

Weekly Report



Key Figures

Mediterranean
16,765

arrivals by sea in 2017*

487

dead/missing in 2017*

Trends of Sea Arrivals

During the reporting period, 268 refugees and migrants have arrived by sea to Greece. The number of sea arrivals fluctuated between 0 (21-25-26 February) and 165 (22 February). Chios recorded the majority of estimated sea arrivals (165), followed by Crete (60). Comparing with the previous week the average number of daily arrivals increased from 27 to 38.

During the week, 3,387 persons arrived in Italy by sea. So far in 2017, 16,765* refugees and migrants reached Italian shores, compared to 8,974 arriving in the same period last year (plus 50 per cent). Most sea arrivals (38 per cent) disembarked in Augusta and Catania, while 23 per cent disembarked in Trapani, Lampedusa and Pozzallo. Based on the latest Ministry of Interior data, sea arrivals mainly originate from Guinea (16 per cent), Côte d'Ivoire (12 per cent), Nigeria (11 per cent), Senegal (9 per cent), The Gambia (8 per cent), Morocco (7 per cent), Bangladesh (6 per cent), Mali (4 per cent), Iraq (3 per cent) and Pakistan (2 per cent).

Between 20 and 21 February, the bodies of 74 refugees and migrants were found on western Libya's shores, near Al Harsha and Zawiya. According to the Libyan Red Crescent, the bodies had been washed ashore following a shipwreck involving a boat carrying 130 persons: 24 persons survived. So far in 2017, 383 have died or gone missing in the entire Mediterranean.

Key Developments

Situation in Greece

UNHCR continued to support the Greek authorities with the priority to improve living conditions in the Registration and Identification Centres (RICs) on the islands. On Lesbos, UNHCR completed the installation on seven two-sto-

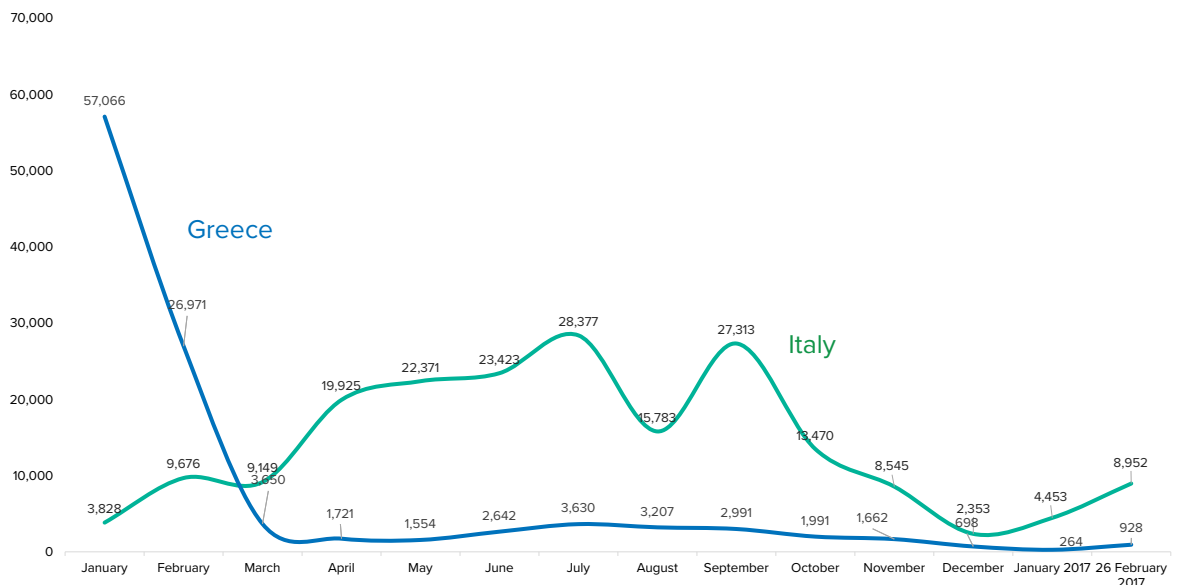
rey and four single prefabricated houses at RIC Moria. In total, 49 two-storey and 20 single containers are planned for RIC Moria. In addition, in Kara Tepe 172 of 292 prefabricated containers have been installed. While weather significantly improved overall, three consecutive days of rain delayed some of the work. Upon completion, prefabricated houses will be able to accommodate up to 2,400 people in the two sites. In total UNHCR has installed 944 prefabricated houses across Greece.

