly between January and April 2017 when compared with the same period in 2016, from 3 to 4,645.

Burkina Faso

Context: The security context in the north of Burkina Faso has improved slightly due to ongoing interventions by the army, but [remains fragile](#). On March 27, a large search and rescue [operation](#) was launched in Soun province and the Malian side of the border supported by French soldiers from Operation Barkhane. The Institute of Security Studies issued [a report](#) warning against an overly strong security response in Burkina Faso, arguing that the complex concerns in Burkina Faso need a cautious and multi-faceted approach.

In April, WFP [reported](#) that gold panning sites in the north of Burkina Faso are still in full activity and are experiencing a strong influx of labour due to stable gold purchasing prices in the past few months.

Forum on development and the diaspora: In April, the ministry of Economy, Finance and Development hosted the first [National Forum on Migration and Development](#) in Ouagadougou, with the theme 'Economic and Social Development in Burkina Faso: what contribution of the diaspora?' [The forum](#), supported by the Swiss Government, aimed to stimulate discussion around the contribution of Burkinabe migrants living abroad to the economic and social development of Burkina Faso. Recommendations from the conference included setting up a fund dedicated to migrants, setting up mechanisms to organise the Burkina Faso diaspora and the creation of a one-stop-shop to facilitate diaspora investments in Burkina Faso.

Humanitarian repatriation: In April, IOM assisted [154 migrants](#) from Burkina Faso to return from Libya, including seven women and a number of children. IOM will provide re-integration assistance to the most vulnerable.

Refugees in Burkina Faso: As of 30 April, there were 33,056 [Malian refugees](#) in Burkina Faso, an increase of 84 persons from March.

In March, [WFP reported](#) that due to funding shortages food assistance to Malian refugees is at risk of being significantly reduced in April, with a particular impact on the most vulnerable. As of March, WFP provides assistance to 24,000 Malian refugees in Burkina Faso.

Cote d'Ivoire

Arrivals of Ivoirians in Europe: Between January and April 2017, 3,920 migrants and refugees from [Cote d'Ivoire](#) arrived in Italy by sea via the central Mediterranean route including 690 unaccompanied or separated children. This represents 11% of total sea arrivals in Italy during this period, and is an increase of 75% from the 2,242 Ivoirians who arrived in Italy by sea between January and April in 2016.

In a [statement](#) at the end of the council of ministers in April, the Ivorian government called into question the number of Ivoirians arriving in Europe by sea via the central-Mediterranean route, stating that of the 13,000 presumed Ivoirians in Italy, only 2,000 had been formally identified as being from Cote d'Ivoire. The statement was based upon the findings of a mission carried out by the Ivorian government following the release of figures relating to the sea arrivals of Ivoirians in Italy by the Italian Ministry of Interior. According to the government, many of those identified as Ivorian in Italy were actually from other countries in the sub-region, or had lived temporarily in Cote d'Ivoire prior to migrating.

Humanitarian repatriation: On 13 April 2017, IOM assisted [156 Ivoirian migrants](#), including 13 children, to return home from Libya.

Refugees in neighboring countries: As of 30 April, there were [28,551 Ivorian refugees](#) in neighboring countries, including 15,460 Ivoirian refugees in Liberia, representing a decline

of 850 refugees since March, and 2,108 Ivoirian refugees in Togo. According to the latest available information, as of 31 March there were 6,489 Ivoirian refugees in Ghana, and 4,494 in Guinea.

Voluntary repatriation: On 19 April, [UNHCR Togo](#) organized the voluntary repatriation of 10 Ivorian refugees to Cote d'Ivoire, bringing the number of refugees repatriated by UNHCR from Togo in 2017 to 21.

Since the end of the political crisis in 2011, over [260,000 persons](#) have been repatriated to Cote d'Ivoire from 26 countries across Africa, Europe and Asia, nearly 200,000 spontaneously and 60,872 persons through voluntary repatriation facilitated by UNHCR. In 2017 UNHCR is planning the repatriation of 15,000 Ivoirian refugees.

