Project funded by the European Union

IOM LIBYA

MIGRANT REPORT ROUND 50

OCT - DECEMBER 2023

This publication was made possible through support provided by the European Union. The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

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This publication was issued without formal editing by IOM.

This publication was issued without IOM Publications Unit (PUB) approval for adherence to IOM's brand and style standards.

This publication was issued without IOM Research Unit (RES) endorsement.

Cover photo: *In March 2022, to celebrate National Children's and Mothers' Day in Libya, IOM organised a series of educational activities in Tripoli for 31 migrants from Morocco, Nigeria, Palestine and Sudan. © Majdi EL NAKUA / IOM 2022.*

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KEY FINDINGS

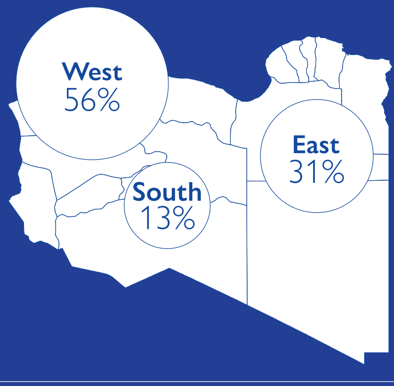
ROUND 50 (OCT - DECEMBER 2023)

DTM DISPLACEMENT TRACKING MATRIX

706,509

migrants were identified by DTM Libya during round 50 of data collection (October - December 2023). Around eight in ten (78%) were adult males, 11 per cent adult females, and 11 per cent were children (among whom 4% were unaccompanied).

LOCATION



UNEMPLOYMENT

16%

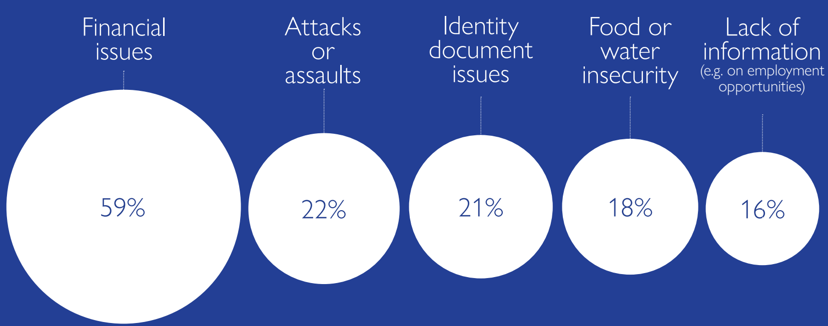
of migrants interviewed between October and December 2023 stated that they were unemployed and actively seeking work — a rate that has continued to decrease compared to the previous round of data collection and stands on par with that of pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels (17%) for only the second time in a year and a half (April 2022).

The percentage of female migrants who were unemployed and actively seeking work (49%) was more than three times the rate among males (14%) in line with a persistent trend.

A greater percentage of migrants from the Middle East (27%) and sub-Saharan Africa (18%) were unemployed compared to those from North Africa (12%) or Asia (7%).

WHAT ARE THE THREE MAIN DIFFICULTIES MIGRANTS ARE FACING?

(multiple-choice question)

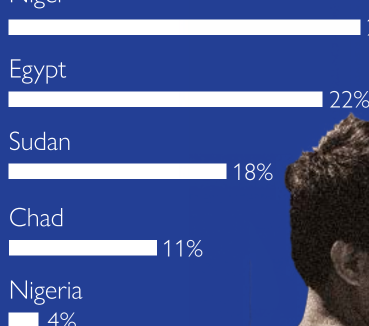


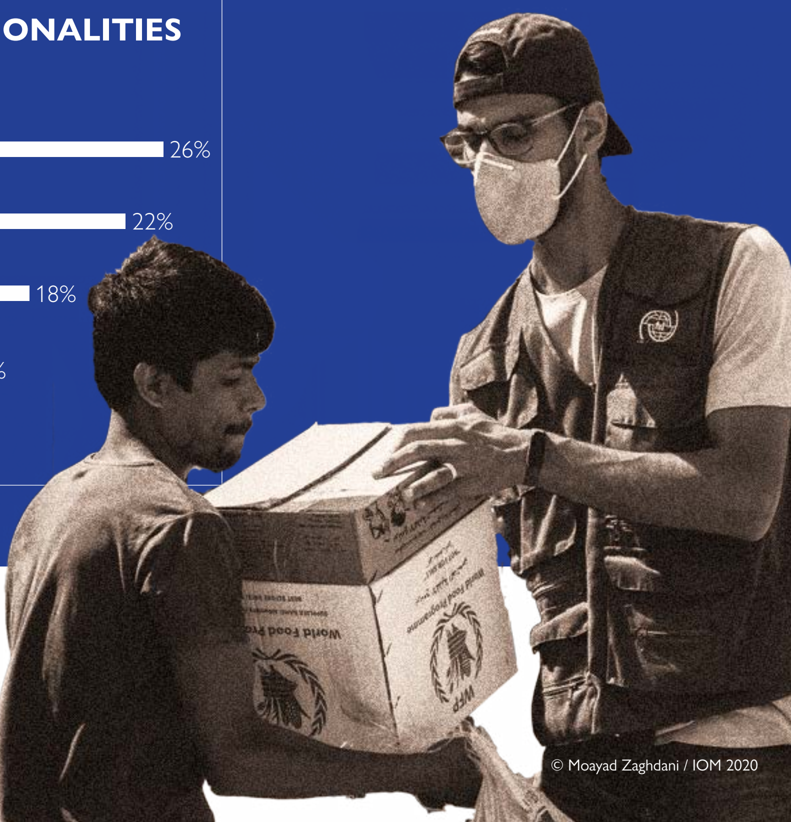
ACCESS TO EDUCATION

61%

of migrants with children between the ages of 5 - 18 mentioned that they lacked access to school, mainly due to financial barriers as well as a lack of documentation. A minority of migrants interviewed by DTM Libya reported being in Libya with their children (8%).

TOP 5 NATIONALITIES





IOM UN MIGRATION

2023 IN REVIEW

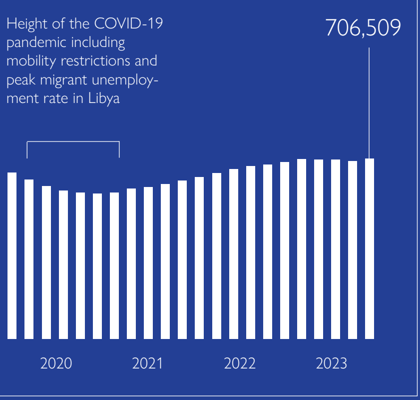
TRENDS & KEY STATS

NUMBER OF MIGRANTS IN LIBYA

After having declined slightly at the beginning of 2023, the number of migrants in December 2023 (706,509) stands on par with that of the start of the year (706,472).

Previously, in 2020 the number of migrants had declined as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and its socioeconomic impact and since 2021 had been on the rise.

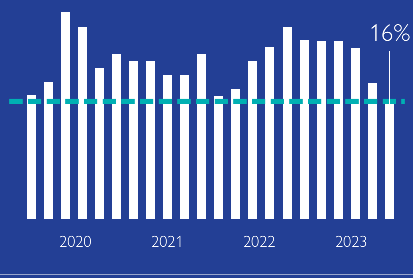
Number of migrants in Libya 2020 - 2023



EMPLOYMENT

The unemployment rate among migrants in Libya has been declining since the second half of 2023 boosted by an economy which the World Bank qualifies as resilient and that is forecasted to continue growing in 2024. This follows a year characterised by low and volatile economic growth and rising food, housing and electricity prices during which around a quarter of migrants were unemployed.

Migrant unemployment rate in Libya 2020 - 2023

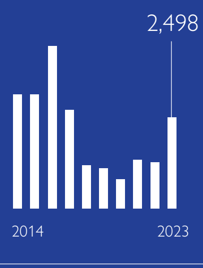


CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN ROUTE

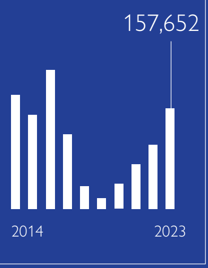
The number of deaths and disappearances on the Central Mediterranean route (CMR) has increased in 2023 compared to the previous five years and stood at 2,498 — a 76 per cent increase compared to 2022.

In 2023, a total of 157,652 individuals arrived in Italy from Tunisia (62%), Libya (33%) and Türkiye (5%).

Number of deaths and disappearances 2014 - 2023



Number of arrivals to Italy 2017 - 2023



KEY EVENTS

APRIL

CLASHES ERUPT IN SUDAN

DTM Libya activates its emergency tracking activities in Alkufra. Libyan authorities order the deployment of reinforcements in the south-east and south-west areas along the country's borders with Chad and Sudan.

MAY

WAVE OF COLLECTIVE EXPULSIONS

Beginning in May, a countrywide wave of arrests and collective expulsions of migrants sweeps in western and eastern Libya.

JULY

COUP D'ÉTAT IN NIGER

Niger's borders are momentarily and partially closed. Niger shares borders with Nigeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Algeria, Chad and Libya.

AUGUST

HEIGHTENED SECURITY PRESENCE AT BORDERS

Libyan authorities maintain a heightened presence along its south-western borders with Chad and Niger.

SEPTEMBER

STORM DANIEL

A total of 3,500 migrants were displaced by the storm, the majority of whom (98%) were originally living in the municipality of Derna at the time of the disaster. The bulk of migrants displaced by storm Daniel were Egyptians (82%) and concentrated in the municipalities of Albayda (44%), Derna (41%) and Tobruk (7%).

NOVEMBER

REPEAL OF MIGRANT SMUGGLING LAW IN NIGER

Niger revoked a 2015 law that criminalised migrant smuggling which coupled with an increase in controls in western Libya had previously led to a decrease in the number of migrants reaching Libya via Niger.

OVERVIEW

IOM Libya's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) programme identified a total of 706,509 migrants from 45 nationalities in the 100 Libyan municipalities during round 50 of data collection (October - December 2023).

The number of migrants in Libya increased slightly compared to the previous round of data collection (from 697,532 migrants, round 49 to 706,509 migrants, round 50) and for the first time since the beginning of 2023 when there were 706,472 migrants (round 46, January - February 2023).

According to DTM Libya's field team a slight increase in incoming flows from Niger to Libya was observed in December compared to November while at the same time a decrease in outgoing flows from Libya to Niger was noted. In addition to being a country of destination and origin, Niger, which shares borders with seven countries, including Libya, is a country of transit for migrants from Western Africa, including those travelling north towards Libya (and Algeria). Around two fifths of migrants (41%) came from, or had transited through Niger on their way to Libya between January and September 2023.

Previous studies have shown that the period between October and December is one of the three main windows during which migrants travel to Libya for seasonal work. In 2022, for instance, DTM Niger noted an increase in the outgoing flux of individuals traveling to Libya (and Algeria) in both November and December corresponding to a surge of migrants seeking economic opportunities after the end of the rainy season and harvest in their countries of origin.

In addition, in November, the leaders of the July 2023 coup d'état in Niger overturned the 2015 law criminalising migrant smuggling in the country, which coupled with an increase in security controls in western Libya had previously led to a decrease in the number of migrants reaching Libya via Niger.

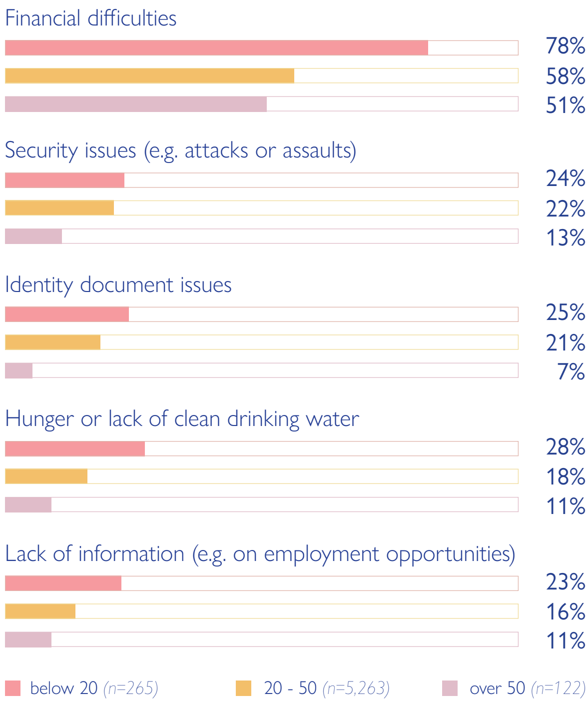
Previously, after having been increasing from the beginning of 2021 up until February 2023, the number of migrants in Libya had been decreasing slightly due to a combination of factors including a wave of arrests and collective expulsions that began in May, an increased security presence at Libya's borders as well as the momentary partial closure of Niger borders in July following the coup d'état. In 2020, the number of migrants had declined as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and its socioeconomic impact.

