

smuggling of migrants — global news september 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.

GENERAL

Nearly 50 million children uprooted: A global crisis by the numbers – 7 September 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/world/la-fg-global-children-displaced-20160907-snap-story.html>

A new report by the United Nations children's agency, titled "Uprooted: The growing crisis for refugee and migrant children," attempts to assemble the best figures available. The findings are staggering: 50 million children driven from their homes as of last year, more than half of them by conflict and persecution, and the rest in search of a better life.

Global leaders pledge more help for refugees; critics say pledges are not enough – 19 September 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/world/la-fg-un-refugees-20160919-snap-story.html>

Global leaders promised Monday to better protect the rights of refugees and migrants, and undertake a more coordinated response to the world's deepening crisis of displaced people. But human rights and humanitarian groups criticized the agreement for being weak and failing to address the magnitude of the problem.

Theresa May urges global measures to tackle 'uncontrolled migration' – 19 September 2016

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-37405598>

Theresa May has called for a global clampdown on "uncontrolled migration", saying it is the right and the duty of countries to control their borders.

AFRICA

EGYPT

Migrant boat capsizes off Egypt, killing at least 42 – 21 September 2016

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/f8eb0d965a3742acb5ea1952b04e8370/migrant-boat-capsizes-egypt-killing-least-20>

A boat carrying African migrants headed to Europe capsized off the Mediterranean coast near the Egyptian city of Alexandria on Wednesday, killing at least 42 people, Egyptian authorities said.

Death toll rises to 52 after migrant boat capsizes off Egypt – 22 September 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-egypt-idUSKCN11S17M>

Nine more bodies have been recovered from the Mediterranean a day after a boat carrying hundreds of migrants capsized off the coast of Egypt, officials said on Thursday, bringing the death toll to 52.

Dozens drown after migrant boat capsizes off Egypt's coast – 22 September 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-ml--egypt-migrants-20160922-story.html>

Survivors, some handcuffed to hospital beds, described watching women and children drown after an overcrowded migrant boat capsized off Egypt's coast, as Egyptian authorities said Thursday 51 bodies had been recovered and an international NGO estimated that over a hundred people were still missing at sea.

Egyptian officials arrest crew members after smuggler's boat capsizes off Mediterranean coast, killing dozens – 22 September 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/world/middleeast/la-fg-egypt-migrants-20160922-snap-story.html>

Four people arrested Thursday in connection with a boat that capsized off Egypt's Mediterranean coast, killing dozens of migrants, face charges of human trafficking and manslaughter, officials said.

Egypt Recovers Over 160 Bodies From Sunken Migrant Boat – 23 September 2016

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/24/world/middleeast/egypt-migrants-boat.html>

The Egyptian authorities said Friday that they had recovered 162 bodies after the sinking of a ship full of mostly Egyptian migrants in the Mediterranean this week.

Death toll in migrant shipwreck off Egypt rises to 300 – 23 September 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/23/death-toll-in-migrant-shipwreck-off-egypt-rises-to-300>

A record number of migrants is expected to drown in the Mediterranean in 2016, after the estimated death toll in this week's latest shipwreck rose to about 300 on Friday.

Egypt shipwreck: Four arrested, 'death toll 'to rise' – 23 September 2016

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/09/egypt-shipwreck-arrested-death-toll-rise-160922133602337.html>

Egyptian authorities have arrested four people in connection with the death of at least 43 refugees whose Europe-bound boat capsized off Egypt's Mediterranean coast.

Over 160 bodies recovered from Egypt refugee shipwreck – 24 September 2016

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/09/140-bodies-recovered-egypt-refugee-shipwreck-160923135015543.html>

The death toll from a refugee boat sinking off Egypt's coast has risen to 162, as rescuers recovered more bodies from the Mediterranean.

Toll from Egypt migrant boat sinking rises to more than 200 – 27 September 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-ml--egypt-migrants-20160927-story.html>

Rescue workers on Tuesday pulled dozens of bodies from the hold of an Egyptian fishing boat that sank in the Mediterranean Sea carrying hundreds of migrants trying to make it to Europe, bringing the toll from the disaster to more than 200 dead.