Guinea

Guinean arrivals to Europe: Between January and April 2017, 4,184 [Guineans](#) arrived in Italy by way of the central Mediterranean route, including [778](#) unaccompanied or separated children (UASC). During this period Guineans made up 11% of the total arrivals to Europe. The number of Guineans arriving in Italy between January and April 2017 has doubled when compared to the same period in 2016.

Migration related programming: In April, the [EU announced](#) funding for a project to 'Strengthening the Governance of Migration and Support for the Sustainable Reintegration of Migrants in the Republic of Guinea'. The program will be implemented by IOM over a three year period with a budget of 5.4 million euros.

In April, [IOM launched](#) an integrated border management project in Guinea and Mali. The main objective of the project is to improve border security and control by enhancing the border management capacities of the Governments of Guinea and Mali.

Refugees in Guinea: As of 30 March, there were [4,494 Ivoirian refugees](#) in Guinea.

Liberia

Refugees in Liberia: As of 30 April, there were [15,460 Ivoirian refugees](#) in Liberia, representing a decline of 850 refugees since March. Since the beginning of 2017 to the end of March, 1,989 refugees have been repatriated. In total, UNHCR plans to repatriate 15,000 Ivorian refugees from Liberia in 2017.

Health and mobility: In a report published in April, [ALNAP explores](#) the effects of population mobility on the outbreak of Ebola in Liberia in 2014/15. Showing that during the outbreak population mobility between urban and rural areas was a key challenge for the humanitarian response, the report demonstrates the importance of taking mobility into account in public health responses.

Statelessness: Between January and March 2017, the Liberian government confirmed the nationality of 709 former [Liberian refugees](#) who are still residing in their countries of asylum. Due to the expiration of their refugee status they were previously at risk of becoming stateless.

Mali

Context: In April a number of security incidents and attacks took place in Mali, including a [MINUSMA force vehicle](#) striking an improvised explosive device on 18 April and seriously wounding three people. In Kidal, the [ICRC suspended](#) some of its activities due to insecurity in the region. In terms of numbers of events, March 2017 was the most violent month in Mali since early 2013. Two-thirds of the [28 incidents](#) that hindered humanitarian aid between January and March were direct violence against humanitarian personnel, goods and infrastructure.

According to [ACLED](#) (the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project), the most recent surge in violence in Mali is due to the newly formed group Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen (AQM), a group formed as a result of a merger between Ansar Dine, Al-Murabitoun, Macina Liberation Front (MLF), and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). ACLED argues that this merger represents a dangerous development to peace in Mali, as it increases the ability of armed groups to launch large scale attacks, increases their access to territory and resources and, through the inclusion of the Fulani led MLF, capitalises on Fulani grievances to unify ethnic politics with anti-state Islamist ideologies.

According to the [Institute for Security Studies](#) (ISS), in the short term the efficacy of this new group will be contingent upon the effectiveness of the French military operation Barkhane and the Malian armed forces (FAMA). According to ISS, judging from recent operations in central Mali, FAMA has been increasingly effective.

Malian arrivals in Europe: Between January and 30 April 2017, [1,879 Malians](#) arrived in Italy by sea via the central Mediterranean route, including [247 unaccompanied children](#). Malian arrivals in Italy by sea have remained relatively consistent, with 1,914 arrivals to Italy by sea during this period in 2016, and 1,515 in 2015.

Transit migration through Mali: During the month of March, [IOM recorded](#) 2,095 people transiting north through Kidal in northern Mali, with the majority indicating Algeria as their final destination. During March, the majority of those recorded by IOM were from Guinea (34%), Mali (26%) and Cote d'Ivoire (14%). Kidal is a transit point for people moving north across the Algerian border after having travelled through Gao. During March, IOM did not record any arrivals from the north in Kidal.

