



smuggling of migrants – global news

March 2015

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 provides in these news items.

AMERICAS

MEXICO

Mexico Raided Migrant Train 153 Times in Last Year – 3 March 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/03/03/world/americas/ap-lt-mexico-immigration.html>

Mexican authorities said Tuesday they staged 153 raids over the last year on a train known as "La Bestia" that rolled toward the U.S. border crowded with hundreds of Central American migrants.

UNITED STATES

1 Month Prison for Businessman in Smuggling of Dodgers' Puig – 6 March 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/03/06/us/ap-bbn-dodgers-puig-smugglers.html>

A businessman who helped Los Angeles Dodgers star Yasiel Puig get out of Cuba to sign a rich American baseball contract was sentenced Friday to a month in prison and five months' house arrest for violating U.S. immigration laws.

Florida man sentenced for smuggling LA Dodgers' Yasiel Puig out of Cuba – 6 March 2015

<http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/mar/06/florida-gilberto-suarez-sentenced-smuggling-dodgers-yasiel-puig-cuba>

A south Florida businessman has been sentenced to a month in prison plus five months' house arrest for his role in smuggling Los Angeles Dodgers star Yasiel Puig out of Cuba.

Los Angeles police officer charged with immigrant smuggling – 16 March 2015

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/chi-la-police-officer-charged-with-immigrant-smuggling-20150316-story.html>

A Los Angeles police officer has been charged with smuggling a Mexican man into the country in the trunk of an SUV.

ASIA-PACIFIC

CHINA

Police shot dead two Uygur women before railway knife attack in Guangzhou – 15 March 2015

<http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1737984/police-shot-dead-two-uygur-women-railway-knife-attack-report-say>

On February 28, police arrested six suspects in a smuggling operation in Macau, according to the statement. It also described a raid on March 2 conducted by mainland and Macau police that saw Liang Jinsheng, a 41-year-old suspected human smuggler from Zhongshan, and 45-year-old Wumaier Maihamuti from Xinjiang arrested with nine other suspects.

MALAYSIA

Malaysia considers border fencing to deter human trafficking – 12 March 2015

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/03/12/malaysia-considers-border-fencing-deter-human-trafficking.html>

Erecting security fences totalling 2,666km along the nation's borders is being considered as a measure to stop smuggling and people trafficking.

THAILAND

Uighur Migrants Held in Thailand for 11 Months Take Case to Court – 3 March 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2015/03/03/world/asia/03reuters-thailand-china-uighurs.html>

A Thai court will decide this month whether to release 17 Uighurs from the western Chinese region of Xinjiang, including 13 children, who have been detained for the past 11 months in Bangkok, a lawyer for the group said on Tuesday.

Thailand Detains 76 Migrants Found on Train, Including Rohingya – 30 March 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2015/03/30/world/asia/30reuters-thailand-migrants.html>

Thai authorities said on Monday they had found a group of 76 migrants from neighboring Myanmar, including six suspected Rohingya, in a sign that one of Asia's busiest smuggling routes is still thriving despite Bangkok's vow to stamp out trafficking.

EUROPE

GENERAL

EU criticised over Syrian refugees policy – 4 March 2015

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/02/eu-criticised-syrian-refugees-policy-150223081057026.html>

Legal access must be offered to refugees escaping persecution if EU wants to end human smuggling, say rights activists.

Europe Swamped With Crush of Migrants Arriving by Land, Sea – 5 March 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/03/05/world/europe/ap-eu-europe-migration.html>

The European Union is immersed in a full-fledged migration crisis. Some officials are even floating the idea of a multinational border guard to deal with the hundreds of thousands arriving from war-torn countries like Syria, poor nations in Africa and non-EU neighbors like Kosovo.

Joint Law Enforcement Action to Tackle People Smuggling Network in Greece – 17 March 2015

<https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/joint-law-enforcement-action-tackle-people-smuggling-network-greece>

On 10-11 March 2015, Greek law enforcement authorities, with the support of Europol, dismantled an organised criminal group suspected of facilitating the entry of irregular migrants - mainly Syrian nationals - into Greece from Turkey via maritime routes.