Labour market

In line with the previous round of data collection the migrant unemployment rate (16%) remains on par with pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels (17%). According to the World Bank, the Libyan economy rose by 14 per cent in 2023 — the largest increase in the Middle East and North Africa region — and is expected to continue growing by over four per cent in both 2024 and 2025. Based on DTM Libya field reports, there has been an increase in the number of economic opportunities available to migrants in some municipalities, particularly where the security situation has been relatively stable and where there has been an improvement in the reliability of the electricity network.

Despite improvement in the overall migrant unemployment rate, around half of female migrants continue to be unemployed and actively seeking work (49%) — more than three times the percentage of males (14%). At the same time, financial issues continue to be the main difficulties faced by the majority of migrants, regardless of sex or age (Fig 1). DTM Libya data further shows that economic constraints are the main obstacle impeding migrants' access to essential services including healthcare, clean drinking water and education for their children.

Figure 1: Main three difficulties faced by migrants by age group (multiple-choice question)



Employment sectors

Nearly half of migrants (47%) interviewed by DTM Libya between September and December were employed in the field of construction, in jobs including labourer (with or without specific skills), carpenter and electrician (Fig 2). The fields of construction, manufacturing and to a lesser extent agriculture, account for the sectors with the highest risks of injuries and fatal accidents. The majority of those employed as agricultural (83%), construction (73%) or manufacturing workers (70%) mentioned having limited or no access to healthcare services in Libya.

Employment conditions

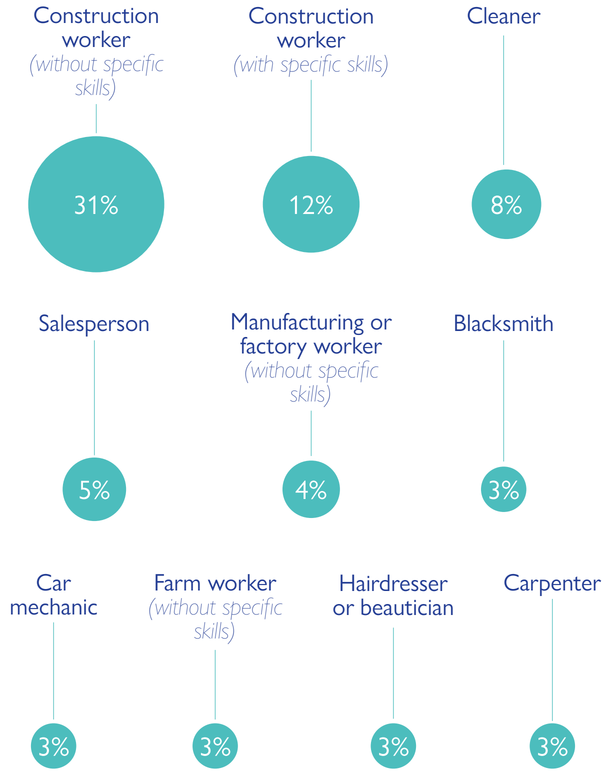
Migrants' working conditions continue to be characterised by non-standard or temporary work agreements with nearly half of migrants being employed on a short-term or casual basis (e.g. daily-wage workers) (48%) and only a minority (2%) in possession of a written and signed employment contract. More than half of migrants cited job insecurity as the main risk they face on the labour market (52%). Other challenges that migrants reported included employers paying lower wages than agreed (39%), verbal abuse (38%) and withheld wages (23%). A greater proportion of female migrants mentioned that withheld wages was an issue (36%) compared to males (23%) while employers paying less than agreed was identified by a greater percentage of males (39%) than females (28%).

Age, employment and working conditions

Overall, a greater proportion of migrants aged less than 20 were unemployed and actively seeking employment compared to other age groups. Employers paying less than agreed was the main issue highlighted by the majority of migrants aged 20 or less (65%) while a lack of job security was the top challenge for those aged 21 or over (53%). A greater proportion of migrants below the age of 20 were employed on a short term or casual basis (70%) compared to those over 21 (48%).

Age has been identified in some cases as a risk factor as younger and older people tend to be relatively more vulnerable than those between the ages of 20 and 50 because of a range of factors, including household structure and dynamics. For example, a greater proportion of migrants over the age of 50 mentioned that their remittances was the primary source of income of their household in their country of origin (70%) compared to those aged 20 - 50 (49%) or below 20 (18%) potentially pointing to the heightened financial dependency of family members among older migrants.

Figure 2: Top 10 jobs held by migrants interviewed by DTM Libya between October and December 2023



Age can also be a risk factor as younger or older people may be less well-informed (e.g. about how to best advocate for themselves). DTM Libya data shows that a greater percentage of migrants below the age of 20 identified a lack of information (e.g. on employment opportunities) (23%) as one of the three main difficulties they faced compared to those aged 20 - 50 (16%) and over 50 (11%).

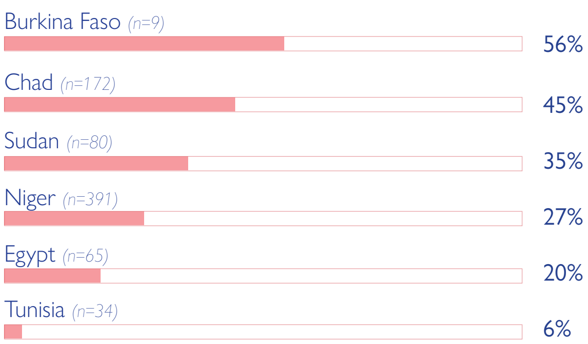
Environment and climate change

Nearly a third of migrants (32%) who reported having been employed in the agricultural sector in their country of origin mentioned having experienced the loss of crops or livestock due to environmental factors (e.g. droughts, floods). DTM data shows that a greater proportion of migrants who had suffered from a loss of agricultural production mentioned facing financial difficulties in Libya (65%) compared to the rest of migrants (58%), highlighting that climate change is exacerbating pre-existing vulnerabilities prior to migrating as well as in Libya.

Overall a quarter of male migrants (28%) and six per cent of female migrants interviewed between October and December who were employed in their country of origin worked in the agricultural, fishery and forestry sectors.

According to the World Meteorological Organization, climate change is causing a decline in agricultural productivity through the increased frequency of more extreme weather and climate events. In eastern Africa, including Sudan, Eritrea and Ethiopia, for instance, according to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) unpredictable rainfall and insecurity is keeping 2023 cereal production below-average levels. Furthermore, in Niger, FAO is forecasting crop losses in parts of Burkina Faso and Chad due to below-average rainfall. A greater percentage of migrants from Burkina Faso (56%), Chad (45%), Sudan (35%) and Niger (27%) reported the loss of agricultural production due to environmental factors compared to those from Egypt (20%) or Tunisia (6%) (Fig 3).

Figure 3: Percentage of migrants who reported having experienced the loss of agricultural production or livestock due to environmental factors (e.g. drought, floods)



Geographical patterns and trends

Nearly eight in ten migrants in Libya (77%) were nationals from neighbouring countries: Niger (26%), Egypt (22%), Sudan (18%) and Chad (11%), highlighting the influence of geographical proximity and diasporic ties as significant factors influencing migration patterns to Libya (Fig 4).

In line with previous rounds of data collection the bulk of migrants identified by DTM Libya during round 50 (October - December 2023) were from sub-Saharan Africa (50%) or North Africa (41%) while a minority were from the Middle East (5%) or Asia (4%) (Fig 5).

In line with previous reports, the largest migrant populations identified by DTM during round 50 of data collection were located in the coastal regions of Tripoli (16%), Benghazi (11%), Misrata (11%), Ejdabia (7%), Almargeb (7%) and Azzawya (7%) (Fig 6). The coastal area is home to the majority of urban settlements and crop land, while the rest of Libya (more than 95% of the total area) is mainly desertic or arid areas.

Figure 4: Proportion of migrants by nationality

Nationality	Number of migrants	% migrants
Niger	183,706	26%
Egypt	158,625	22%
Sudan	125,363	18%
Chad	81,078	11%
Nigeria	31,163	4%
Syrian Arab Republic	26,548	4%
Bangladesh	21,258	3%
Ghana	13,414	2%
Mali	12,907	2%
Other	7,054	1%
Palestine	6,725	1%
Tunisia	5,867	1%
Pakistan	5,852	1%
Burkina Faso	4,676	1%
Senegal	3,354	0.5%
South Sudan	3,221	0.5%
Eritrea	2,962	0.4%
Mauritania	2,419	0.3%
Côte d'Ivoire	2,320	0.3%
Unknown	1,963	0.3%
Morocco	1,924	0.3%
Somalia	1,667	0.2%
Cameroon	1,223	0.2%
Guinea	1,220	0.2%
Total for Libya	**706,509**	**100%**

Figure 5: Regions of origin of migrants

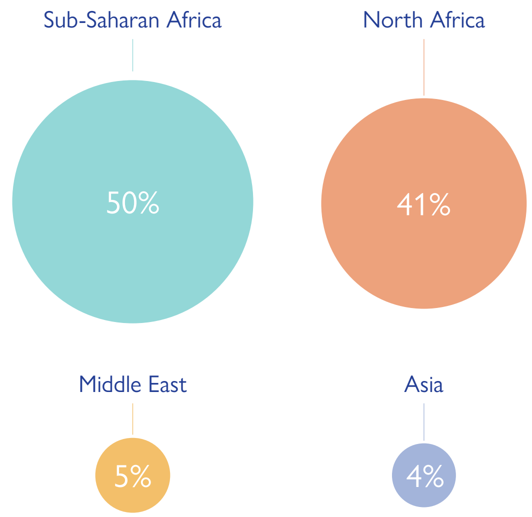
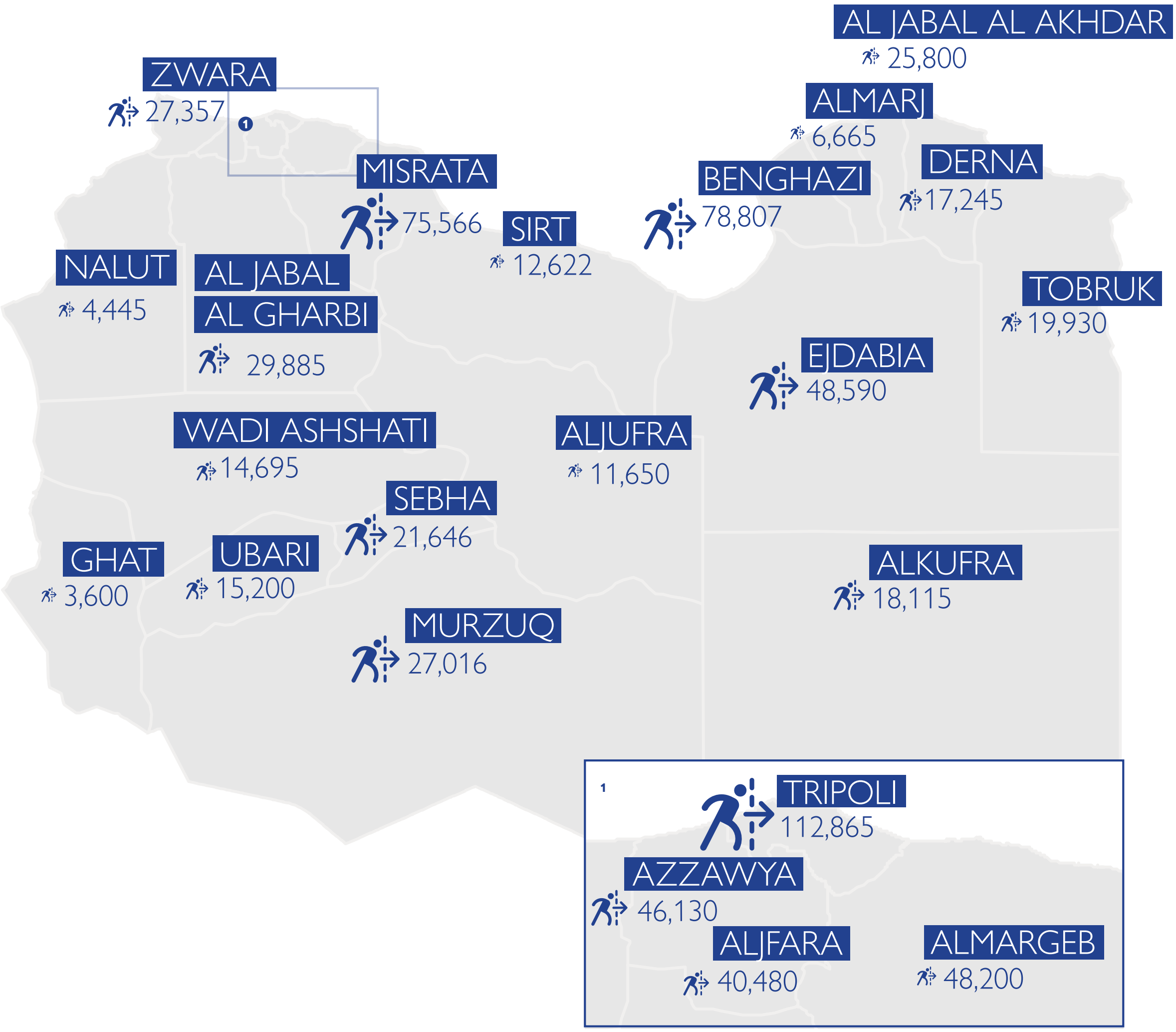