RMMS West Africa's [Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism initiative](#) (4Mi), conducted in-depth interviews with 51 migrants in northern Mali in April, in Gao, Timbuktu and Sevare. The majority of those interviewed were men (76%) and indicated they had left their place of origin for economic reasons (86%). Migrants from Burkina Faso were the most prevalent in the sample in April, representing 27% of those interviewed, followed by Guineans (24%) and Nigeriens (24%). In line with [previous 4Mi data](#), the majority of those interviewed in northern Mali indicated their final destination was within North Africa (59%) or West Africa (25%).

Malian Refugees in Neighbouring Countries: As of 30 April 2017, there were [143,567](#) Malian refugees in neighbouring countries in the region, including, 50,357 in Mauritania, 33,056 in Burkina Faso and 60,154 in Niger (lasted available figures from 31 December 2016).

In Mauritania, [UNHCR registered](#) more than 600 people in the Mbera camp in April. Since September 2016, over 5,800 people have crossed from Mali into the Mbera camp.

Repatriation of Malian Refugees: In April, UNHCR assisted [298 Malian refugees](#) to return to Timbuktu in northern Mali, after the refugees expressed their intention to return. Due to

the security situation in northern Mali, UNHCR does not promote the return of Malian refugees, but will facilitate voluntary return upon request from refugees.

Internal Displacement: As of 28 February, there were [44,762 IDPs in Mali](#), an increase from the 35,353 IDPs recorded in January, and the 36,690 recorded in October 2016. The majority of IDPs are located in the regions of Segou (10,794), Menaka (10,381) and Timbuktu (9,109).

Niger

Context: Due to the insecurity in the border areas of Mali and Burkina Faso, the Nigerian authorities declared a [state of emergency](#) in departments along the Burkina Faso border in March. Since February, 34 attacks have been recorded in this area. The border areas are home to 846,485 people.

Insecurity continues in the Diffa region, with the [Niger Defence ministry](#) reporting clashes with Boko Haram (BH) on 9 April resulting in the deaths of 57 BH fighters and 15 Niger defence force soldiers, as well as the wounding of two civilians. Between January and March 2017, over [14 attacks](#) on civilians by BH have been reported.

Departures from Niger: In March 2017, [IOM recorded](#) 4,781 people traveling from Niger to North Africa, with 2,218 people recorded traveling through Arlit to Algeria, and 2,563 recorded traveling through Séguédine to Niger.

The number of people recorded traveling through Séguédine on the way to Libya is lower in 2017 when compared with 2016 as migrants and refugees are using alternative routes to travel around Séguédine due to increased security presence by Niger security forces in the region.

The number of migrants and refugees traveling through Arlit remains largely consistent with those transiting through in 2016.

Since January, RMMS West Africa's [Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism initiative](#) (4Mi), has conducted 197 in-depth interviews with migrants and refugees in Niger, mostly in Agadez and Niamey. In April, 4Mi conducted 33 interviews with migrants and refugees in Niger, the majority of whom were from Senegal. 4Mi seeks to address the need for data about mixed migration movements by collecting comprehensive data from people on the move. The data covers motivations for movement, the routes and methods people use and the protection risks they face on route.

Arrivals in Niger: In March 2017, [IOM recorded](#) 8,416 arriving in Niger from North Africa, including 1,866 arriving from Algeria through Arlit, and 6,550 arriving via Séguédine from Libya. The majority of those recorded arriving in Niger from Algeria were from Niger (21%) followed by Mali (13%) and Guinea (10%). The majority of those recorded arriving via Séguédine were from Niger (87%). This reflects the difficulties that many non-Nigerien migrants have in returning to Niger from Libya.

Refugees in Niger: As of 30 April there were [106,146 Nigerian refugees](#) and, according to the latest available figures, 60,154 Malian refugees in Niger (latest available figures from 31 December 2016).

