

smuggling of migrants – global news july 2016

This monthly newsletter summarises news items and media commentary from some of world's leading media outlets. The Migrants Smuggling Working Group takes no responsibility for the content and accuracy of the information provided in these news items.

AFRICA

LIBYA

Amnesty documents 'horrifying' abuse of migrants in Libya – 1 July 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-ml--libya-20160701-story.html>

An international rights group on Friday published "horrifying" accounts by migrants of exploitation and sexual abuse in Libya, including Christians who were abducted by Islamic State group militants and forced into sexual slavery.

Amnesty reports horrific refugee abuse stories in Libya – 1 July 2016

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/07/amnesty-reports-horrific-refugee-abuse-stories-libya-160701105057719.html>

Widespread cases of rape, torture, and killings reported by refugees and migrants in new report.

Bodies of 22 migrants found on boat in Mediterranean: MSF – 20 July 2016

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/bodies-of-22-migrants-found-on-boat-in-mediterranean-msf/article31022994/>

The bodies of 21 women and one man were found on a rubber dinghy adrift near the Libyan coast on Wednesday, just hours after they had set sail for Italy, humanitarian group Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) said.

One more day of desperation: Italy says 3,200 boat migrants rescued, one body recovered – 20 July 2016

<http://www.scmp.com/news/world/europe/article/1992208/one-more-day-desperation-italy-says-3200-boat-migrants-rescued-one>

Some 3,200 migrants were plucked from overcrowded boats off the coast of Libya on Tuesday and one dead body was recovered, Italy's coast guard said, as people smugglers operating in Libya took advantage of calm seas and warm weather.

Rescuers recover 17 bodies, pick up 1,128 boat migrants – 21 July 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-italy-idUSKCN1012NO>

An Irish navy ship recovered 17 dead bodies on Thursday when it went to the aid of migrants packed onto a wooden boat off the coast of Libya, Italy's coastguard said, marking another deadly day of attempted sea crossings.

Nameless dead of the Mediterranean wash up on Libyan shore – 28 July 2016

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-36902816>

So far this year, more than 3,000 migrants and refugees have been claimed by the waves as they tried to reach Europe, according to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

More than 120 bodies washed ashore near Libyan city – 31 July 2016

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/07/120-bodies-washed-ashore-libyan-city-160731135006965.html>

More than 120 bodies of people who died trying to cross the Mediterranean to Europe washed up around Sabratha city in western Libya in July, the city's mayor said.

ZIMBABWE

Zimbabwe's Child Exodus – 6 July 2016

<http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/africainvestigates/2011/11/2011111682030843189.html>

Over the past decade, tens of thousands of Zimbabwean children have taken remarkable risks to smuggle themselves across the border into South Africa.

AMERICAS

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Suspected smuggler's SUV crashes near Mexican border; 1 dead, 2 hurt – 10 July 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-smuggler-20160710-snap-story.html>

A suspected smuggler's SUV overturned in a remote desert wash early Friday, killing one passenger, injuring two others and causing an extensive law enforcement search for the victims near the San Diego-Imperial County line.

Migrants and Smugglers Won't Be Stopped by Donald Trump's Wall, Ranchers Say – 23 July 2016

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/24/us/donald-trump-wall-immigration-ranchers.html>

Ranchers near the Mexican border see smugglers and sometimes find bodies, but they favor a different approach to illegal immigration from Donald J. Trump's wall.

ASIA-PACIFIC

MALAYSIA

Malaysia's invisible children – 5 July 2016

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2015/04/malaysia-invisible-children-150429064406390.html>

Undocumented and marginalised, the children of migrants face arrest, detention and possible death in Malaysia's Sabah.

NORTH KOREA

North Korean Defector Surfaces in Pyongyang, Saying He Tried to Abduct Orphans – 15 July 2016

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/16/world/asia/north-korea-child-abduction-defector.html>

A man who had defected to South Korea from the North turned up in a government-arranged news conference in the North's capital on Friday, saying that he was arrested there this year while trying to smuggle orphans out of the impoverished country.

EUROPE

GENERAL

Europol chief says people smugglers at record levels as criminal gangs move in – 12 July 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-smuggling-europe-idUSKCN0ZS2CE>

Law enforcement agencies are battling a surge in the number of people smugglers to record levels as criminal networks cash in on Europe's escalating migrant crisis, according to the head of the European Union's police agency Europol.

E.U. Offers New Immigration Plan, Hoping to Sway Reluctant Countries – 13 July 2016

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/14/world/europe/migrants-refugees-immigration-eu-greece.html>

The European Union authorities, seeking to balance the scale of the migration crisis with the reluctance of some countries to take in refugees, offered a series of proposals on Wednesday that would give member states more latitude while offering them 10,000 euros for each refugee they accept.