LIBYA

Libyan naval attack on charity ship adds new danger to migrant rescue – 3 September 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/03/libyan-naval-attack-on-charity-ship-adds-new-danger-to-migrant-rescue>

Crews fear armed violence as a Libyan naval vessel opens fire in Mediterranean and EU sends in protective seapower.

British warship sent to Libya to target people-smugglers – 4 September 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/sep/03/uk-warship-to-tackle-libya-people-smugglers>

A British warship will arrive off the Libyan coast in the next few days in a dramatic attempt to intercept and arrest people smugglers as the flow of migrants trying to cross the Mediterranean for Italy reaches record levels.

Italy says 15 boat migrants drowned, 2,700 saved off coast of Libya – 5 September 2016

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/italy-says-15-boat-migrants-drowned-2700-saved-off-coast-of-libya/article31709799/>

Fifteen bodies were recovered and more than 2,700 boat migrants rescued off the coast of Libya on Monday, the Italian coastguard said, in another day of mass departures from north Africa.

Libya says 1,425 migrants turned back over two days – 16 September 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-libya-idUSKCN11M1AP>

Libyan patrols intercepted some 1,425 migrants trying to cross the Mediterranean to Europe over the past two days, a naval spokesman said on Friday.

EU anti-trafficking unit denies turning back migrant boats – 16 September 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-britain-idUSKCN11M145>

The European Union's anti-smuggling and people trafficking operation denied on Friday that it had returned any migrant boats to Libya, after Britain's foreign secretary said it had turned back more than 200.

AMERICAS

MEXICO

Haitian influx continues through Tijuana, straining shelters – 8 September 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/world/mexico-americas/la-fg-haitian-influx-tijuana-20160908-snap-story.html>

With the city's shelters full, migrant advocates in Tijuana say they are in crisis mode — and calling for more government help in coping with large numbers of Mexicans, Haitians and others petitioning for entrance to the United States.

Central American migrants desperate to reach US risk new dangers at sea – 15 September 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2016/sep/15/migrants-mexico-human-trafficking-us-immigration-crackdown>

A rising number of Central American migrants are heading out to sea in small open boats to evade the immigration officials and bandits who have proliferated along Mexico's southern border.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Haitians, After Perilous Journey, Find Door to U.S. Abruptly Shut – 23 September 2016

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/24/world/americas/haitians-mexico-brazil-deport-united-states.html>

On Thursday, the Obama administration, in an effort to halt an extraordinary wave of Haitian migrants streaming to the United States, announced that it was tightening its immigration policy on Haitians. Those who appeared at the American border without visas would almost certainly be sent back to Haiti.

U.S. established working group to stop Middle East migrant smugglers – 27 September 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-congress-security-idUSKCN11X1NH>

Department of Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson told a Senate panel on Tuesday the United States was cracking down on Middle Eastern migrants illegally crossing the southern U.S. border.

ASIA-PACIFIC

INDONESIA

Indonesia arrests notorious people-smuggler – 23 September 2016

<http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/indonesia-arrests-notorious-people-smuggler>

Indonesian police said Friday (Sept 23) they had arrested a notorious people-smuggler over an attempt to send a boatload of asylum seekers to New Zealand in 2015.

Indonesia arrests key people smuggler who targeted Australia – 24 September 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-indonesia-australia-asylum-idUSKCN11U03I>

Indonesian police have arrested an alleged key people smuggler who has targeted Australia since 1999, Indonesian and Australian authorities said on Saturday.

Indonesia arrests 'Captain Bram', key people smuggler, who targeted Australia for decades – 24 September 2016

<http://www.scmp.com/news/asia/australasia/article/2022279/indonesia-arrests-key-people-smuggler-captain-bram-who>

Indonesian police have arrested an alleged key people smuggler who has targeted Australia since 1999, Indonesian and Australian authorities said on Saturday.