Figure 6: Number of migrants per region (mantika) during DTM round 50 of data collection



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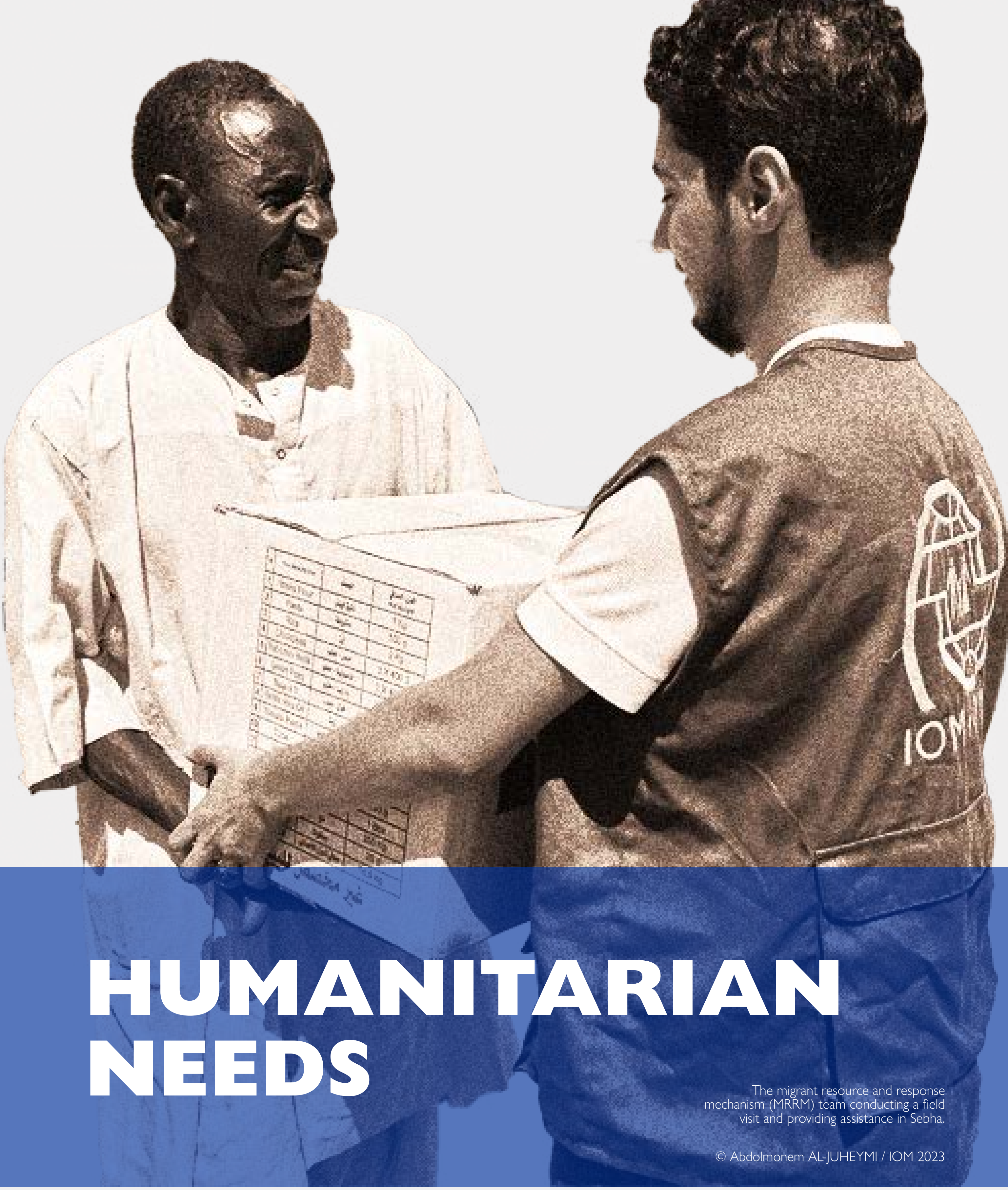


HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

The migrant resource and response mechanism (MRRM) team conducting a field visit and providing assistance in Sebha.

MIGRANT VULNERABILITIES AND HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

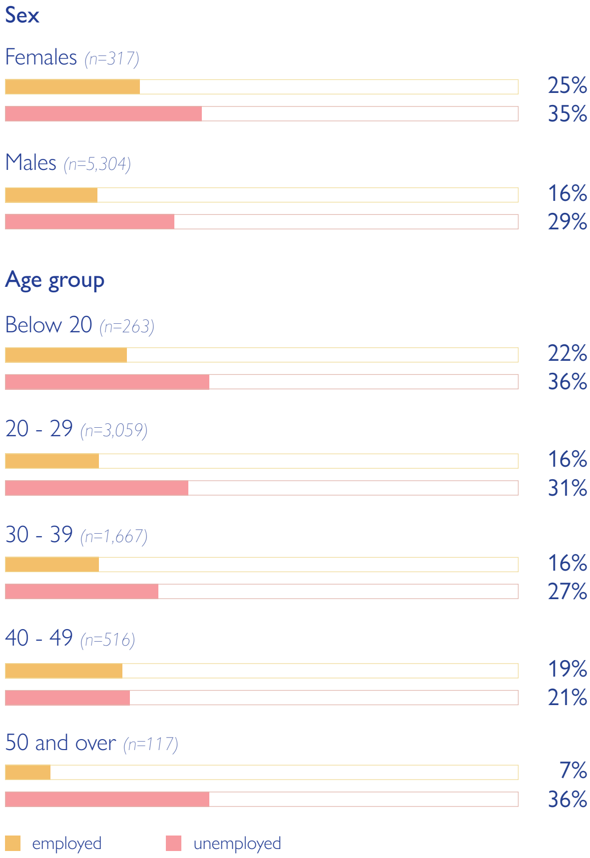
To better understand migrant vulnerabilities and humanitarian needs, DTM conducted 5,882 individual interviews with migrants in Libya between October and December 2023. The thematic findings presented in this section rely largely on these interviews.

In parallel, interviews conducted by DTM Libya with 2,240 key informants across Libya between October and December 2023 highlighted that the main needs of migrants were related to healthcare (80%), housing (54%), non-food items (NFIs) (50%) and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) (24%).

According to key informants, the high costs of food, clean drinking water, accommodation, essential non-food items and healthcare was the main issue affecting migrants' ability to fulfill their basic needs. These findings are further corroborated by the results of individual interviews with migrants that showed that around three in five migrants (59%) continue to report that financial difficulties are among the three main challenges they faced.

The cost of essential items, such as food, which remains high, according to the World Food Programme, is a source of concern for many migrants. Nearly one in five migrants (18%) reported that a lack of food or clean drinking water was among the three main difficulties they faced — a rate that was higher among those who are unemployed regardless of sex or age (Fig 7).

Figure 7: Percentage of migrants who reported that hunger or a lack of clean drinking water was one of the three main difficulties they faced by sex, age and employment status



Access to water, sanitation and hygiene

Interviews conducted by DTM Libya between October and December 2023 show that nearly one in five migrants (16%) continue to face insufficient access to clean drinking water. Female migrants (31%), those who are unemployed (29%), and those below 20 years of age (22%) reported lacking clean drinking water to a greater extent than males (15%), those above 20 years of age (15%) and those who were employed (13%) (Fig 8).

According to key informants the lack of access to the water network is the main obstacle to migrants' adequate access to clean drinking water. Individual interviews with migrants highlighted that 18 per cent had rare or no access to the public water network. A greater percentage of female (23%) than male migrants (17%) suffered from rare or no access to the public water network.

Figure 8: Percentage of migrants who reported lacking access to sufficient clean drinking water

In addition to the lack of availability of the public water network, key informants highlighted that the high cost of water, sanitation and hygiene products and the lack of waste management or disposal system at the local level were affecting migrants' wellbeing.

Overall, more than half of migrants (55%) reported having to use a communal toilet shared with more than 6 other individuals. A higher percentage of migrants from sub-Saharan Africa (66%) than those from North Africa (36%), Asia (28%) or the Middle East (8%) cited having to use a communal toilet shared with more than six individuals. Access to adequate and safe sanitation facilities is essential to human health and dignity.

Access to healthcare

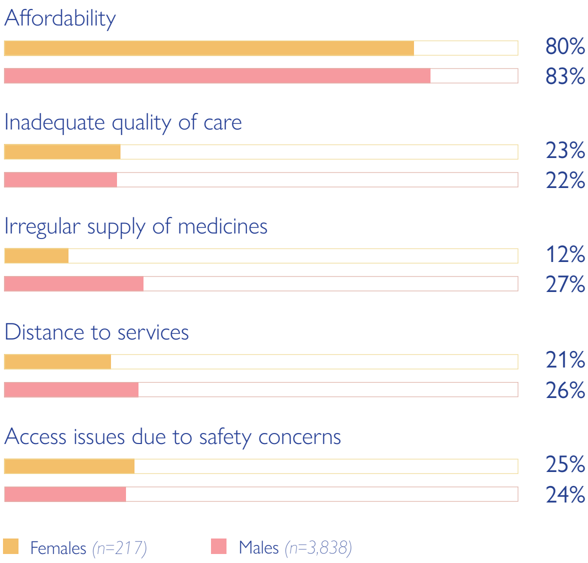
In southern and western Libya, the percentages of migrants who report having rare or no access to healthcare services in Libya (77% and 74% respectively) continue to be twice as much as that of eastern Libya (33%).

More than five times as many migrants who were unemployed mentioned lacking access to healthcare in Libya (29%) compared to those who were employed (6%), confirming that the cost of services is the main barrier to accessing healthcare in Libya for the majority of migrants (82%). Other obstacles migrants reported facing when accessing healthcare in Libya included the irregular supply of medicines (26%), the distance to reach services (24%), the inadequate quality of care (21%), and the lack of safe access (21%).

Consistent with the previous round of data collection, more than twice as many females (20%) reported that they lacked access to healthcare compared to male migrants (8%). For both males and females, however, the main issue was the cost of services. Echoing these findings, a 2018 World Bank survey among randomly selected patients found that 20 per cent of respondents had foregone treatment because of costs.

A greater proportion of females identified issues with the quality of care while more males than females cited deficiencies in the supply of medicines (Fig 9) as the main reasons for their inability to access the services they needed. A 2018 World Bank report highlighted that due to a range of factors including inadequate procurement, storing and handling practices there were severe shortages of medicines across the Libyan public healthcare facilities. Moreover, a survey of patient experience highlighted some gaps in the quality of care due to high patient loads because of staff shortages, for example.