Between 18 and 24 February 2017, 460 people were transferred from the islands to the mainland for improved accommodation in state-run sites or the UNHCR operated accommodation scheme. Since 1 June 2016, UNHCR has assisted the transfer of 6,034 people from the islands to the mainland and over 26,000 people had benefited from accommodation in apartments, hotels, and host family programme, as well as facilities for more than 700 unaccompanied and separated children.

On 24 February UNHCR and Greek authorities met to discuss the transfer of third country nationals from the islands to the mainland. The meeting - attended by UNHCR, KEPOM, the Reception and Identification Service (RIS), and the Ministry of Migration Policy (MoMP) - focused on transfers which have not been carried out for asylum-seekers not originating from Syria, Afghanistan, or Iraq. The authorities noted that site managers were concerned about the need for additional interpreters and having many nationalities residing in the same locations. Greek authorities committed to identify sites on the mainland where a multicultural environment can be pursued, prioritizing single women to avoid their further isolation.

Security concerns in sites across Greece have been on the rise recently with several protests taking place in the re-

Arrivals to Greece and Italy per Month
January 2016 to 26 February 2017



* data.unhcr.org/mediterranean as of 2 March 2017

Key Figures

Greece

268
Total Weekly Arrivals to Greek Islands
20 - 26 Feb 2017

porting period. As a matter of priority, UNHCR continued to work with authorities and partners to improve conditions in the sites, transfer especially persons with specific needs to improved accommodation and the mainland, and to work with community leaders to defuse tensions.

Access to formal education continued to improve with 254 more refugee children enrolled in afternoon classes in February, across Greece (in Attica - Schisto, Central Greece – Larissa, and Macedonia – Alexandria). The Education Ministry estimates that 2,500 asylum-seekers have entered the formal primary and secondary education.

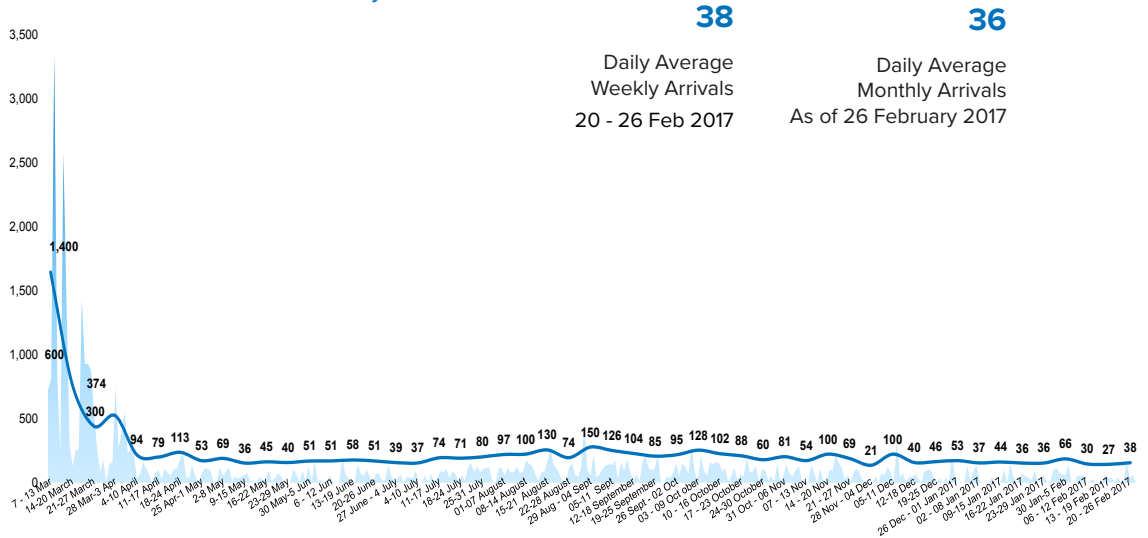
Update on Returns from Greece to Turkey

According to Greek authorities on 23 February 2017, one return operation with five men (two from Algeria, two from Bangladesh, and one from Morocco) was carried out from Lesbos (Greece) to Dikili (Turkey) by boat: out of the five, two had not applied for asylum, two were rejected at the second instance, and one rejected at first instance. According to Greek authorities, since 1 January 2016, a total of 899 third country nationals have been returned to Turkey.