PAKISTAN

Pakistan is driving out 1.5m Afghan refugees – 16 September 2016

<http://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2016/09/daily-chart-11>

When the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979, it triggered one of the largest refugee outflows since the second world war. For every year after until 2014, Afghanistan was the world's biggest source of refugees. Most of those who fled crossed the border into Pakistan. By the end of last year 1.5m Afghans were living in Pakistan. Only Turkey hosts more refugees.

THAILAND

Thai kingpin jailed for 35 years for Rohingya human-trafficking – 1 September 2016

<http://www.scmp.com/news/asia/southeast-asia/article/2012184/thai-kingpin-jailed-35-years-rohingya-human-trafficking>

A Thai man accused of masterminding the smuggling and trafficking of Rohingya migrants fleeing Myanmar has been jailed for 35 years, a court said on Thursday.

Thailand, Malaysia plan border wall to halt illegal flow of goods, people – 8 September 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/uk-thailand-south-malaysia-idUSKCN11E1HI>

Thailand and Malaysia will discuss plans to build a wall along their shared border, Thai officials said on Thursday, a day before Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak is set to meet his counterpart in Bangkok.

Thailand, Malaysia consider border wall to boost security – 10 September 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-thailand-malaysia-idUSKCN11F1OF>

The leaders of Thailand and Malaysia agreed on Friday to boost security cooperation and consider building a border wall to combat transnational crime and smuggling, an idea that appears to be gaining popularity elsewhere in the world.

MIDDLE EAST

TURKEY

Turkey to complete Syria border wall within 5 months, official says – 28 September 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-idUSKCN11Y1MB>

A concrete wall being built to stop illegal crossings along the length of Turkey's 900-km (560-mile) border with Syria will be finished by the end of February, an official at a Turkish state institution with knowledge of the project said on Wednesday.

EUROPE

GENERAL

Rescuers pull 1,725 migrants to safety from Mediterranean – 1 September 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-italy-idUSKCN1175XV>

Rescuers pulled 1,725 migrants to safety from boats in the Mediterranean on Thursday, Italy's coast guard said, as seaborne arrivals to Europe's southern shores keep climbing.

More migrants stuck in Balkans as nations fortify borders – 16 September 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-eu--europe-unwanted-migrants-20160916-story.html>

Now, countries across eastern and central Europe — spurred by Hungary's tough stance against refugees and migrants trying to cross into the country — are teaming up to make it even harder for people like Al Mansouri to come anywhere near the EU.

EU refugee policy marks progress, not success – 29 September 2016

<http://www.aljazeera.com/blogs/europe/2016/09/eu-refugee-policy-marks-progress-success-160928182559405.html>

More than six months since the EU-Turkey Deal to control refugee flows across the Aegean was signed, the European Commission is congratulating itself on a “steady delivery of results”.

FRANCE

For some 'Jungle' migrants, France isn't that bad after all – 13 September 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-calais-idUSKCN11J20I>

Afghan national Sajjad had dreamt of a new life in Britain, but the teenager is among a growing number of migrants holed up in a squalid camp in Calais to decide that France might not be such a bad second choice.

France to close Calais refugee camp and tells UK it must play its part – 26 September 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/26/calais-migrant-camp-must-go-by-end-of-year-francois-hollande>

The UK must make an effort to solve the refugee problem at Calais and across Europe, the French president, François Hollande, has said during a visit to the port town.

France nabs prosperous smuggler sneaking migrants to Britain – 29 September 2016

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/3080d4917e5e4a0196d797f72c1a26b5/france-nabs-prosperous-smuggler-sneaking-migrants-britain>

French authorities have arrested and convicted a top smuggler and his accomplice who had reigned over desperate migrants trying to sneak to Britain, earning 300,000 pounds (\$390,000) a month and hiding travelers amid onions to keep police off their trail.