Forced Displacement in Diffa Region: According to the [latest available figures](#), as of 30 April there were 106,146 Nigerian refugees, 120,956 IDPs (3 March) and [15,423 returnees](#) (13 April) in the Diffa region of Niger. In April, [UNHCR reported](#) some people returning to their communities in Bosso, Niger, and Damassack, Nigeria, as well as new arrivals from Nigeria.

In April, [UNHCR published](#) a mapping of the displacement areas in Diffa and the areas of origin of refugees in Nigeria.

In April, the Ministry of Public health in Niger [declared a hepatitis E outbreak](#) in the Diffa region, with [278 suspected and confirmed](#) cases since January 2017.

Nigeria

Context: In April, the number of attacks around Maiduguri and in southern Borno State increased, raising concern for the safety of IDPs. [UNHCR reports](#) that the number of children used to serve in suicide attacks across the region has increased significantly in the first quarter of 2017, from nine in 2016 to 27 in 2017. Incursions and attacks were also reported across the borders in Niger, Cameroon and Chad.

In April the UN Secretary-General released a [report on children and armed conflict](#) in Nigeria, which finds that children in the Northeast of Nigeria continue to be brutalised as a result of the Boko Haram insurgency and the ensuing conflict. The report, covering the period between January 2014 and December 2016 highlights trends and patterns pertaining to grave violations against children in the context of the conflict in the north-eastern region of the country.

Arrivals of Nigerians in Europe: In April, [Nigerians](#) represented 14% of the 12,943 migrants and refugees who arrived in Italy by sea, the highest ranked nationality among arrivals. The 2,094 Nigerian migrants and refugees who arrived in Italy in April 2017 represent a significant increase from the 896 who arrived in April 2016. Between January and April 2017, 5,253 Nigerians arrived in Italy by sea, an increase of 22% when compared to the same period in 2016. Consistent with the trends from 2016, Nigerian women represent a much higher percentage of Nigerian arrivals to Europe when compared with other nationalities. Overall 10% of arrivals in Italy by sea between January and April are adult women, however, 30% of Nigerian arrivals during this period were women (1,582).

Humanitarian repatriation: On 25 April, [IOM assisted](#) 253 Nigerians to return home from Libya, including 148 women and 105 men. The groups also included six children and five infants. The majority had been detained in detention centres in Tripoli before they were assisted to return home.

Refugees in Neighbouring Countries: As of 30 April, there were [208,439 refugees](#) in countries neighbouring Nigeria, with 93,422 Nigerian refugees in Cameroon, 106,141 refugees in Niger and 8,649 in Chad. UNHCR registered 781 newly arrived Nigerians in Cameroon April.

Returns of displaced persons: As of 10 April, UNHCR and Nigerian Immigration Services had registered [142,409 returnees](#) returned from Cameroon, 119,061 from Niger and 339 from Chad. The main reasons evoked by returnees included participation in local elections, the return of stability and resumption of economic activities in areas of origin, but also a lack of food and water in hosting areas.

In April, [MSF highlighted](#) the strain being put on towns in North-eastern Nigeria as large number of newly displaced and returning Nigerians arrive in remote areas of Borno State. According to MSF, over 11,300 people have arrived in Pulka, close to the Cameroonian border, between January and April 2017, both people newly displaced by conflict, and those returning from Cameroon. MSF reports similar situations in Rann and Dikwa, both in northeast Borno, where large population movements occur almost daily and humanitarian

access is highly restricted. Between 4 and 14 April, 3,225 new arrivals were registered in Rann, with 1,212 of those arriving children under the age of five. UNOCHA reports that humanitarian access constraints will be compounded by the approaching rainy season.

[According to UNHCR](#), from the 9-16 April, 1,754 Nigerian refugees spontaneously left Minawao camp in Cameroon by their own means to return to their area of origin in Nigeria. A further 34 asylum seekers were returned from Cameroon to Gambaru in Nigeria by military authorities in April.

