



## smuggling of migrants – global news april 2017

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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.

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### AFRICA

#### LIBYA

##### ***Italy-Libya accord to fight smugglers is 'dangerous fiction': aid groups – 3 April 2017***

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-italy-libya-idUSKBN1751PL>

An agreement between Italy and Libya to fight people-smuggling in the north African nation will lead to migrants being returned to camps where they are held against their will, extorted and abused, Doctors without Borders (MSF) said on Monday.

##### ***Libya coastguard clashes with suspected smugglers, four killed: spokesman – 6 April 2017***

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-libya-idUSKBN1781A3>

Four suspected migrant smugglers were killed in an exchange of fire with the Libyan coastguard off western Libya on Thursday, spokesman Ayoub Qassem said.

##### ***Migrants traded in 'slave markets' in Libya, U.N. agency says – 11 April 2017***

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-libya-idUSKBN17D1IB>

Growing numbers of African migrants passing through Libya are traded in what they call slave markets before being held for ransom, forced labor or sexual exploitation, the U.N. migration agency said on Tuesday.

##### ***IOM: African migrants traded in Libya's 'slave markets' – 12 April 2017***

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/04/iom-african-migrants-traded-libya-slave-markets-170411141809641.html>

Hundreds of African refugees and migrants passing through Libya are being bought and sold in modern-day slave markets before being held for ransom or used as forced labour or for sexual exploitation, survivors have told the UN's migration agency.

##### ***Libyan coast guard says 97 missing after migrant boat sinks – 13 April 2017***

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-ml--libya-migrants-20170413-story.html>

At least 97 African migrants are missing and believed drowned after their Europe-bound boat sank in the Mediterranean Sea on Thursday, the Libyan coast guard said.

NIGER

***Fewer migrants are crossing Niger for Libya: IOM – 21 April 2017***

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-niger-idUSKBN17N1EE>

The number of migrants crossing Niger to reach Libya has declined, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) said on Friday, after Europe pledged Niger money to help it fight people-smuggling.

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AMERICAS

CANADA

***Crown tells B.C. court accused Tamil migrant smugglers driven by profit, not aid – 18 April 2017***

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/british-columbia/crown-tells-bc-court-accused-tamil-migrant-smugglers-driven-by-profit-not-aid/article34743203/>

Four men who orchestrated a dangerous voyage across the Pacific were out to make a profit, rather than mutually help dozens of Tamil asylum seekers, the Crown prosecutor told their B.C. Supreme Court trial.

***Canada police charge woman with smuggling refugees from US – 19 April 2017***

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/0e4e1a82c8624158ba998f1262e0ecbb/canada-police-charge-woman-smuggling-refugees-us>

A woman has been charged with human smuggling after Canadian police last week intercepted a vehicle carrying nine refugee claimants who authorities believe crossed the border from the United States, officials said Wednesday.

***Canada police charge woman for smuggling asylum-seekers from U.S. – 19 April 2017***

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-immigration-canada-refugees-idUSKBN17L2ID>

Canadian police on Wednesday said they charged a woman with human smuggling offences in connection with the asylum seekers who have been streaming over the border from the United States in growing numbers in recent months.

***Asylum seekers crossing into Canada increase with warmer weather – 19 April 2017***

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-canada-asylumseekers-idUSKBN17M01T>

Canadian authorities caught 887 asylum seekers crossing unlawfully into Canada from the United States in March, nearly triple the number in January, according to numbers released by the government Wednesday.

***Self-preservation behind actions of accused Tamil migrant smugglers: lawyer – 19 April 2017***

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/british-columbia/self-preservation-behind-actions-of-accused-tamil-migrant-smugglers-lawyer/article34755465/>

Four men accused of smuggling dozens of Tamil migrants into Canada were simply part of the effort to get themselves and the rest of the asylum seekers across the Pacific Ocean, their lawyers told a court on Wednesday.

### ***RCMP charge Saskatchewan woman with human smuggling – 19 April 2017***

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/rcmp-charge-saskatchewan-women-with-human-smuggling/article34755045/>

A Saskatchewan woman has been charged with human smuggling after nine foreign nationals were intercepted crossing into Canada from the United States, shining a light on the predatory nature of the practice as illegal border crossings rise across Canada.