GREECE

Greeks Appeal for Aid After Fire Damages Refugee Camp – 20 September 2016

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/21/world/europe/refugee-camp-greece-fire.html>

Thousands of people were left homeless after a fire tore through a refugee camp Monday night on the Aegean island of Lesbos, and the Greek authorities appealed on Tuesday to the European Union for more support in managing the migration crisis.

EU: Migrants to stay on Greek islands despite fire – 20 September 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-eu--europe-migrants-20160920-story.html>

Authorities on the island of Lesbos called for the immediate evacuation Tuesday of thousands of refugees to the Greek mainland after fires started by rioting residents gutted a detention camp. But European Union officials appeared cool to the idea.

Thousands flee fire at refugee camp on Greece's Lesbos – 20 September 2016

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/09/thousands-flee-fire-refugee-camp-greece-lesbos-160920034715543.html>

Thousands of people were forced to flee to safety on Monday after a fire, set on purpose according to police, tore through a refugee camp on the Greek island of Lesbos.

Lucky few leave Greece under refugee relocation plan – 26 September 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-eu--europe-migrants-familys-odyssey-20160926-story.html>

The group is among the very few accepted by a European country as part of a sputtering relocation program designed to relieve pressure on Greece and Italy, the main entry points for hundreds of thousands of people fleeing war and hoping for better lives in the European Union.

ITALY

Italy says 15 boat migrants died, 2,700 saved – 5 September 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-italy-idUSKCN11B18B>

Fifteen bodies were recovered and more than 2,700 boat migrants rescued off the coast of Libya on Monday, the Italian coastguard said, in another day of mass departures from north Africa.

Italy breaks up ring smuggling Syrian refugees to Western Europe – 6 September 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-arrests-italy-idUSKCN11C1P8>

Italian police said on Tuesday they had broken up a criminal network that smuggled mostly Syrian refugees across the Balkans to Western Europe.

Smuggling gangs hire Ukrainian sailors for 'luxury' migrant crossings – 7 September 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-italy-migrants-smuggling-idUSKCN11D219>

Human smuggling gangs are increasingly hiring Ukrainian sailors to captain yachts and other boats for migrants willing to pay up to \$8,000 for safe passage to Europe, Italian police said on Wednesday, after the arrest of two suspected traffickers.

Italy court clears accused people smugglers, says were forced to drive boats – 8 September 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-italy-smugglers-idUSKCN11E236>

An Italian judge acquitted two men accused of people smuggling and murder, saying they had been forced at gunpoint by Libyan traffickers to drive a rubber boat packed with migrants last year.

People-smuggling accused were forced to drive boat, says Italian judge – 8 September 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/08/people-smuggling-accused-were-forced-to-drive-boat-says-italian-judge>

An Italian judge has acquitted two men accused of people-smuggling and murder, saying they had been forced at gunpoint by Libyan traffickers to drive a rubber boat packed with migrants last year.

Italy Sets Trial for Suspected African Human-Smuggling Boss – 21 September 2016

<http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2016/09/21/world/europe/21reuters-europe-migrants-smuggler.html>

A Sicilian judge on Wednesday ordered a trial for an Eritrean man accused of running a people smuggling network that sent thousands of migrants to Europe and many to their deaths during dangerous sea voyages to the continent.

Eritrean accused of people-smuggling to face second trial in Italy – 21 September 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/21/eritrean-second-trial-italy-medhanie-berhe-mered-people-smuggler>

An Eritrean refugee accused of being the most influential people-smuggler in north Africa will face a second trial in Italy despite the failure of prosecutors to provide a single witness to testify against him during his initial prosecution.

SWEDEN

Sweden charges three over smuggling of 170 migrants through Europe – 23 September 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-sweden-smuggling-idUSKCN11T1QN>

Sweden has charged three men with organizing the smuggling of 170 migrants in minibuses from northern Italy across the EU's open-border zone to Scandinavia, prosecutors said on Friday.

UNITED KINGDOM

Derby man to be extradited over migrant smuggling probe – 15 September 2016

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-derbyshire-37376593>

A British-Iraqi man accused of smuggling hundreds of migrants into the UK is set to be extradited to France.