Figure 9: Main barriers migrants who have limited or no access to healthcare services reported facing by sex



Accommodation

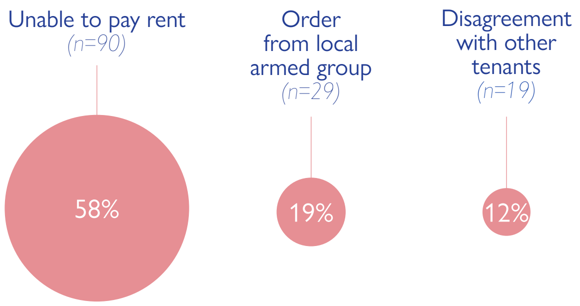
According to key informants, more than four in five migrants (82%) lived in rented accommodation either paid for by themselves (69%), their employer (8%) or others (5%). Migrants interviewed paid on average USD 28 per month for rent but the monthly average ranged from USD 1 to USD 900.

A total of 15 per cent of migrants, based on key informants, were housed in their workplaces. A DTM Libya study has previously highlighted that a greater proportion of migrants who were residing in either their workplaces or in collective accommodation were living in overcrowded accommodation of which the structural quality was substandard.

Overall, a total of three per cent of migrants interviewed by DTM Libya between October and December 2023 reported having been evicted (1%) or threatened with eviction in the past three months (2%). This percentage was slightly higher among migrants from the Middle East (6%) compared to those from sub-Sahara Africa (3%), North Africa (2%), or Asia (<1%). A total of nine per cent of female migrants surveyed mentioned having either been evicted (5%), or threatened with eviction (4%) compared to two per cent of males (1% were evicted and 1% were threatened with eviction). A higher share of migrants staying with host families (relatives or not) (7%) and those living in informal settings (e.g. makeshift shelters) (36%) reported having been evicted or threatened with eviction than those living in rented accommodation (2%). Overall, key informants estimated that around one per cent of migrants lived in informal settings.

According to migrants interviewed, the main reason for eviction or threat thereof was the inability to pay rent (58%) (Fig 10). This perception is corroborated by the data that confirms that twice as many unemployed migrants (4%) were evicted or threatened compared to those who were employed (2%). Other reasons for eviction or threat thereof included direct orders from local armed groups (19%) or disagreement with other tenants or neighbours (12%).

Figure 10: Top three reasons cited by migrants to explain their eviction or threat thereof



Migrants reported that the majority of evictions were reportedly carried out by landlords themselves (69%) and in a minority of cases by armed groups (10%) or host families (10%).

Based on a DTM Libya study, it is estimated that nearly all migrants have undocumented rental lease agreement, which means they can be more vulnerable to forced eviction and other threats, such as arbitrary rent increases or inadequate housing maintenance on the part of the landlord.

Access to education

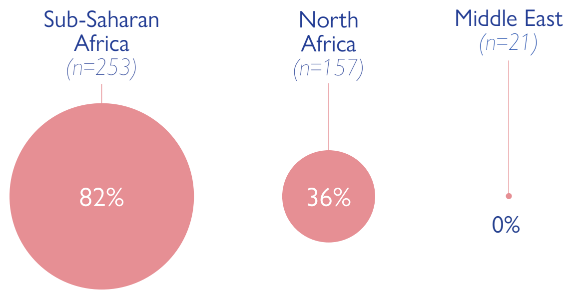
While only a minority of migrants (8%) interviewed by DTM between October and December 2023 reported having family members aged between 5 and 18 in Libya, the majority (61%) mentioned that they were without access to school.

In line with previous reports, the main obstacle for migrant children to access school was related to financial issues (81%). Corroborating these findings, the data also shows that more than twice as many migrants who were employed mentioned that their children could access school (43%) compared to those who were unemployed (16%).

Other barriers to accessing education included a lack of documentation (79%), problems related to social isolation and participation in the local community (62%) and the language barrier (59%). More migrants from the Middle East (100%) than those from North Africa (64%) or sub-Saharan Africa (18%) reported that their children could go to school in Libya (Fig 11). Social isolation and the language barrier were more commonly cited by migrants from sub-Saharan Africa compared to those from North Africa, for whom a lack of documents and financial constraints were the main obstacles (Fig 12).

In addition to being a barrier to accessing education, socioeconomic disparities have also been linked to lower educational performance and attainment, potentially affecting longer-term life outcomes.

Figure 11: Percentage of migrants who reported that their children had no access to school by region where they were surveyed*



*No respondents from Asia mentioned having school-aged children in Libya.

Figure 12: Main issues hindering migrants' ability to send their children to school by region of origin (multiple-choice question) (n=246)

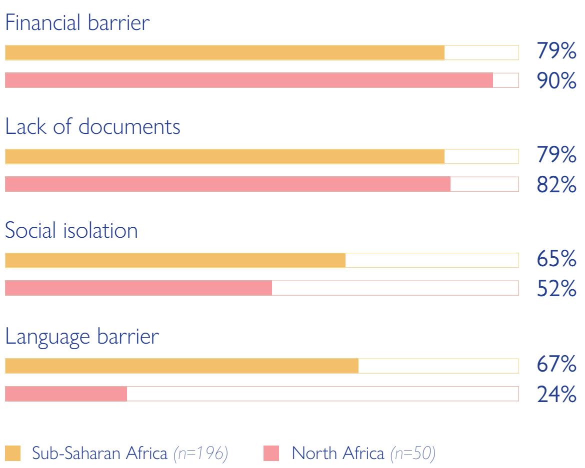
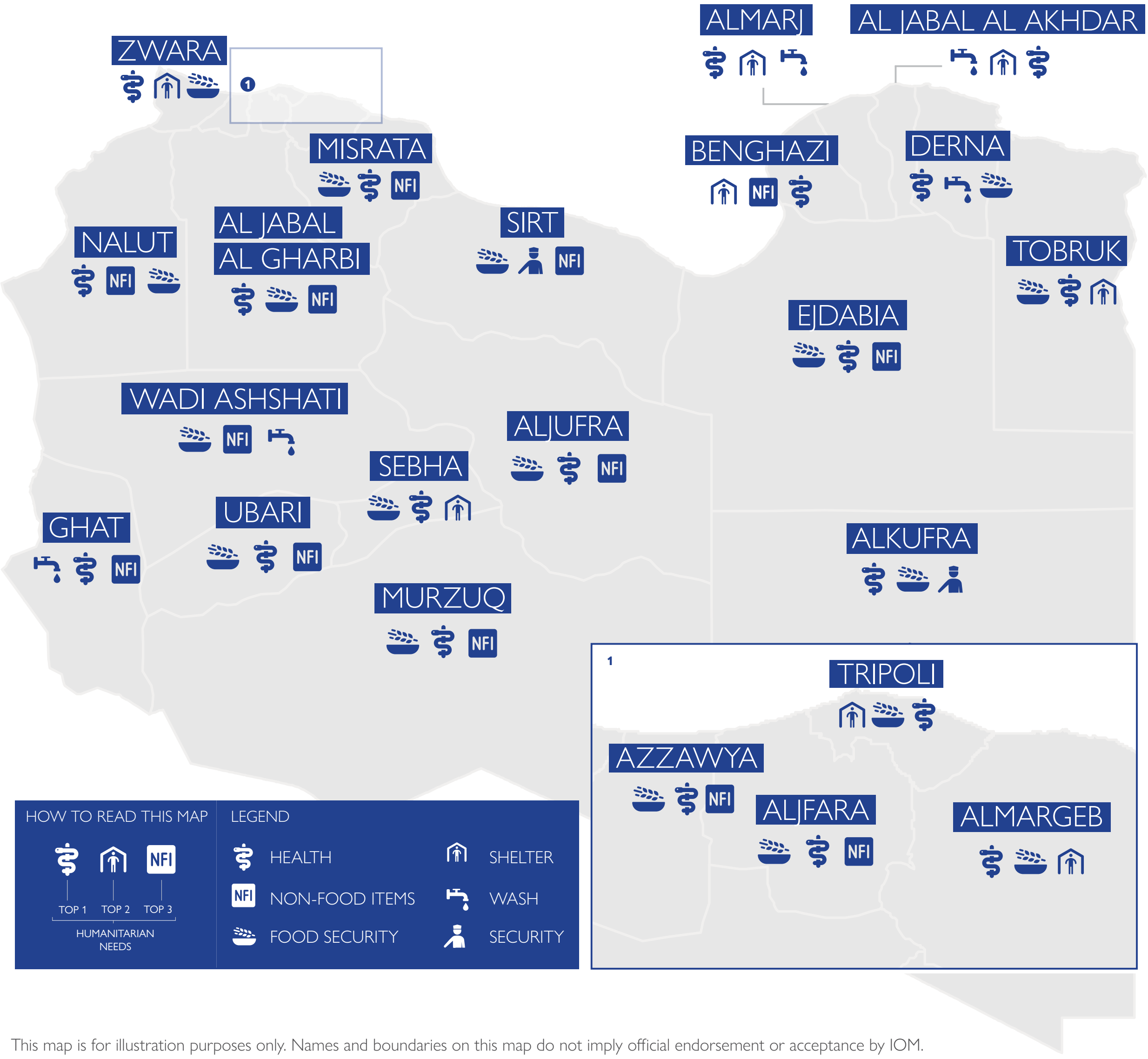


Figure 13: Humanitarian priority needs of migrants per region (mantika)



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MIGRATION FLOWS

In May 2021, in the run up to World Day for Cultural Diversity, IOM Libya facilitated a workshop during which 58 migrants were given the opportunity to share about their journey to Libya.

MIGRATION ROUTES TO LIBYA

This section maps the major migration routes that migrants from different countries of origin used to reach Libya. This analysis is based on 29,916 individual quantitative migrant interviews conducted throughout 2023 at key locations including transit points throughout Libya.

Between January and December 2023, aside from a small number of migrants entering via Tunisia (4%) and Algeria (<2%), the largest shares of migrants had transited through Niger (41%), Egypt (20%), Sudan (14%) and Chad (13%) before arriving to Libya.

Around nine in ten migrants (86%) continue to report that economic reasons such as the search for job opportunities abroad or insufficient income in the country of origin were the primary motivation of their migration to Libya. A greater proportion of female migrants mentioned security issues (e.g. war or conflict in their country of origin) (22%) compared to male migrants (8%) as the top driver behind their migration.

A larger share of migrants from the Middle East (39%) and North Africa (including Sudan) (14%) cited security related reasons (e.g. war or conflict) as the primary motivation behind their migration to Libya compared to those from sub-Saharan Africa (5%) or Asia (3%).

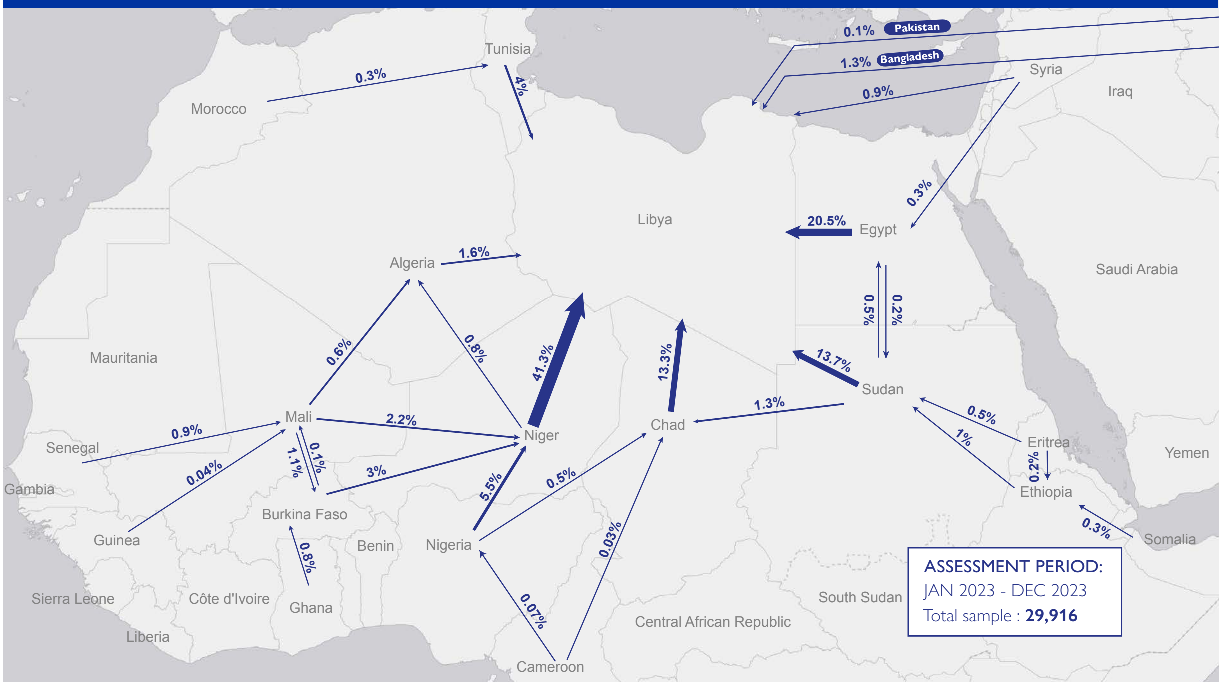
Migrants paid on average 752 USD for their journey to Libya. Although the price paid by migrants varied greatly based on the route and means of transportation taken, the biggest expense for the majority of migrants (70%) was the cost of migration facilitators. Migrants used the services of migration facilitators mainly for support with transportation (95%) or to help them cross difficult areas along the route (52%), and to a lesser extent for the provision of food and water (20%), information (19%), housing (14%), security (13%) and documents (4%).