### ***RCMP stopped 887 asylum seekers from illegally entering Canada last month – 19 April 2017***

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/rcmp-stopped-887-asylum-seekers-from-illegally-entering-canada-last-month/article34754211/>

The number of people stopped by the RCMP after illegally entering Canada rose in March.

### ***Canadian Woman Caught Trying to Smuggle Asylum-Seekers Across the Border – 20 April 2017***

<http://time.com/4747574/canada-asylum-seekers-human-smuggling-michelle-omoruyi/?iid=sr-link4>

A Canadian woman faces charges of human smuggling after police intercepted nine asylum seekers near the U.S.-Canada border on Friday.

### ***Canadian woman faces human smuggling charges – 20 April 2017***

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-39646504>

A Saskatchewan woman has been charged with human smuggling following a months-long cross-border investigation.

### ***Canadian woman transporting asylum seekers charged with human smuggling – 20 April 2017***

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/apr/19/canada-woman-arrested-human-smuggling-asylum-seekers>

Police in Canada have charged a woman with human smuggling after intercepting nine asylum seekers from west Africa who crossed irregularly into the country from the US.

### ***Asylum seekers from US surge into Canada – 20 April 2017***

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/04/asylum-seekers-surge-canada-170420051255797.html>

Canadian authorities caught 887 asylum seekers crossing unlawfully into Canada from the United States in March, nearly three times the number in January.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

### ***US eyes more border prosecutions in shift for California – 14 April 2017***

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-us--border-courts-20170414-story.html>

Through Republican and Democratic presidential administrations, the top federal prosecutor on California's border with Mexico has resisted going after people caught entering the U.S. illegally on their first try and instead targeted smugglers and serial offenders.

**U.S. authorities charge Canadian man in connection with human smuggling investigation – 26 April 2017**

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/us-authorities-charge-canadian-man-in-connection-with-human-smuggling-investigation/article34824993/>

A Canadian man has been charged in the United States with harbouring and transporting an alien in connection with a human smuggling investigation.

**Canadian Sent to US Prison for Smuggling Immigrants in 1999 – 27 April 2017**

[http://staging.hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/U/US\\_IMMIGRANT\\_SMUGGLING?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-04-27-17-45-15](http://staging.hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/U/US_IMMIGRANT_SMUGGLING?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-04-27-17-45-15)

A Canadian man has been sentenced to 15 months in a U.S. prison nearly 20 years after he smuggled immigrants across the Detroit River.

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ASIA-PACIFIC

INDONESIA

**Indonesia foils smuggling of Somali refugees from Malaysia – 30 April 2017**

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2017/04/30/indonesia-foils-smuggling-of-somali-refugees-from-malaysia.html>

The Indonesian Navy has thwarted an attempt to smuggle eight Somali citizens using an Indonesian boat from Malaysia through Bagan Asahan waters in North Sumatra.

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MIDDLE EAST

SYRIA

**Syrian refugees must buy travel papers - from Assad – 26 April 2017**

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-raqqa-insight-idUSKBN17S0WF>

When Mohamed al-Khalaf escaped from Syria and won asylum in Luxembourg last year, his wife and children stayed behind in Raqqa, the hub of Islamic State's so-called Caliphate. Khalaf applied for his family to join him, exercising a right to family life under European law. But first, Luxembourg officials said, they must see the family's passports and a document, certified by President Bashar al-Assad's administration, to prove Khalaf's wife Ghufraan did not have a criminal record.

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EUROPE

GENERAL

**EU migration crisis: border agency accused of stirring controversy – 5 April 2017**

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/apr/05/eu-migration-crisis-frontex-people-traffickers>

A senior Italian minister has accused Frontex, the EU border agency, of creating a “misleading controversy” for political purposes after it accused aid groups such as Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) of colluding with migrant-traffickers.

### ***Almost 8,300 asylum seekers rescued in Mediterranean – 18 April 2017***

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/04/8300-asylum-seekers-rescued-mediterranean-170417155412020.html>

Nearly 8,300 asylum seekers were rescued from unseaworthy smugglers' boats in the Mediterranean over the Easter weekend, according to NGOs and rescue workers.