Almost 3,000 drowned in Mediterranean crisis this year – 22 July 2016

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/07/3000-drowned-mediterranean-crisis-year-160722104100993.html>

Some 2,977 people have perished in the Mediterranean Sea so far this year, with people dying at a rate of around 20 a day since March.

Lone child refugees 'left in squalor' by EU nations – Lords – 26 July 2016

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-36890721>

Thousands of lone migrant children are living in squalid conditions after being let down by European countries including the UK, a report has warned.

Desperate journeys: 3,034 refugees die in seven months – 31 July 2016

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/07/desperate-journeys-3034-refugees-die-months-160730100626791.html>

At least 3,034 refugees have died en route to Europe so far in 2016, a sharp increase from last year, says the IOM.

AUSTRIA

Austria breaks up migrant-smuggling ring: police – 25 July 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-austria-idUSKCN1051EZ>

Austria has broken up an international people-smuggling ring that illegally spirited more than 1,000 migrants into Germany, France and other countries from Hungary, police said on Monday.

European people-smuggling ring smashed – 26 July 2016

<http://www.straitstimes.com/world/europe/european-people-smuggling-ring-smashed>

Austrian police said Monday (July 25) that an international operation smashed an alleged people-smuggling ring suspected of illegally bringing more than 1,000 people from Hungary into western Europe over the past year.

GERMANY

German police smash migrant smuggling ring – 5 July 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-germany-trafficking-idUSKCN0ZL1TB>

Germany has broken up a ring of human traffickers who smuggled mainly Syrian migrants into the country via Hungary and Austria for a charge of up to 1,500 euros (\$1,671.00) each, federal police said on Tuesday.

Germany: 222,000 asylum-seekers arrived in year's first half – 8 July 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-eu--europe-migrants-20160708-story.html>

Some 222,000 asylum-seekers arrived in Germany in the first half of this year, the government said Friday — reflecting a much-reduced influx after the route through the Balkans was largely blocked and the European Union made a deal with Turkey to cut arrivals by sea.

HUNGARY

Hungary sentences 10 migrants for illegal border crossing – 1 July 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-hungary-court-idUSKCN0ZH4DP>

A Hungarian court on Friday sentenced 10 migrants to jail terms for illegally crossing the border during a riot in September 2015, after Hungary built a razorwire fence to seal its frontier with Serbia.

ITALY

Italy detains 38 in crackdown on migrant trafficking ring – 4 July 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-eu--europe-migrants-20160704-story.html>

Italian authorities detained 38 people in a crackdown on a migrant trafficking ring that used a Rome cosmetics shop as a base for illegal financial transactions, officials said Monday.

Italian police arrest 23 over alleged people-smuggling ring – 4 July 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/04/italian-police-arrest-23-over-alleged-people-smuggling-ring>

Italian police have arrested 23 people accused of being part of a criminal network smuggling people across the Mediterranean, following testimony from a former gang member who said migrants had been beaten and killed en route to Europe.

Italian police smash suspected people-smuggling ring, arrest dozens – 4 July 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-italy-arrests-idUSKCN0ZK13Q>

Italian police on Monday arrested 25 Eritreans, 12 Ethiopians and an Italian who they said belonged to an organization that had smuggled thousands of migrants into Europe from Africa.

Italian prosecutors investigate pair who say they got the wrong people smuggler – 21 July 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/21/people-smuggling-trial-eritrean-italian-prosecutors>

Italian prosecutors accused of arresting the wrong person in a smuggling trial in Sicily have responded by launching an investigation into their accusers, a court has heard.

Palermo court says people smuggler arrested in Sudan is right man – 22 July 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-smuggler-idUSKCN10221U>

A suspected people smuggler who alleged he had been mistakenly arrested and extradited to Italy is indeed the man prosecutors had sought, Palermo magistrates said after investigating his identity.

Child migrants in Sicily must overcome one last obstacle – the mafia – 24 July 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/23/child-migrants-in-sicily-must-overcome-mafia-obstacle>

Anti-mafia prosecutors have revealed to the Observer that they are currently investigating the Italian government's network of official homes for unaccompanied minors, believing that child refugees are being targeted in the very places they should be protected. They also claim to have uncovered widespread corruption, involving alleged kickbacks and bribes to secure lucrative public contracts to run migrant camps.

MACEDONIA

Macedonian police discover 73 migrants hidden in truck – 2 July 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-eu--europe-migrants-20160702-story.html>

Macedonian police say they have discovered 73 illegal migrants in a truck during a routine check early Saturday near Macedonia's border with Serbia.