Situation in Serbia

The number of refugees and migrants present in Serbia was 7,749 according to the authorities, UNHCR and part-

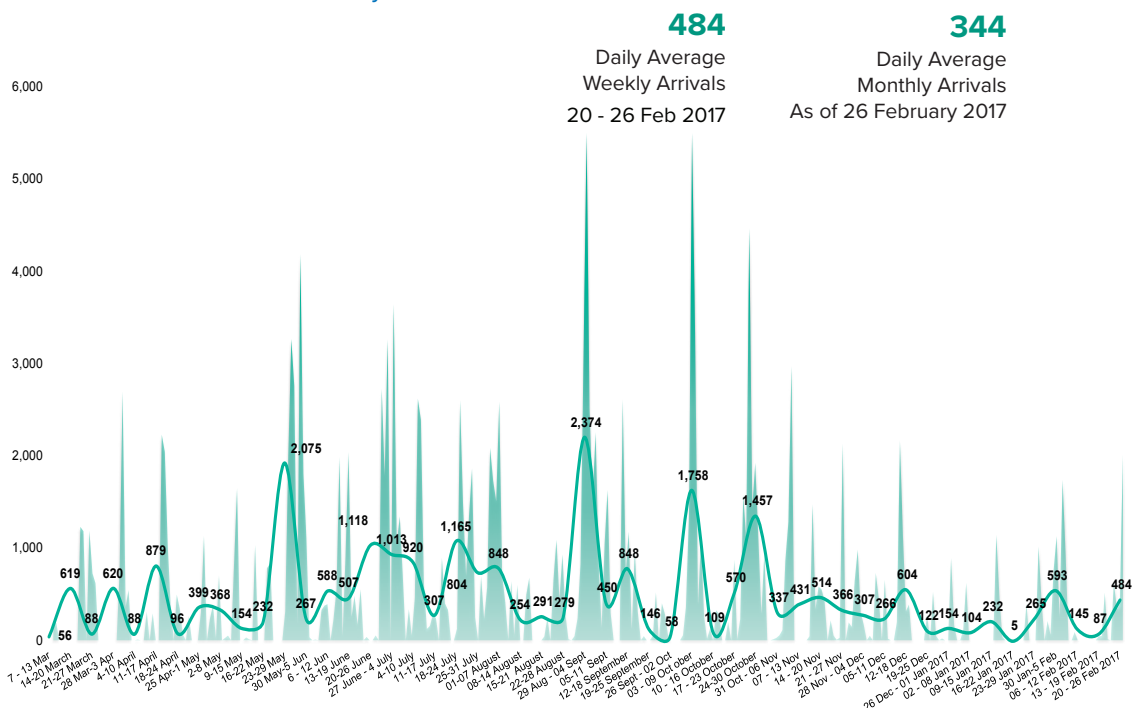
Daily and Weekly Average Arrivals to Greece
7 March 2016 to 26 February 2017



Italy

3,387
Total Weekly Arrivals to Italy
20 - 26 Feb 2017

Daily and Weekly Average Arrivals to Italy
7 March 2016 to 26 February 2017



ners: 85 per cent are accommodated in 17 governmental facilities, while the remainder were counted sleeping rough in Belgrade city centre or in the North.

On the Serbian-Hungarian border, only 12 asylum-seekers awaited admission to Hungary outside the Hungarian transit zones near Kelebije and Horgos border-crossings. Over 200 unregistered men (mostly from North Africa, Pakistan and Afghanistan) continue being observed sleeping rough around Subotica, trying to irregularly enter Hungary, some repeatedly. UNHCR and partners in Serbia received reports of 338 instances of push-backs of people who had entered Hungary irregularly. There were reports of 43 persons being push backed from Croatia.

UNHCR and partners continued supporting the rapid refurbishment of capacities in Obrenovac centre near Belgrade, as well as regular medical, non-food aid and protection services. Small groups of men and boys continued making use of governmental transport from the city centre, while some also went to Obrenovac spontaneously and requested accommodation. The number of male refugees and migrants accommodated in Obrenovac thus rose from 574 three weeks ago to 899 (including 341 unaccompanied or separated boys).

Situation in Hungary

During the week, Hungarian officials admitted 54 asylum-seekers into the two transit zones at the border with Serbia. In addition, the Hungarian Police reported 23 apprehensions for irregular entry, 780 people were prevented from crossing the green border and another 303 people were intercepted inside Hungary and sent back to the other side of the border control fence, compared to 296 last week. The border police, the military, Immigration and Asylum Office (IAO), the Constitution Protection Office (CPO), and the Government's Office which provides legal information maintains presence inside the transit zones. UNHCR has been conducting daily visits to the transit zones and providing asylum-seekers with

information and counselling on their rights and obligations, Dublin procedures and on the implications of the safe third country notion.

The preparatory work for the expansion of Tompa and Röszke transit zones is underway. According to the new proposed legal amendments, asylum-seekers will be held there until they receive a final decision on their status. The Government reallocated HUF 38 billion (EUR 124 million) for adjustments along the Serbian border (i.e. increase the overall capacity of the transit zones and erect a second fence parallel with the current one).