Joint Operational Team Launched to Combat Irregular Migration in the Mediterranean – 17 March 2015

<https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/joint-operational-team-launched-combat-irregular-migration-mediterranean>

The influx of migrants via the Mediterranean Sea has been exponentially rising, with 220 000 migrants crossing in 2014. Apart from putting intense immigration pressure on countries such as Greece and Italy, before the migrants arrive they have often taken very risky journeys across the Mediterranean to get there.

Major People Trafficking Ring Smashed in Greece: Europol – 17 March 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2015/03/17/world/europe/17reuters-europol-greece-migrants.html>

Police raids across Greece last week smashed an international people trafficking ring that made \$8 million in profit from smuggling Syrian migrants into Europe, and 16 suspects were arrested, officials said on Tuesday.

EU Police Group Launches Team to Tackle Migrant Smugglers – 17 March 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/03/17/world/europe/ap-eu-europol-migration.html>

The European Union police agency launched a new team Tuesday to crack down on the organized crime gangs that smuggle tens of thousands of migrants across the Mediterranean from North Africa to Europe.

EU steps up war on people-traffickers in Mediterranean – 17 March 2015

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-31923143>

The EU police agency Europol has set up a new team to break people-smuggling gangs who send migrants on perilous voyages across the Mediterranean.

ICE Signs Agreement to Join Europol's Efforts to Target People Smuggling – 24 March 2015

https://www.europol.europa.eu/latest_news/ice-signs-agreement-join-europol%E2%80%99s-efforts-target-people-smuggling

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Director Sarah R. Saldaña travelled to The Hague this week to sign an agreement to join Europol's Focal Point Checkpoint, which targets people smuggling networks.

World's Huddled Masses Use 4 Key Land, Sea Routes to Europe – 28 March 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/03/28/world/europe/ap-eu-migrants-journey-to-europe-key-routes.html>

Most migrants who live illegally in the European Union fly to the 28-nation bloc on valid visas and simply overstay their welcome. But for the poorest and most desperate travellers of Africa, Asia and the Middle East, the journey often takes months by sea or land, with payments to trafficking gangs.

ITALY

Italy Resumes Navy Exercise Amid New Tensions Over Libya – 1 March 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/03/01/world/europe/ap-eu-italy-mediterranean-navy-exercise.html>

The Italian Navy is resuming exercises in the Mediterranean Sea, including near the coast of Libya, amid concerns about rapidly deteriorating security in the North African nation.

Migrants Risk Death to Escape War and Get to Europe – 3 March 2015

<http://time.com/3729809/libya-italy-migration/>

Driven out of his home by poison gas, Mohammed will take any risk to start a new life.

KOSOVO

Pan-European Operation Dismantles Migrant Smuggling Network with 77 Arrests – 27 March 2015

<https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/pan-european-operation-dismantles-migrant-smuggling-network-77-arrests>

With the support of Europol and Eurojust and nearly 400 law enforcement officers, 77 individuals suspected of large-scale irregular migrant smuggling from Kosovo to the EU have been arrested in Austria, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Slovakia and Kosovo.

Police Make 77 Arrests in Europe-Wide People Trafficking Crackdown – 25 March 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2015/03/25/world/europe/25reuters-europe-migrants-trafficking.html>

A large criminal gang smuggling migrants from Kosovo across the European Union's porous south-eastern border and onwards into Western Europe has been broken up, the EU's policing agency said on Wednesday.

Dozens Arrested in Raids to Stem Illegal Influx of Kosovars – 25 March 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/26/world/europe/raids-against-kosovo-smuggling-network.html>

The police in seven countries, trying to stanch the mass migration of Kosovars through Serbia and into the European Union, arrested 77 people accused of running a smuggling operation, the European authorities said on Wednesday.