Internal Displacement: [According to IOM](#), as of 31 March there were 1,832,743 displaced persons in the six north-eastern states of Nigeria, representing a decrease of 4% since February. Keeping in mind that increased humanitarian access in some areas has increased the number of IDPs accessible to IOM, this is largely consistent with the 1,850,321 IDPs recorded in April 2016. Although the displaced population is fluid, with large numbers of people moving between towns and across borders in both directions in the region, the number of IDPs has not fallen significantly over the past year. Borno state hosts the highest number of IDPs, with 1,428,947 recorded in March 2017, a decrease from the 1,856,616 recorded in April 2016. A large decrease since April 2016 has also been recorded in Maiduguri, from 723,051 in April 2016 to 395,847 in March 2017.

In April, a report on the human rights of [internally displaced persons](#) in Nigeria was released ahead of the upcoming 35th session of the Human Rights Council. The report evidences widespread human rights violations in the north-east by non-State armed groups and state actors and calls for action to address the epidemic of exploitation and abuse occurring in camps for the internally displaced.

Senegal

Arrivals of Senegalese in Europe: Between January and April 2017, 2,555 migrants and refugees from [Senegal](#) arrived in Italy by sea via the Mediterranean route, an increase of almost 30% compared with the same period in 2016. Arrivals during this period in 2017 also included 329 unaccompanied children.

Other Regional Information

Protection risks for migrants and refugees in Libya: In April 2017, [IOM published](#) first hand reports of migrants who indicated that they were sold into slavery while in Libya. According to the testimonies collected by IOM from returning migrants in Agadez and Niamey, several people attested to having been kidnapped and sold as slaves when they arrived in Libya. Other migrants indicated they had been held hostage by their kidnappers, often only being released after a ransom was paid by their families.

Migrants and refugees in Libya: Between December 2016 and March 2017, IOM identified [381,463 migrants and refugees](#) in Libya, including 7,197 people in detention. Of those identified, 87% were males, 90% were above the age of 18, and the majority were from Egypt (18%), Niger (17%) and Chad (11%). In January and February, IOM conducted surveys with 1,314 migrants and refugees, including 31 women (2%). Of those surveyed, 90% reported having entered Libya through an unofficial entry point, and the majority (67%) indicated that their journey to reach Libya had cost less than 1,000 USD per person. Disaggregated by nationality, 94% of Nigeriens and 57% of Malians reported paying less than 1000 USD to arrive in Libya, however 71% of Nigerians reported paying between 1,000 and 5,000 USD.

West African arrivals to Europe: Between January and April 2017, 37,235 migrants and refugees [arrived in Italy](#) by sea, a 33% increase compared with the same period in 2016. West Africans accounted for some 55% of arrivals to Italy by sea during this period, with 14% of the total arrivals from Nigeria, 11% from Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea respectively, 8% from Gambia, 7% from Senegal, and 5% from Mali. In 2017, a marked decrease has been recorded in the numbers of people arriving in Italy by sea from Eritrea (-53%), Somalia (-60%) and Sudan (-40%) compared to the first four months of 2016. The numbers of migrants and refugees from Bangladesh has risen significantly between January and April 2017 when compared with the same period in 2016, from 3 to 4,645.

Deaths at Sea: In April 2017, [IOM recorded](#) 302 migrants and refugees who lost their lives or went missing in the Mediterranean Sea. It is estimated that between January and April 2017, 1,095 migrants died or went missing in the Mediterranean, a slight decrease from the 1,379 lost at sea during the same period in 2016.

EU migration and asylum context: In April, the [European Court of Auditors](#) released a report examining the 'hotspot' approach adopted by EU countries to help respond to the so-called refugee crisis. [The report finds](#) that the approach did help improve the situation in Italy and Greece somewhat, and provides recommendations to the Commission to assist member states in improving the hotspot approach.