Around two thirds of migrants (65%) reported having paid for their journey to Libya with their savings and around two in five (45%) mentioned having incurred debt to finance their migration.

Figure 14: Major migration routes reported by migrants interviewed via DTM Flow Monitoring Surveys (FMS)

How to read this map

The percentages shown along each route segment on the map below represent the percentage of migrants who reported having travelled along each route. For example, around two in five migrants in Libya reported having arrived directly from or transited through Niger, including almost all migrants from Niger and those from Burkina Faso, Ghana, and Nigeria.



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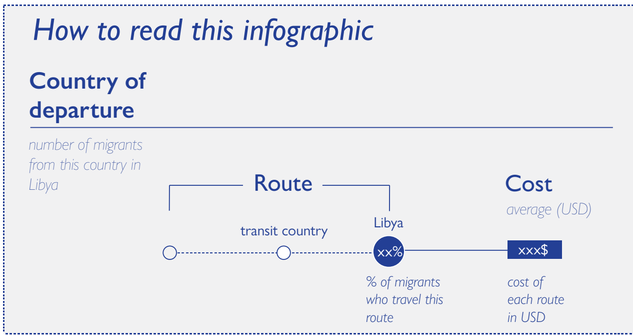
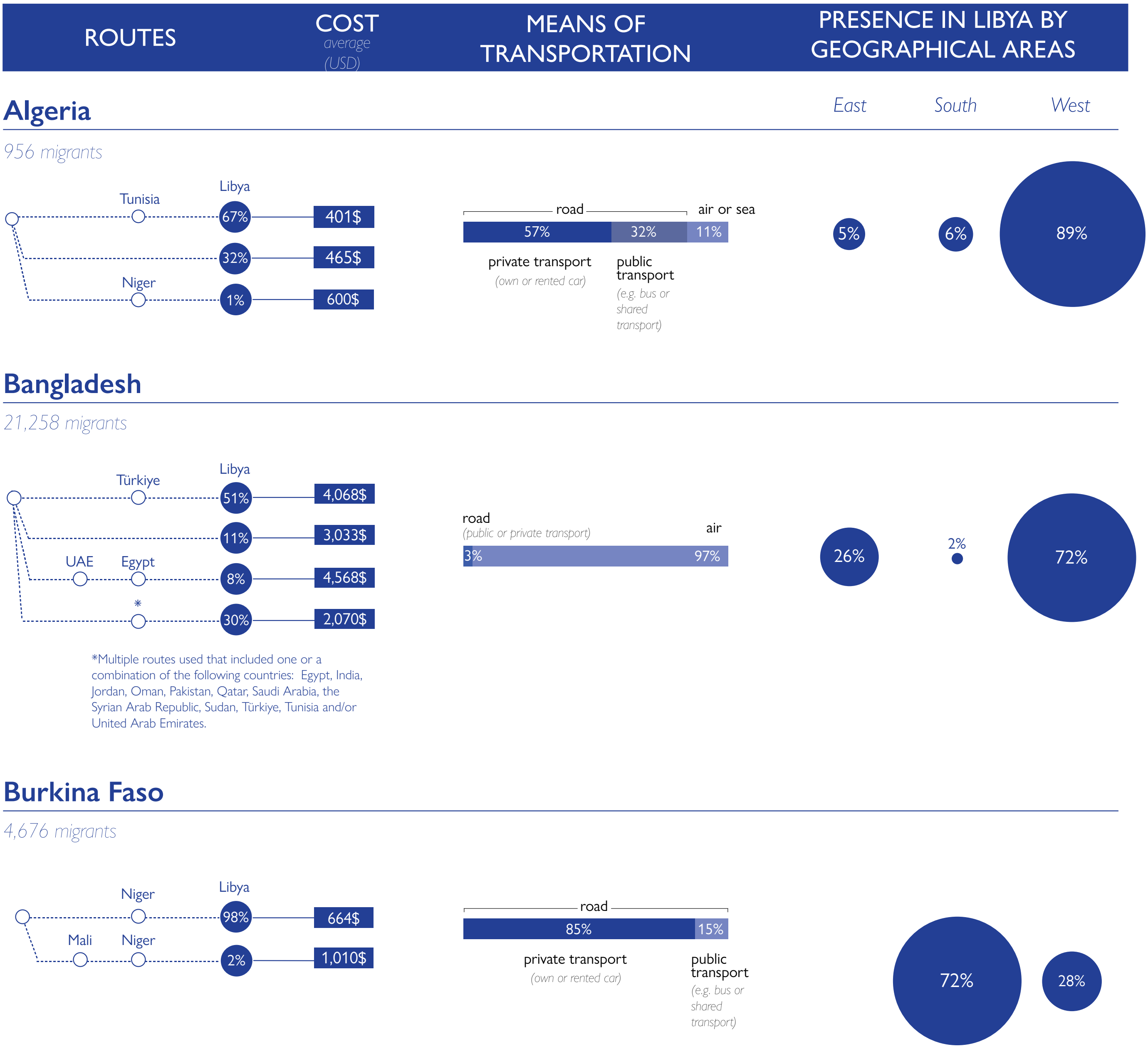
N.b. Around two per cent of respondents reported having arrived directly or indirectly to Libya via other countries including the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Türkiye, Saudi Arabia and Togo.

MIGRATION ROUTES: ANALYSIS AND TRENDS

This section outlines the different routes taken by migrants (i.e. through which countries they transit before reaching Libya) and the percentage of migrants who use these routes by country of origin drawing on data collected by DTM Libya over the period January - December 2023.

This table also includes the average cost of each route, the means of transportation migrants use and the total number of migrants from each country as well as their geographical distribution by regions of Libya (i.e. where individual interviews occurred).





ROUTES	COST average (USD)	MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION	PRESENCE IN LIBYA BY GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS

Chad

81,024 migrants

Libya	99%	617$
Niger – Libya	1%	2,454$

Means of transportation: road – private transport 76%, public transport 23%; Air or foot 1%

Presence in Libya: East 12% · South 9% · West 79%

Egypt

158,583 migrants

Libya	99%	1,010$
Sudan – Libya	<1%	3,005$
*	<1%	2,046$

*Multiple routes used that included one or a combination of the following countries: Chad, Sudan, Tunisia, Türkiye, the Syrian Arab Republic and/or the United Arab Emirates.

Means of transportation: road – private transport (own or rented car) 42%, public transport (e.g. bus or shared transport) 24%; air 28%; foot 6%

Presence in Libya: East 42% · South 4% · West 54%

Mali

12,907 migrants

Niger – Libya	65%	1,179$
Burkina Faso – Niger – Libya	19%	672$
Algeria – Libya	14%	990$
*	2%	679$

*Multiple routes used including via one or a combination of the following countries: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Niger, Nigeria, Tunisia and/or Senegal.

Means of transportation: road – private transport (own or rented car) 72%, public transport (e.g. bus or shared transport) 27%; foot 1%

Presence in Libya: East 3% · South 51% · West 46%

Niger

183,698 migrants

Libya	96%	572$
Algeria – Libya	2%	443$
Nigeria – Chad – Libya	1%	496$
*	1%	567$

*Multiple routes used including via one or a combination of the following countries: Chad, Egypt, Mali, Nigeria, Sudan and/or Tunisia.

Means of transportation: road – private transport (own or rented car) 75%, public transport (e.g. bus or shared transport) 25%

Presence in Libya: East 1% · South 33% · West 66%

ROUTES	COST average (USD)	MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION	PRESENCE IN LIBYA BY GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS

Nigeria

31,163 migrants

Route	Share	Cost average (USD)
Niger – Libya	90%	951$
Chad – Libya	4%	1,467$
* – Libya	6%	765$

*Multiple routes used that included one or a combination of the following countries: Algeria, Chad, Mali, Niger, Tunisia and/or Sudan.

Means of transportation:

road		air or other
66% private transport (own or rented car)	31% public transport (e.g. bus or shared transport)	2%

East	South	West
3%	32%	65%

Sudan

125,327 migrants

Route	Share	Cost average (USD)
Libya	88%	883$
Chad – Libya	8%	537$
* – Libya	4%	825$

*Multiple routes used that included one or more of the following countries: Chad, Egypt, Niger, Sudan, Tunisia and/or Türkiye.

Means of transportation:

road		air	foot
68% private transport (own or rented car)	22% public transport (e.g. bus or shared transport)	8%	2%

East	South	West
29%	11%	60%

Tunisia

5,867 migrants

Route	Share	Cost average (USD)
Libya	100%	262$

Means of transportation:

road		air
29% public transport (e.g. bus or shared transport)	23% private transport (own or rented car)	48%

East	South	West
3%	1%	96%

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

A woman taking a picture of a discussion on the challenges that migrant women face organised by IOM Libya to celebrate International Women's Day in Sebha.

REGIONAL ANALYSIS - DISTRIBUTION

In line with the previous round of data collection, key informant interviews conducted by DTM Libya in October, November and December 2023 revealed that over half of migrants were located in the west (56%), while a minority were in the east (31%) or the south (13%) (Fig 15).

Consistent with previous reports, the majority of migrants (59%) were located in the coastal regions of Tripoli (16%), Benghazi (11%), Misrata (11%), Ejdabia (7%), Almargeb (7%) and Azzawya (7%) (Fig 14).

Based on key informants interviewed between October and December 2023 seven in ten migrants (71%) lived in urban settings while less than a third (29%) resided in rural areas. Similarly, it is estimated that the majority of the Libyan population (81%) [lives in urban areas](), mainly [concentrated]() in the major urban centres along the Mediterranean, such as Tripoli, Misrata and Benghazi.