### ***Child refugees in Europe 'forced to sell bodies' to pay smugglers – 19 April 2017***

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/apr/18/child-refugees-in-europe-forced-to-sell-bodies-to-pay-smugglers>

Unaccompanied child refugees in Greece desperate to reach the UK and other parts of northern Europe are being forced to sell their bodies in order to pay smugglers to help them with their journeys, according to a new report from Harvard University.

### ***'Horrific' levels of child abuse in unsafe refugee camps, warns EU – 24 April 2017***

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/apr/24/eu-urgent-protection-23000-unaccompanied-child-refugees-squalid-camps-greece-italy>

Urgent action is needed to help at least 23,000 unaccompanied child refugees stranded in squalid and unsafe Greek and Italian refugee camps, an official EU audit has warned.

FRANCE

### ***Migrants injured in clashes among rival groups in France – 25 April 2017***

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-france-idUSKBN17R1KN>

Around 10 people were injured in clashes between rival migrant groups in the northern French port city of Calais, until recently a magnet for people trying to reach Britain, local authorities said on Tuesday.

GERMANY

### ***German police arrest two for alleged human smuggling – 25 April 2017***

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-germany-migrants-idUSKBN17R2CJ>

German police arrested two men on Tuesday and carried out 22 searches in a crackdown on human trafficking that authorities say helped illegally secure asylum approvals for at least 10 migrants, mostly from Iran.

GREECE

### ***Boat carrying migrants from Turkey to Greece sinks; 16 dead – 24 April 2017***

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/6-bodies-recovered-off-greek-island-of-lesbos-1-woman-saved/2017/04/24/ebe56d20-28d5-11e7-9081-f5405f56d3e4\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/6-bodies-recovered-off-greek-island-of-lesbos-1-woman-saved/2017/04/24/ebe56d20-28d5-11e7-9081-f5405f56d3e4_story.html)

A migrant boat sinking in the eastern Aegean between Greece and Turkey left at least 16 people dead, including two children, Greek authorities said Monday, while two people were rescued. Patrol boats and helicopters were searching for several more people believed missing.

ITALY

### ***Aid groups cut death toll from shipwreck off Libya – 1 April 2017***

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/03/aid-groups-cut-death-toll-shipwreck-libya-170331152145963.html>

Reports earlier this week that as many as 150 people drowned in the Mediterranean were wrong, aid organisations said on Friday.

### ***Italy plucks 2,000 migrants from the Mediterranean Sea – 15 April 2017***

<http://www.latimes.com/world/la-fg-italy-migrants-20170415-story.html>

Italian rescue ships have plucked some 2,000 migrants from unseaworthy smugglers' boats off the coast of Libya, with hundreds of them arriving Saturday in southern Italian ports.

### ***Calm seas, greedy smugglers: Italy saves over 6,000 migrants – 16 April 2017***

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-eu--italy-migrants-20170416-story.html>

Profit-hungry smugglers are taking advantage of calm seas off Libya to launch unseaworthy boats, crowded with migrants, toward Italy.

### ***Italy migrant crisis: Charities 'colluding' with smugglers – 23 April 2017***

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-39686239>

An Italian prosecutor says he has evidence some of the charities saving migrants in the Mediterranean Sea are colluding with people-smugglers.

### ***Italian minister says painting NGOs as migrant traffickers is a lie – 27 April 2017***

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-ngo-idUSKBN17T21G>

Italy's justice minister said on Thursday it was "a lie" to paint humanitarian ships saving migrants in the Mediterranean as criminals, responding to a Sicilian prosecutor who has repeatedly suggested some are colluding with Libyan smugglers.

SERBIA

### ***8 migrant smugglers arrested in Serbia – 19 April 2017***

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/ee05c9b7d1f648c293ca2ea082932ed1/8-migrant-smugglers-arrested-serbia>

Serbian police have arrested eight people suspected of smuggling migrants from the border with Bulgaria to the European Union.

SPAIN

### ***Spain saves 73 migrants from 5 boats crossing from Africa – 14 April 2017***

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-eu--europe-migrants-20170414-story.html>

Spanish rescue ships saved 73 migrants, including one pregnant woman, from five different smuggling boats trying to cross the sea from Africa to Europe during the previous 24 hours.