



smuggling of migrants — global news august 2016

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

AFRICA

LIBYA

AP witnesses rescue of migrants off Libya, 4 bodies found – 18 August 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-eu--europe-migrants-20160818-story.html>

A Spanish aid group rescued more than 100 migrants Thursday from three separate migrant boats off Libya's coast and recovered at least four bodies after one of the vessels sank. Relatives reported another two people drowned but rough seas hampered search efforts.

European ships rescue thousands of migrants off Libyan coast – 29 August 2016

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/a4b535827c6f482f9b1ad4365e8cad85/european-ships-rescue-thousands-migrants-libyan-coast>

Italian naval ships and vessels from non-government groups rescued thousands of migrants off the Libyan coast on Monday, the latest surge in desperate attempts to flee to Europe driven by war, poverty, and human traffickers.

Libya navy thought migrant rescuers were smugglers, fired warning shots: spokesman – 30 August 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security-migrants-idUSKCN1152Q6>

A Libyan navy boat fired warning shots at a search and rescue vessel operated by Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) earlier this month because it thought it was involved in smuggling, a spokesman said on Tuesday.

AMERICAS

GENERAL

Quietly, US urges Central American nations to deport migrating Cubans – 1 August 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-tns-bc-uscuba-migration-20160801-story.html>

The recent increase in undocumented Cuban emigration more than 44,000 reached the United States in the past eight months alone is complicating the Obama administration's drive to normalize relations with Havana and cut the migrant flow through Central America.

COLOMBIA

Colombia deports 1,350 travelers amid crackdown on Cuban migrants – 9 August 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-tns-bc-colombia-migrants-20160809-story.html>

Colombia has deported more than 1,350 undocumented migrants in recent days many of them Cubans trying to reach the United States as the Andean nation becomes the latest to crack down on human smuggling.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Havana slams US on its migration policy for Cuban migrants – 10 August 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-tns-bc-uscuba-migrants-20160810-story.html>

MIAMI In the face of a surge in Cuban migrants arriving in the United States, Cuba is accusing Washington of politicizing migration policy between the two countries and encouraging "illegal and unsafe" migration from the island.

Girl shot while being smuggled into US is rescued by border agents – 11 August 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-tns-bc-smugglers-shooting-20160811-story.html>

DALLAS Texas border agents rushed a 4-year-old Salvadoran girl to the hospital this week after she was shot while being smuggled from Mexico to the U.S.

ASIA-PACIFIC

THAILAND

Thai Court Sentences Man to 35 Years in Rohingya Trafficking Case – 31 August 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-thailand-trafficking-idUSKCN11622C>

A Thai court on Wednesday sentenced a man to 35 years in prison for trafficking ethnic Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar, in a high-profile case that led to the discovery of jungle camps, mass graves and an international trafficking ring.

EUROPE

GENERAL

UK lawmakers say Europe's efforts over migration crisis 'lamentable' – 2 August 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-britain-idUSKCN10D2MX>

European Union attempts to tackle the migration crisis have been a failure, amounting to "too little, too late" with not enough being done to tackle people-smugglers, a committee of British lawmakers said on Wednesday.

Four arrested in Italy, Hungary, Slovenia for trafficking migrants – 6 August 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-italy-arrests-idUSKCN10H073>

Police in Italy, Hungary and Slovenia on Saturday arrested four people in a coordinated operation targeting a group suspected of smuggling illegal migrants into Italy from the Balkans, Italian police said.

Report: More migrants die in Mediterranean as risks increase – 23 August 2016

<http://www.bigstory.ap.org/article/ed13d728dad4bf0b6f13dc7cf759b19/report-more-migrants-die-mediterranean-risks-increase>

New and more dangerous smuggling practices and attempts to reach Europe by riskier routes have led to a spike in the number of migrants dying as they attempt to cross the Mediterranean, according to a new analysis released Tuesday.

Where key countries stand on Europe's ongoing refugee crisis – 28 August 2016

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/where-key-countries-stand-on-europes-ongoing-refugee-crisis/article31586516/>

Faced with more than 1 million migrants flooding across the Mediterranean last year, European nations tightened border controls, set up naval patrols to stop smugglers, negotiated an agreement with Turkey to limit the numbers crossing, shut the Balkan route used by hundreds of thousands, and tried to speed up deportations of rejected asylum-seekers.

EU authorizes new maritime operations in Mediterranean – 30 August 2016

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/ccf1ecc9333c41da91f200fe2cc70a85/eu-authorizes-new-maritime-operations-mediterranean>

An EU naval mission in the Mediterranean has been authorized to start enforcing a UN arms embargo designed to choke off weapon supplies to extremists in Libya.