Figure 15: Distribution of migrants by geographical area

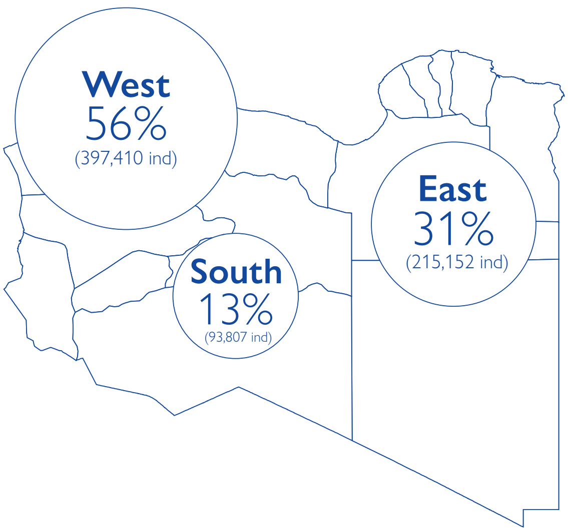


Figure 16: Migrants in Libya by region (mantika) (based on mobility tracking data)

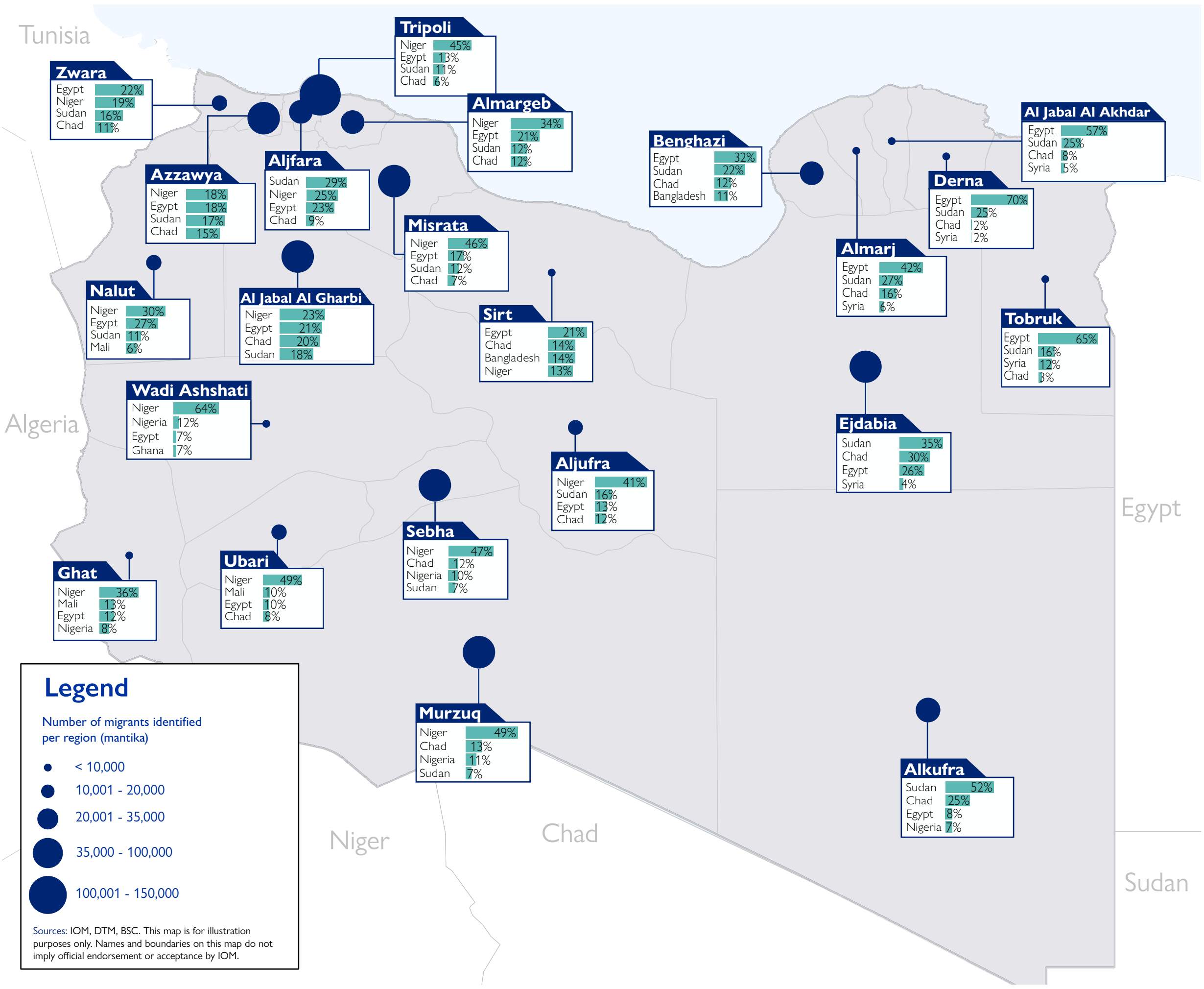
Mantika (region)	Number of migrants	% by region
Tripoli	112,865	16%
Benghazi	78,807	11%
Misrata	75,566	11%
Ejdabia	48,590	7%
Almargeb	48,200	7%
Azzawya	46,130	7%
Aljfara	40,480	6%
Al Jabal Al Gharbi	29,885	4%
Zwara	27,357	4%
Murzuq	27,016	4%
Al Jabal Al Akhdar	25,800	4%
Sebha	21,646	3%
Tobruk	19,930	3%
Alkufra	18,115	3%
Derna	17,245	2%
Ubari	15,200	2%
Wadi Ashshati	14,695	2%
Sirt	12,622	2%
Aljufra	11,650	2%
Almarj	6,665	1%
Nalut	4,445	1%
Ghat	3,600	1%
Total for Libya	**706,509**	**100%**

REGIONAL ANALYSIS: NATIONALITIES OF MIGRANTS

The map below (Fig 17) shows the top four nationalities of migrants by region based on data collected by DTM Libya between October and December 2023.

This map highlights the influence of historical, socioeconomic, ethnic and cultural ties that developed through the circular migration of populations from bordering countries, particularly Niger, Egypt, Sudan and Chad. For example, migrants from neighbouring Niger and Chad were the most-represented nationalities in the southern and western regions of Murzuq and Sebha. Sudanese and Chadians represented the majority of migrants in the region of Alkufra, which is the main entry point for migrants traveling to Libya particularly those coming from or transiting through Chad and Sudan. Similarly, migrants from Egypt constituted the largest shares of migrants in the eastern coastal regions of Libya, such as Al Jabal Al Akhdar, Derna, Almarj, Tobruk and Benghazi.

Figure 17: Map of top 4 migrant nationalities per region (mantika)



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REGION OF ORIGIN ANALYSIS

Based on key informant interviews conducted between October and December 2023 and in line with previous reports, migrants from North African countries (including Egypt and Sudan) continue to account for two thirds of migrants in eastern Libya (66%) while migrants from sub-Saharan African countries (such as Niger and Chad) represent the bulk of migrants in southern and western Libya (85% and 57%, respectively). The complete disaggregation of migrants' region of origins by regional location (mantika) in Libya is shown in the table below (Fig 18).

Figure 18: Migrants' region of origin by region in Libya

Region (mantika)		Migrants from Asia & Middle East		Migrants from sub-Saharan Africa		Migrants from North Africa	
EAST	Al Jabal Al Akhdar	2,006	7%	2,390	6%	21,394	15%
	Alkufra	307	1%	6,993	16%	10,815	8%
	Almarj	584	2%	1,452	3%	4,629	3%
	Benghazi	20,187	67%	15,667	37%	42,953	30%
	Derna	322	1%	400	1%	16,523	12%
	Ejdabia	3,435	11%	14,800	35%	29,855	21%
	Tobruk	3,077	10%	682	2%	16,171	11%
Eastern Libya total		**29,918**	**14%**	**42,384**	**20%**	**142,340**	**66%**
SOUTH	Aljufra	-	-	8,269	10%	3,381	26%
	Ghat	-	-	2,759	3%	841	6%
	Murzuq	319	27%	24,181	30%	2,516	19%
	Sebha	620	52%	19,102	24%	1,924	15%
	Ubari	182	15%	12,143	15%	2,875	22%
	Wadi Ashshati	77	6%	13,112	16%	1,506	12%
Southern Libya total		**1,198**	**1%**	**79,566**	**85%**	**13,043**	**14%**
WEST	Al Jabal al Gharbi	1,026	3%	16,239	7%	12,602	9%
	Aljfara	741	2%	18,343	8%	21,346	16%
	Almargeb	2,860	9%	29,098	13%	16,242	12%
	Azzawya	1,514	5%	26,847	12%	17,769	13%
	Misrata	6,411	21%	45,006	20%	24,149	18%
	Nalut	200	1%	2,176	1%	2,052	1%
	Sirt	4,280	14%	4,042	2%	4,233	3%
	Tripoli	12,557	42%	71,803	31%	27,171	20%
	Zwara	659	2%	14,890	7%	11,788	9%
Western Libya total		**30,248**	**8%**	**228,444**	**57%**	**137,352**	**35%**
Total for Libya		**61,364**	**9%**	**350,394**	**50%**	**292,735**	**41%**

Note: 2,016 migrants from other minority nationalities (including those whose nationalities could not be established) are not included in the table above.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Niger and Chad are the first and second most represented nationality from sub-Saharan Africa in Libya (52% and 23%, respectively) (Fig 19 and 20). In line with a trend that began in March 2023, the number of migrants from sub-Saharan Africa (350,394 individuals) has remained relatively stable compared to the previous five rounds of data collection and stands slightly above the number of migrants identified by DTM Libya during the corresponding reporting period in 2022 (340,057 individuals, round 45, November - December 2022)

Overall, half of migrants (50%) identified by DTM in Libya between October and December were from sub-Saharan Africa.

A slightly higher percentage of migrants from sub-Saharan Africa (18%) than those from North Africa (12%) or Asia (7%) stated being unemployed in Libya. Two sub-Saharan African migrants in five (41%) mentioned sending money home to their family in their country of origin compared to around half of those from North Africa (51%) and Asia (48%). For over half of migrants from sub-Saharan Africa (56%) remittances were their family's primary source of income.

Figure 20: Number of migrants from countries of origin in sub-Saharan Africa (top 6 nationalities)

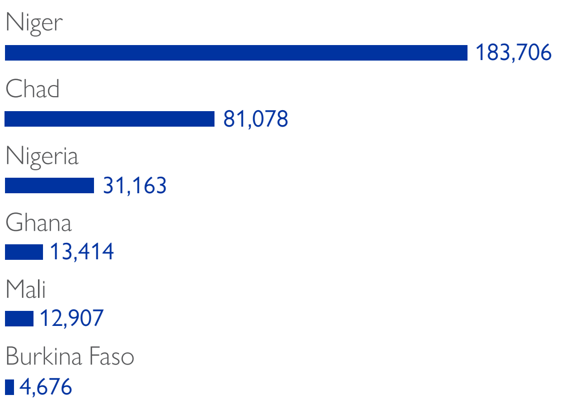
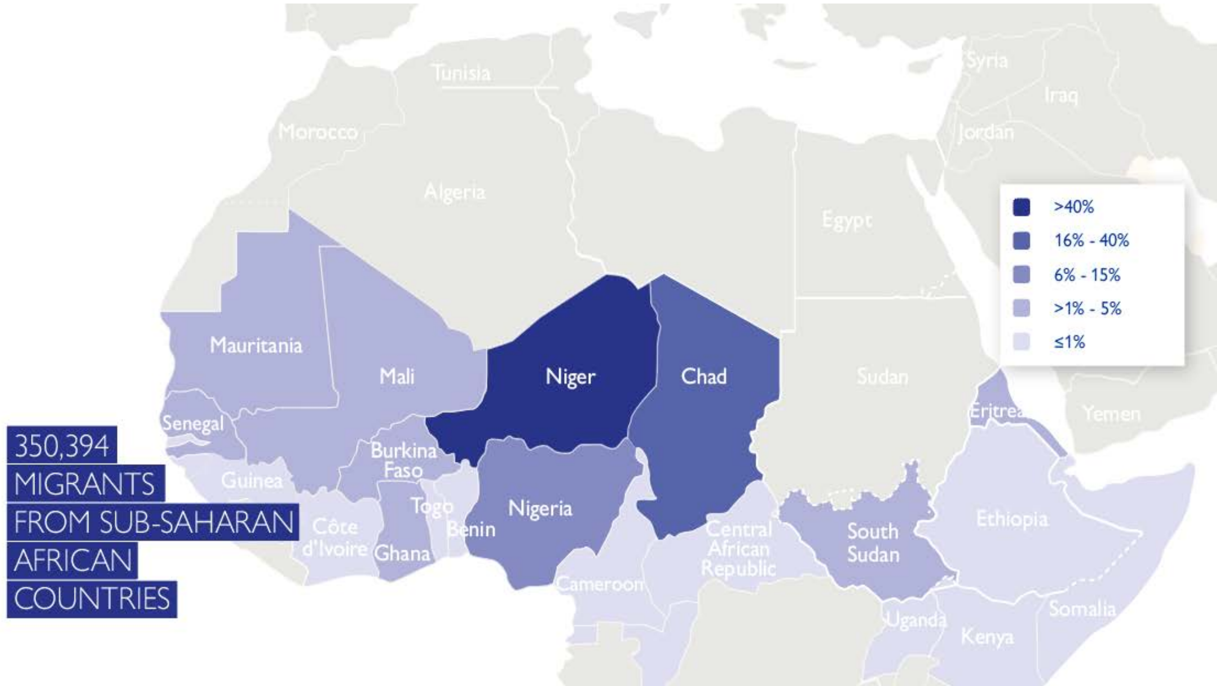


Figure 19: Percentages of migrants by country of origin for the sub-Saharan Africa region



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MIGRATION FLOWS FROM AND TO NIGER

In December, DTM Libya observed a 10 per cent increase in incoming flows from Niger to Libya and an 11 per cent decrease in outgoing flows (from Libya to Niger) compared to November (Fig 21). This shift could be related to a range of factors, including seasonal trends as many migrants seeking temporary work opportunities tend to travel to Libya in November and December. In December 2022, for example, DTM Niger observed a rise in outgoing flows from Niger to Libya driven by a surge in the number of migrants seeking economic opportunities after the end of the harvest in their country of origin.