The EU also [adopted a communication](#) on the protection of children in migration, which presents a series of actions to reinforce the protection of children. UNHCR and UNICEF welcomed this communication.

News, Reports, Books

RMMS West Africa (2017) 'Before the Desert: Conditions and Risks on Mixed Migration Routes through West Africa - Insights from the Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism initiative (4Mi) in Mali and Niger'

Based on the pilot phase of the Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism initiative (4Mi) in Niger and Mali this report presents the insights from over 200 in-depth interviews with migrants and refugees in northern Mali and Niger between January and March 2017. The report illustrates the conditions and protection risks faced by people moving north from West Africa, with a focus on the initial stages of their journey, before they cross the Sahara Desert towards North Africa.

Centre for Global Development and International Rescue Committee (2017) 'Refugee Compacts: Addressing the Crisis of Protracted Displacement' Final Report of the Forced Displacement and Development Study Group

This report is the result of a joint study group convened by The Center for Global Development and the International Rescue Committee to assess how key lessons from recent humanitarian and development collaborations can inform a sound partnership framework between host governments, development and humanitarian actors, the private sector and civil society in protracted displacement situations. The report sets forth recommendations for host governments and humanitarian and development actors to build strategic partnerships that respond to today's challenges.

Liska Wittenberg (2017) 'Managing Mixed Migration: The Central Mediterranean Route to Europe' Desperate Migration Series No.3, international Peace Institute.

This report explores the dynamics of mixed migration along the central Mediterranean route to Europe and the EU's response to these dynamics. Drawing on a detailed analysis the

report offers a number of lessons to inform the policy discourse of the EU, including the need to look beyond border control, improve collaboration between actors and bolster rescue at sea operations, and create more legal alternatives to irregular migration.

Regional Protection Working Group West Africa (2017) 'Typology of Movements in the Lake Chad Basin and Voluntariness Verification Tool of Return Movements'

Responding to recommendations from the Regional Protection Working Group this document aims to provide a detailed typology of movements to help identify voluntariness of returns in the Lake Chad Basin. The documents provides detailed definitions of the categories of population and advices on the practical application of relevant categories in the Lake Chad Basin, as well as explaining the population movements and applicable legal and policy frameworks.

Mark Micallef (2017) 'The Human Conveyor Belt: trends in human trafficking and smuggling in post-revolution Libya' Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime

This report examines the recent trends in human trafficking and smuggling in Libya, demonstrating how the smuggling markets have become liberalised, expanded and transnationally consolidated in the wake of Libya's civil war. The report calls for a long term perspective based upon greater investment into research in order to identify ways in which to isolate smuggling industries from their communities at a local level.

Isabelle, C, et al. (2017) 'Gendered internal migration patterns in Senegal' HAL: hal-01497824

This research article explores the internal migration patterns of men and women within Senegal. Using individual panel data from Senegal collected in 2006-07 and 2010-12, the study finds that women are more likely to migrate than men, however, they are likely to move less far and move to rural areas, especially when originating from rural areas. In addition female migration is often linked to marriage, while labour mobility is frequently observed for men.

The Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMMS) West Africa is an independent unit hosted by the Danish Refugee Council which aims to enhance the protection of people on the move in mixed migration flows in West Africa, including refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. RMMS West Africa distributes this summary to agencies, academic institutions, donors, embassies, journalists, government officials, international and multinational organisations and related non-government organisations. Data is sourced from a wide variety of collaborators, partners, international and local organisations, media outlets and individuals in the region. RMMS West Africa makes independent editorial decisions as to what sections and what data is included in this summary.

If you would like more information about RMMS West Africa please visit our website at www.westafrica.regionalmms.org

*The term migrant/refugee is used to cover all those involved in mixed migration flows (including asylum seekers, trafficked persons, economic migrants, refugees). If the caseload mentioned refers only to refugees or asylum seekers or trafficked persons it will be clearly stated.