Situation in Bulgaria

As of 23 February 2017, there were 3,311 refugees and asylum-seekers registered at SAR centres (of whom, 165 with granted international protection and 480 living at external addresses) in Bulgaria. From 1 January to 23 February, 98 s were apprehended for irregular entry (for the previous week, the total reported was 89); another 949 third country nationals were apprehended for attempting to irregularly exit (for previous week, the figure was 861), mostly towards Serbia; and 183 third country nationals inland for irregular presence in Bulgaria (for previous week, the figure was 156). Most people were apprehended for attempted irregular exit, as opposed to irregular entry or irregular presence in-land.

The unwillingness of General Practitioners (GP) to register asylum-seekers has resurfaced in particular in Sofia. In Ovcha Kupel and Voenna Rampa (where two reception centres are located, with capacity for some 1500 individuals) local GP have refused to register asylum-seekers citing a number of obstacles including the legal limit in the number of persons a GP may register. Without a registration with a GP, asylum-seekers or Bulgarian citizens are unable to benefit from the services provided by the state-covered health insurance. UNHCR will take the matter up with the SAR Chairperson.

Update on Relocation

Key Documents from the Web portal

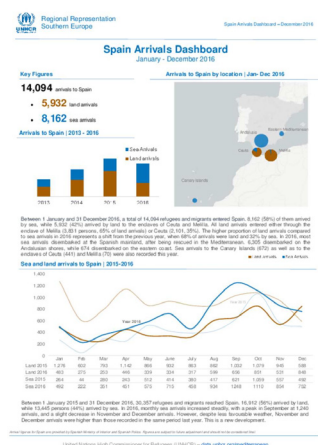
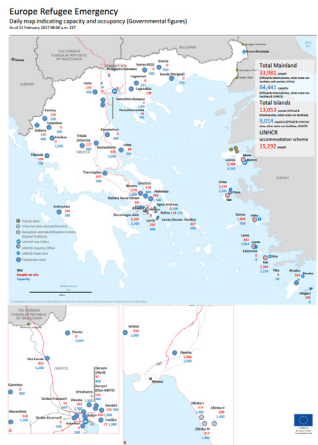
UNHCR Bureau for Europe February 2017

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



SUMMARY

The number of refugees and migrants arriving by sea to Europe increased significantly in 2016, with 200,000 arrivals in the Mediterranean and 100,000 arrivals in the Western Balkans. The majority of arrivals are from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. The number of arrivals in the Mediterranean has increased from 100,000 in 2015 to 200,000 in 2016. The number of arrivals in the Western Balkans has increased from 50,000 in 2015 to 100,000 in 2016. The majority of arrivals in the Mediterranean are from Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan. The majority of arrivals in the Western Balkans are from Pakistan and Afghanistan. The number of arrivals in the Mediterranean has increased from 100,000 in 2015 to 200,000 in 2016. The number of arrivals in the Western Balkans has increased from 50,000 in 2015 to 100,000 in 2016.



During the week, 80 asylum-seekers (78 Eritreans and two CAR nationals) were relocated from Italy to Switzerland bringing [total relocations from Italy since the beginning of the relocation scheme to 3,704](#) (9.4 per cent of the 39,600 original target).] No UASC have been relocated from Italy yet. Progress continued under the EU Relocation Scheme and a total of 494 asylum-seekers departed to a Member State. In total, 9,810 relocation candidates will have left or are scheduled to leave by the end of March 2017 from Greece for another EU Member State (out of 66,400 initial target). A total of 494 asylum-seekers were relocated from Greece during the reporting period, to Belgium (71), Germany (214), Latvia (31), Malta (16), Norway (45), Portugal (76), and Spain (41).

[Alternative routes](#)

UNHCR's latest report [Desperate Journeys](#) and [press release](#) detail the impact of the increased border restrictions introduced in 2016 on refugee and migrant move-

ments towards and inside Europe. It shows that people continued to move but undertook more diversified and dangerous journeys, often relying on smugglers because of the lack of accessible legal ways to Europe.

After the “closure” of the Western Balkan route and the EU-Turkey Statement in March 2016, the number of people reaching Greece via the Eastern Mediterranean route drastically decreased. The Central Mediterranean route from North Africa to Italy has since become the primary entry point to Europe. However, arrival trends in Italy show that the primary nationalities who crossed to Greece had not switched in significant numbers to the Central Mediterranean route.

Timeline Overview

Highlights