This slight increase in incoming flows may also be linked to improvement in road security with migrants traveling by organised convoys through new routes following the repeal of law 2015-3614 criminalising migrant smuggling in Niger, as noted by DTM Niger. The 2015 law coupled with an increase in controls in western Libya had previously led to a decrease in the number of migrants reaching Libya via Niger and an increase in the number of migrants reaching Libya via Chad in 2018.

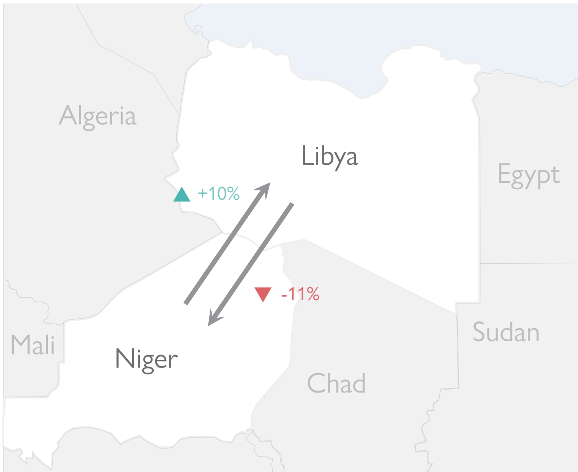
Niger is one of the main entry hub through which migrants from Western Africa, such as those from Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Mali and Senegal reach Libya. Around two in five migrants (41%) interviewed in Libya in 2023 by DTM Libya had transited through, or came from Niger.

In December, DTM Libya observed an increase in the number of migrants from Chad, Niger and Nigeria traveling from Niger to Libya compared to previous months. The majority of seasonal migrant workers identified by a DTM Libya study on circular migration were from Niger, Chad, Sudan and Egypt, and to a lesser extent from Nigeria.

Repeal of law 2015-3614 criminalising migrant smuggling in Niger

As a result of the securitisation of migration – a focus on security to stem migration – actors, such as migration facilitators, transporters and smugglers, adapted and new actors emerged. For example, new migration routes that are more scattered and pass through more isolated and hazardous parts of the country that are prone to vehicle breakdowns, encounters with bandits and known for the threat or presence of unexploded ordnances developed. As such, the securitisation of migration translated into longer, more dangerous and more expensive journeys which have been linked to a surge in the number of reported deaths in the desert and have led to greater exposure to human rights abuses and hardships for migrants. Access to health facilities and supplies on the journey is difficult or not possible at all. According to the Missing Migrant Project, Libya registered the highest number of deaths and disappearances on Northern African land routes in the first half of 2023 with 83 deaths.

Figure 21: Percentage change in migration flows to Libya from Niger and vice-versa between November and December 2023



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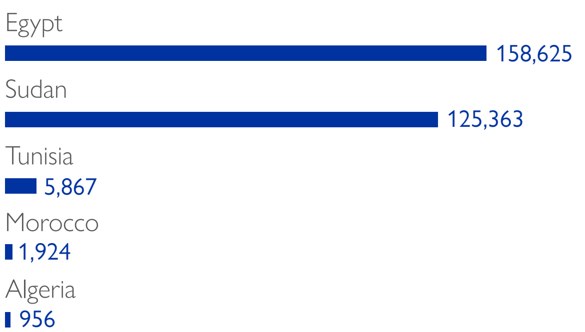
NORTH AFRICA

For the first time since the beginning of 2023, the number of North African migrants in Libya has not decreased and has remained relatively stable compared to the previous round of data collection (292,735 in December 2023 compared to 290,497 in September 2023). Prior to this and since the end of 2021, the number of North African migrants in Libya had been on the rise. The increased security controls along Libya's borders as well as a wave of arrests and collective expulsions into Egypt, Sudan and Tunisia reported by the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), may have contributed to this development.

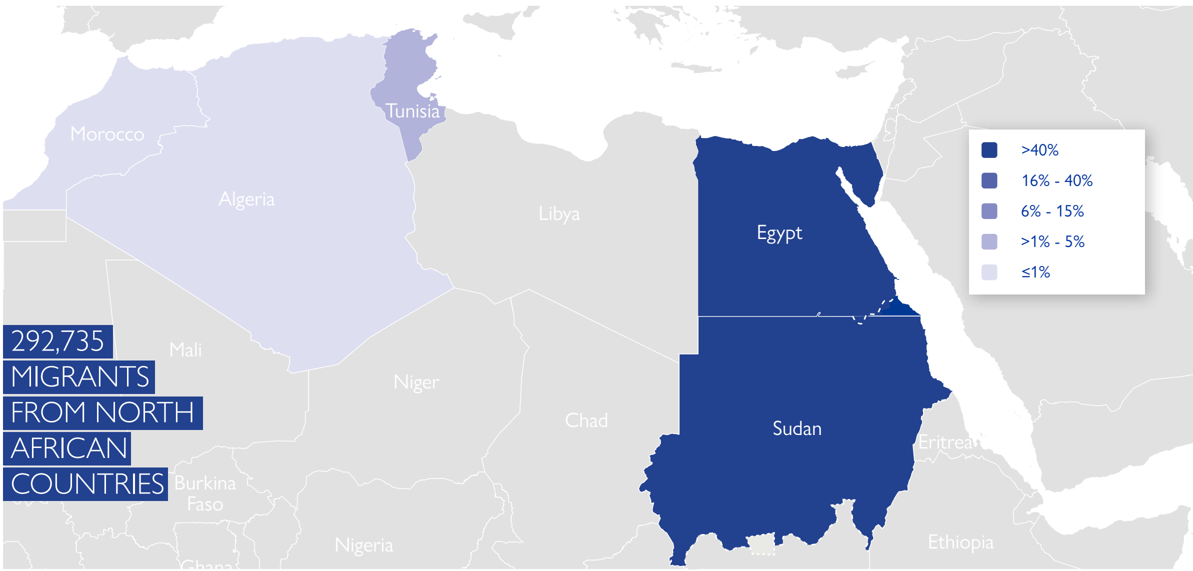
In line with previous reports, migrants from neighbouring Egypt and Sudan continue to be the two most represented nationalities among those from North Africa (54% and 43% respectively). Together, migrants from Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria accounted for three per cent of the total number of migrants from North Africa. Overall, around two in five migrants in Libya were from North Africa (41%).

Figure 23: Migrants from countries of origin in North Africa



A greater percentage of migrants from North Africa (82%) stated that financial issues were among the top three difficulties they faced compared to those from sub-Saharan Africa (78%), the Middle East (70%) or Asia (67%). On the contrary, a smaller percentage of North African respondents (22%) mentioned that food insecurity or a lack of clean drinking water were among the top three issues they faced compared to those from Sub-Saharan Africa (26%), Asia (24%) or the Middle East (<1%).

Figure 22: Percentages of migrants by country of origin for the North African region



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MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

Consistent with previous reports, a minority of migrants (9% or 61,364 individuals) identified during round 50 were from the Middle East (5%) or Asia (4%).

The majority of migrants from Asia and the Middle East were from the Syrian Arab Republic (26,548 individuals) and Bangladesh (21,258 individuals) accounting for 43 and 35 per cent of migrants (including refugees), respectively (Fig 24). Individuals from the Syrian Arab Republic and Bangladesh accounted for respectively four and three per cent of the overall migrant population in Libya.

In addition, there were 6,725 migrants who self-identified as Palestinians (11% of all migrants from the Middle East and Asia in Libya) and 5,852 migrants from Pakistan (10%). There were 981 individuals from various other nationalities who altogether accounted for one per cent of the migrant population from the Middle East and Asia.

In line with previous reports, a greater proportion of migrants from the Middle East (26%) were unemployed in Libya compared to the average (16%) and three times as many compared to those from Asia (7%).

A greater proportion of migrants from Asia (48%) mentioned sending remittances home compared to those from the Middle East (24%). Nearly two fifths individuals from the Middle East (39%) stated having left their country of origin primarily because of war, conflict, or targeted violence compared to eight per cent on average.

Figure 25: Migrants from countries of origin in the Middle East and Asia

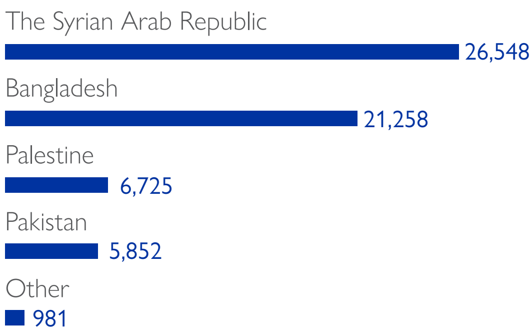
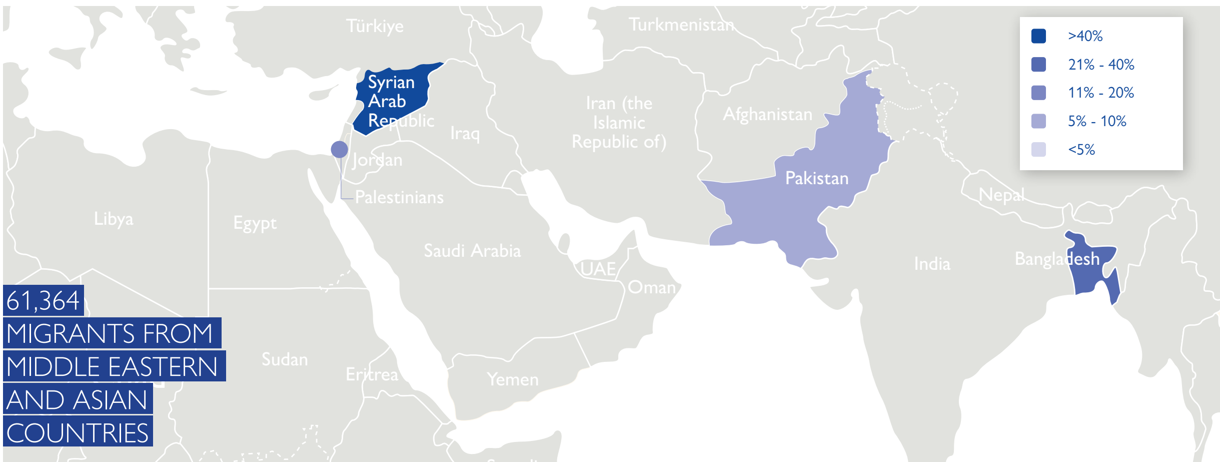


Figure 24: Percentages of migrants by country of origin for the Middle East and South Asia



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CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN ROUTE

Arrivals to Italy and Malta

During the months of October, November and December 2023, a total of 23,940 migrants arrived in Italy and Malta from Libya and Tunisia via the Central Mediterranean Sea. In comparison, in 2022, 40 per cent more migrants arrived in Italy and Malta from Libya and Tunisia during the corresponding period (33,491 migrants).

Overall, in 2023, a total of 158,032 migrants arrived in Italy and Malta from Libya and Tunisia via the Central Mediterranean Sea, which is 50 per cent more than in 2022 (105,575 individuals) and 131 per cent more than in 2021 (68,315 individuals) but 13 per cent less than in 2016 (181,460 individuals).

The main countries of origin of migrants who arrived by sea to Italy were Guinea (11%), Tunisia (11%), Côte d'Ivoire (10%), Bangladesh (8%), Egypt (7%), Syrian Arab Republic (6%), Burkina Faso (5%), Pakistan (5%), Mali (4%) and Sudan (4%), among others (29%).