AUSTRIA

Austria's migrant disaster: Why did 71 die? – 25 August 2016

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-37163217>

No-one will ever know exactly where the 71 refugees and migrants from Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan died.

BULGARIA

Serbia offers to help patrol Bulgaria-Turkey border – 7 August 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-eu--europe-migrants-20160807-story.html>

Serbia has offered to help patrol the border between Bulgaria and Turkey to curb the influx of migrants seeking to reach the European Union through the Balkans.

Bulgaria charges four Afghans with people-smuggling – 23 August 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-bulgaria-idUSKCN10Y0Z9>

Bulgaria charged four Afghans with smuggling offences, prosecutors said on Tuesday, for trying to help 29 Syrians cross the Bulgarian-Turkish border through the Rezovska river on Sunday.

GREECE

In wake of Turkey unrest, Greece grows nervous about a potential spike in influx of refugees – 2 August 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/world/europe/la-fg-greece-turkey-20160802-snap-story.html>

Early on the first day of August, the peak of the summer season in Greece, the Greek coast guard spotted an inflatable motorized boat laden with refugees and migrants off the tourist island of Chios, near a fishing village called Waterfall.

Smuggling surges in Greece as migrant frustrations grow – 7 August 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-eu--greece-smuggling-spike-20160807-story.html>

With Turkey in crisis and Europe's borders closed, smugglers in northern Greece are expecting a profitable summer.

Refugees in Greek camps targeted by mafia gangs – 20 August 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/20/refugees-greek-camps-targeted-mafia-gangs>

Fresh evidence is emerging that refugees stranded in camps across Greece are falling victim to rising levels of vice peddled by mafia gangs who see the entrapped migrants as perfect prey for prostitution, drug trafficking and human smuggling.

ITALY

Afghan migrant travels 250 miles strapped to underside of lorry – 23 August 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/23/afghan-migrant-travels-250-miles-strapped-to-underside-of-lorry>

An Afghan migrant travelled 400 kilometres (250 miles) along an Italian highway strapped by leather belts to the bottom of a lorry, according to police.

Italy: Thousands more migrants rescued from Mediterranean – 30 August 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-tns-bc-europe-migrants-1st-lede-20160830-story.html>

About 3,000 migrants were picked up Tuesday from the central Mediterranean, the Italian coast guard said, raising to around 10,000 the rescue tally over the past 48 hours.

SERBIA

Serbia police find 34 migrants in a Belgrade house – 25 August 2016

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/d72aba0ecfbb488b9637c1d94f07ba15/serbia-police-find-34-migrants-belgrade-house>

Serbian police say they have arrested a man after finding 34 migrants in his house in a Belgrade suburb.

Hungary offers Serbia help in guarding borders against migrants – 25 August 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-serbia-hungary-idUSKCN1101YX>

Hungary is offering to send police to Serbia's border with Macedonia and Bulgaria to help its neighbor stem the flows of migrants crossing illegally into Western Europe, Interior Minister Sandor Pinter said on Thursday.

3 detained in Serbia for trying to smuggle 64 Afghans – 30 August 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-eu--europe-migrants-20160830-story.html>

Serbia's defense ministry says three people have been detained for attempting to smuggle 64 migrants from Afghanistan, including a pregnant woman and a baby.

Serbian Border Patrol Arrests Three for Smuggling 64 Afghans – 30 August 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-serbia-border-idUSKCN1151G1>

The Serbian authorities have detained three men on suspicion of the attempted smuggling of 64 Afghan migrants, including women and infants, in the south east of the country near the border with Bulgaria, the Defence Ministry said on Tuesday.

SPAIN

Spanish police arrest 57 in illegal Chinese immigration ring – 27 August 2016

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/cc9ad6b4ab674865934cd99265a9ade4/spanish-police-arrest-57-illegal-chinese-immigration-ring>

Spanish police say they have arrested 57 people and dismantled an illegal immigration ring giving Chinese citizens Spanish residency permits through fake job contracts as domestic staff.

UNITED KINGDOM

Migrants rescued from sandbank off Kent coast – 25 August 2016

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-kent-37186599>

Six migrants who were trying to reach the Kent coast in a small boat have been rescued from a sandbank in the English Channel.

Border patrol vessels: Numbers 'worryingly low', MPs warn – 3 August 2016

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-36960905>

Britain's Border Force has a "worryingly low" number of boats to patrol the UK's coasts, MPs have said, amid concerns that coastal security is under threat from people smugglers.

South coast community 'to tackle migrant boat threat' – 4 August 2016

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-36979239>

Community intelligence is needed to tackle the migrant boat threat along the south coast, a National Crime Agency (NCA) chief has said.