



smuggling of migrants — global news February 2018

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

About 90 Migrants Feared Dead After Boat Capsizes Near Libya – 2 February 2018

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/02/world/middleeast/migrants-dead-mediterranean.html>

The United Nations is investigating a sudden increase in Pakistani migrants trying to make the perilous sea crossing to Europe after a smuggler's boat foundered off the coast of Libya leaving 90 people feared drowned.

Migrant crisis: Scores feared drowned off Libyan coast – 2 February 2018

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/amp/world-africa-42915867?_twitter_impression=true

Ninety migrants are feared drowned after a boat capsized off the Libyan coast. Three survivors said most of those who drowned were Pakistani nationals. Libyans were also aboard.

90 people – most Pakistani – are feared dead as migrant boat capsizes off Libya on way to Europe – 3 February 2018

<http://www.scmp.com/news/world/europe/article/2131831/90-people-feared-dead-migrant-boat-capsizes-libya>

An estimated 90 migrants were feared to have drowned early Friday, leaving three known survivors and 10 bodies washed up on the Libyan shore.

Smugglers holding migrants feared drowned in Libya shipwreck: official – 7 February 2018

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-libya/smugglers-holding-migrants-feared-drowned-in-libya-shipwreck-official-idUSKBN1FR1Z1>

About 20 people feared to have drowned on a boat that sank off Libya were brought back to shore by smugglers and are being held at an unknown location.

Human smugglers in Libya have links to security services: U.N. report – 8 February 2018

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-libya-un/human-smugglers-in-libya-have-links-to-security-services-u-n-report-idUSKBN1FR3BQ>

Most armed groups involved in human smuggling and trafficking in Libya have links to the country's official security institutions. People smugglers operating with impunity in Libya have sent hundreds of thousands of migrants to Europe, mainly Italy, by sea since 2014.

More than 300 migrants intercepted in boats off Libya: coastguard – 20 February 2018

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-libya/more-than-300-migrants-intercepted-in-boats-off-libya-coastguard-idUSKCN1G31XJ>

The Libyan coastguard said 324 migrants were picked up trying to leave the North African country on board two rubber boats. Libya's western coastline is the main departure point for migrants attempting to reach Europe by sea to seek better lives. Most are from sub-Saharan Africa, though recently more Tunisians and Libyans have been trying to cross.

Tragedy at Sea 3,000 Miles Away Resonates in Pakistani Village – 27 February 2018

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/27/world/asia/pakistan-libya-migrants-capsize.html>

A boat smuggling migrants to Italy capsized off the coast of Libya this month. Roughly 90 drowned with the majority of the migrants hailing from Pakistan.

MOROCCO

Bodies of 16 migrants recovered off Morocco coast – 4 February 2018

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2018/02/04/bodies-of-16-migrants-recovered-off-morocco-coast.html>

Moroccan rescue services have recovered the bodies of 16 migrants off the coast of Spain's enclave of Melilla.

AMERICAS

GENERAL

Smugglers Inc.: A voyage through the fraught, life-changing and totally routine \$35 billion human-smuggling business – 15 February 2018

<http://time.com/smugglers-inc/?iid=sr-link6>

An informative account of Doña Katia and her involvement in the smuggling of persons throughout Central America.

COLOMBIA

'Migrate or die': Venezuelans flood into Colombia despite crackdown – 26 February 2018

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-colombia-venezuela-migrants/migrate-or-die-venezuelans-flood-into-colombia-despite-crackdown-idUSKCN1GA1K9>

There are more than 1 million Venezuelans who have fled to Colombia, many illegally, hoping to escape grinding poverty, rising violence and shortages of food and medicine in their once-prosperous, oil exporting nation.

EUROPE

GENERAL

Pressure on EU's southern borders from African migrants seen persisting in 2018 – 21 February 2018

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-eu-frontex/pressure-on-eus-southern-borders-from-african-migrants-seen-persisting-in-2018-idUSKCN1G42AK>

The European Union's southern borders in the Mediterranean will remain under heavy pressure from African migrants trying to reach Europe this year. Nearly 119,000 Africans were caught trying to get to

the EU last year on smugglers' boats departing from Libya, more than 42,000 from Turkey to Greece and another 23,000 heading from Algeria and Morocco to Spain.

ITALY

How Italy's interior minister tackles illegal migration – 1 February 2018

<https://www.economist.com/news/europe/21736177-left-has-answer-too-how-italys-interior-minister-tackles-illegal-migration>

In the first half of 2017 a sharp rise in maritime migration from Libya spooked Europeans, still recovering from the refugee crisis of 2015-16. But crossings fell by 70% after Mr Minniti stepped in as Interior Minister of Italy.

SPAIN

Father of boy smuggled into Spain in a suitcase walks free – 21 February 2018-03-13

<http://www.straitstimes.com/world/europe/father-of-boy-smuggled-into-spain-in-a-suitcase-walks-free>

A Spanish court allowed an Ivory Coast man to walk free, with only a small fine to pay, after his son was found crammed into a suitcase at a border crossing.

UNITED KINGDOM

Channel migrant boat rescue: Man charged – 1 February 2018

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-42910421>

A man has been charged with people smuggling offences after nine people were rescued from an inflatable boat in the English Channel.

People smuggling raids: 21 arrests made across England – 6 February 2018

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/amp/uk-england-42959485>

Raids have taken place across England in an operation to tackle people smuggling involving suspected Kurdish gangsters. The National Crime Agency (NCA) said 350 officers were involved in the raids in Middlesbrough, Hartlepool, Stockton, Newcastle, Hastings and London.

People smuggling raids: 19 men and two women released while inquiry continues – 9 February 2018

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-43004274>

Twenty-one people arrested on suspicion of human trafficking have been released while inquiries continue. More than 350 officers from the National Crime Agency (NCA) and police carried out the raids in Middlesbrough, Hartlepool, Stockton, Newcastle, Hastings and London

Duo jailed for Hayling Island Ukrainian people smuggling – 21 February 2018

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-hampshire-43143979>

A former ballet dancer and a chef have been jailed for attempting to smuggle six Ukrainians into the UK on a yacht. Vladyslav Kurtoglu and Dmytro Kruiik were caught when their yacht was intercepted in Hampshire in May 2017.