Figure 27: Arrivals by sea, returns and deaths on the Central Mediterranean Route to Italy and Malta

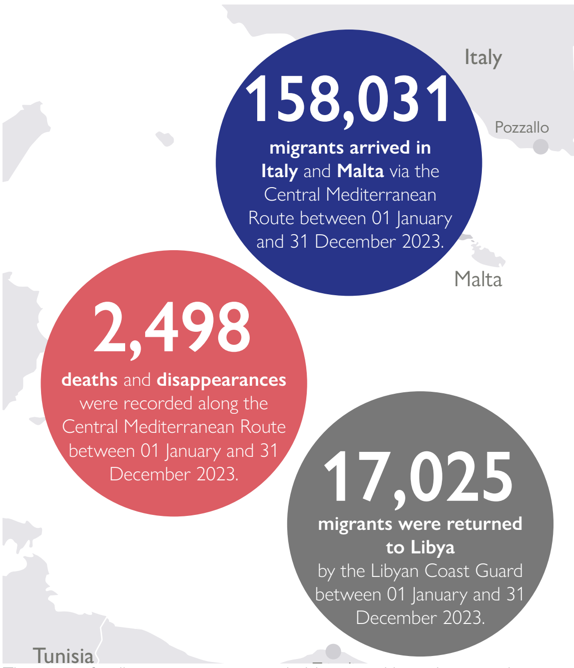

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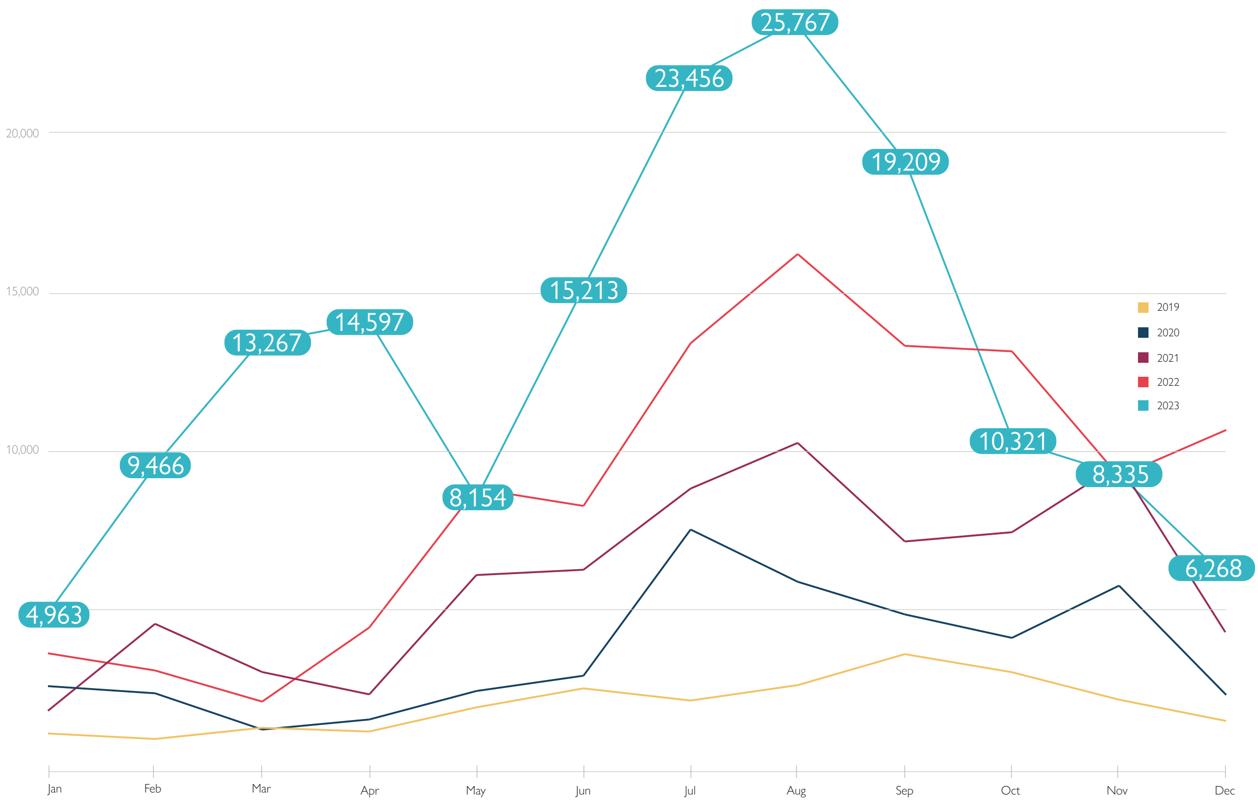
Figure 26: Arrivals by sea via Central Mediterranean route to Italy and Malta (2019 - 2023) (number of individuals)



Interceptions and returns to Libyan shores

In 2023, and as of 30 December, a total of 17,025 migrants who had attempted the Central Mediterranean Sea crossing had been intercepted and returned to Libyan shores which is fewer than in 2022 (24,684 individuals) and in 2021 (32,425 individuals) over the corresponding period.

Fatalities at sea

Between October and December 2023, a total of 259 deaths and disappearances were recorded on the Central Mediterranean route, which is similar to 2022 (254) but fewer than in 2021 (413) and 2020 (383) during the corresponding period (Fig 28). However, overall, in 2023, the number of fatalities and disappearances at sea on the Central Mediterranean route was 60 per cent higher than in 2021 and 76 per cent higher than in 2022, in line with a trend across the Mediterranean. The number of deaths and disappearances remains lower than in 2016 (4,574) and 2017 (2,853).

Figure 29: Comparisons of the number of deaths and missing individuals on the Central Mediterranean route during the period January - December for the years 2018 - 2023

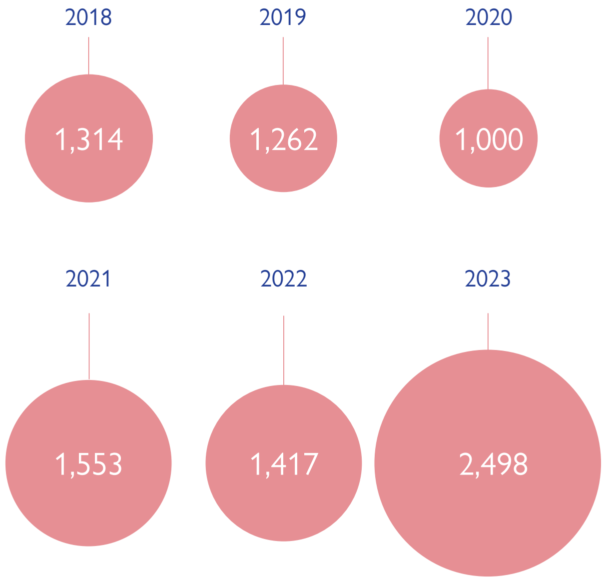
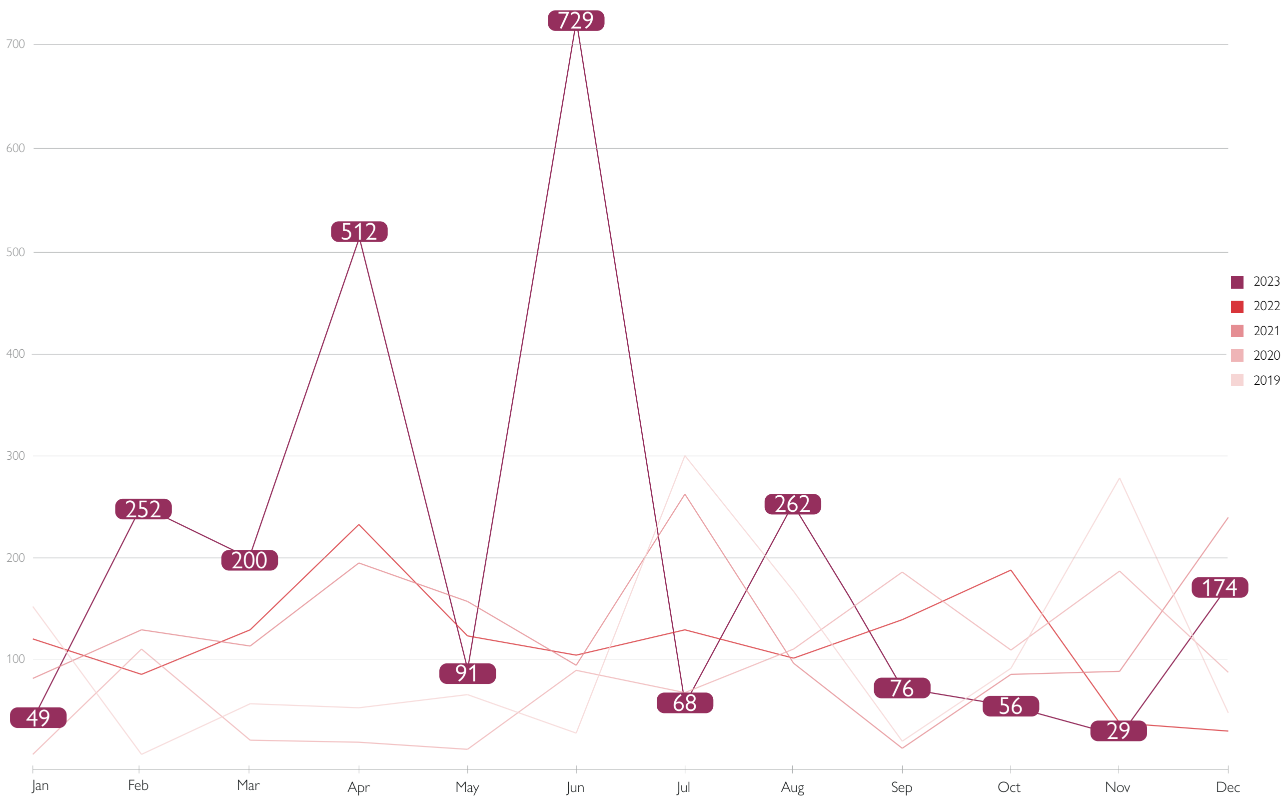


Figure 28: Number of deaths and missing individuals on the Central Mediterranean route by year (2019 - 2023)



METHODOLOGY

This report utilizes data collected through different regular DTM data collection activities.

The migrant population figures and analysis is based on the data collected through DTM mobility tracking (including multisectoral location assessment) that identifies the overall population figures in Libya including that of migrants and helps identify priority humanitarian needs via key informant interviews conducted at municipality (admin 3: baladiya), and community (admin 4: muhalla) levels.

Migration flow statistics are based on the data collected through a network of 52 flow monitoring points (FMPs) in eight regions of Libya (Alkufra, Ghat, Murzuq, Nalut, Sebha, Tobruk, Ubari and Wadi Ashshati).

Analysis of migrant routes, migrant vulnerabilities and humanitarian needs is based on microlevel data collected through quantitative interviews via flow monitoring surveys (FMS) with migrants who provided their informed consent.

Limitations

Migrants in Libya are a highly heterogenous group and their situation is very dynamic. The face-to-face interviews took place mainly in markets, public buildings, work recruitment points, collective accommodations and transit points along key migration routes, which means that the findings of this report are representative of migrants who frequent these public places. Migrants who may not be able to frequent these public places are less likely to have been included in the assessment. While this (purposive) sampling approach limits the findings on migration routes and migrant vulnerabilities from being fully statistically representative of the demographic make-up of the entire migrant stock in Libya, it represents a large-scale assessment of migrants present in Libya.

Definition of migrant

IOM characterizes 'migrant' as an umbrella term, not defined under international law, reflecting the common lay understanding of a person who moved away from their place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons. The term includes several of well-defined legal categories of people, such as migrant workers; persons whose particular types of movements are legally defined, such as smuggled migrants; as well as those whose status or means of movement are not specifically defined under international law, such as international students.

For the purposes of collecting data on migration, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) defines "international migrant" as "any person who changes their country of usual residence" (UN DESA, Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, Revision 1 (1998) para. 32). This report only takes into consideration the "international migrants" in Libya as defined above.

IOM DATA COLLECTION

TEAM	IN NUMBERS	
112 enumerators	**5,882** migrants interviewed (round 50, flow monitoring survey)	**2,240** key informant interviews
3 team leaders	**52** flow monitoring points (FMPs) are active in 8 regions (mantikas) of Libya	

Funded by the European Union, the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) in Libya tracks and monitors population movements in order to collate, analyze and share information to support the humanitarian community with the needed demographic baselines to coordinate evidence-based interventions.

To consult all DTM reports, datasets, static and interactive maps and dashboards, please visit:

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UN MIGRATION