Stressed and stuck in Macedonia: Balkans' hidden migrant story – 17 July 2016

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36778262>

Tabanovce is not the kind of place a traveller would choose to stop on a long journey. The main feature of this small village close to Macedonia's northern border with Serbia is an unlovely railway siding. But hundreds of people fleeing conflict have found themselves stuck here for weeks or even months following the official closure of the so-called Balkan route in March.

SERBIA

Serbian police arrest 6 people smuggling 78 migrants – 19 July 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-eu--europe-migrants-20160719-story.html>

Serbian police said Tuesday they have detained six people for smuggling 78 migrants trying to reach the European Union.

Hundreds of migrants marching to Hungary border in protest – 22 July 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-eu--europe-migrants-20160722-story.html>

Hundreds of migrants and asylum seekers set off on foot Friday toward Serbia's border with Hungary to protest its decision to keep its border closed for most people trying to reach the European Union.

Protesting migrants ask EU leaders why borders are closed – 24 July 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-eu--europe-migrants-20160724-story.html>

A group of migrants and asylum-seekers who set off two days ago on a protest march toward Hungary reached the European Union-member state's border on Sunday, saying they want to ask European leaders why it is closed for the thousands fleeing war and poverty.

Desperate migrants in Serbia launch hunger strike – 27 July 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-eu--serbia-protesting-migrants-20160727-story.html>

Some 100 men and boys, mostly from Afghanistan and Pakistan, have been protesting Europe's migrant policies for several days now. Last weekend they staged a march to Serbia's border with EU-member Hungary, where they stopped in a dusty field near the boundary, without any facilities and accepting only water from humanitarian groups.

SWITZERLAND

Man smuggles himself inside suitcase on train from Italy to Switzerland – 7 July 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/07/man-smuggles-himself-inside-suitcase-train-switzerland-italy-eritrea>

A 21-year-old man from Eritrea has been caught by Swiss border guards after trying to smuggle himself inside a suitcase on a train from Italy, a tactic not previously seen by local authorities.

TURKEY

Syrian refugees: Struggles in Turkey intensify – 25 July 2016

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/07/syrian-refugees-struggles-turkey-intensify-160717072943845.html>

Amid a security crackdown after the failed putsch, refugees from Syria now face multiple new challenges.

The migrant crisis, as seen through the eyes of a people smuggler in Turkey- 28 July 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/world/la-fg-turkey-human-smuggling-snap-story.html>

Izmir — Turkey's third-largest city and traditional hub of its Mediterranean trading class — has served as the country's central staging post for the people smugglers whose operations exploded over the last year along the Aegean Sea. Other such smuggling occurs from places such as Antalya and Bodrum.

UNITED KINGDOM

France eyes prospects to pressure Britain over migrants – 3 July 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-eu--france-britain-migrants-20160703-story.html>

Concern about immigration and a wish for stricter border controls were important factors in Britain's vote to leave the European Union last week.

Children among suspected migrants found in lorry on M25 – 3 July 2016

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-kent-36698178>

A group of suspected migrants have been discovered in a lorry travelling on the M25 in Kent.

Prosecutions for people-smuggling into UK rise by 50% - 4 July 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/law/2016/jul/04/prosecutions-people-smuggling-uk-vehicles-rise-50>

The number of people prosecuted for smuggling illegal immigrants into Britain in their vehicles has risen by more than 50% in a year, according to new figures.

Suspected trafficker sent hundreds of migrants to Britain, court told – 26 July 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/jul/26/suspected-trafficker-sent-hundreds-migrants-britain-court-told>

A British-Iraqi man is the head of a people-smuggling network suspected of bringing hundreds of migrants to Britain, a court heard.

Britons jailed over attempt to smuggle in 18 Albanians by boat – 29 July 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-britain-idUSKCN10920M>

Two British men who tried to smuggle 18 Albanians into England by inflatable boat in May and had to be rescued in choppy waters were each sentenced to over four years in prison on Friday, Britain's state prosecution service said.

Three men jailed in two cases of smuggling Albanians into the UK – 29 July 2016

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-36921682>

Two men have each been jailed for more than four years for smuggling 18 Albanian migrants into the UK.

'Massive network' of European gangs smuggling migrants – 29 July 2016

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-36915890>

UK immigration investigators have warned of a "big challenge" to tackle a "massive network" of criminal gangs trafficking people across Europe.

Three men jailed over two attempts to smuggle Albanians into UK – 29 July 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/jul/29/two-men-who-tried-to-smuggle-18-albanians-into-uk-jailed>

Three men have been sentenced to prison terms over two separate attempts to smuggle Albanians into the UK in boats across the Channel.