

MIXED MIGRATION FLOWS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

Compilation of Available
Data and Information
February 2020



International Organization for Migration (IOM)

The UN Migration Agency

DTM





Migrants rescued last March in the Channel of Sicily by Italian Coast Guard. © Francesco Malavolta/IOM 2015

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Photo/ cover page:
One part of a reception centre in Bira, Bosnia and Herzegovina. IOM BIH/2019

HIGHLIGHTS

A total of 6,732¹ migrants and refugees arrived in Europe through different land and sea routes in February 2020, which is 18 per cent less than the 8,223 registered in the previous month (January 2020), 58 per cent more than the 4,268 sea and land arrivals registered in February last year, 50 per cent more than the 4,487 arrivals registered in February 2018, and 43 per cent less than the 11,808 reported in February 2017.

Arrivals registered in Europe in the first two months of 2020 were 14,955, which is 20 per cent more than arrivals registered in the same period last year (12,444) and 13 per cent more than arrivals in the first two months of 2018 (13,167).

There were 2,950 registered arrivals in Bulgaria and Greece through the **Eastern Mediterranean route** (44% of total registered arrivals in Europe) in February 2020. Another 2,175 arrivals were registered on the **Western Mediterranean route** (32%) leading to Spain,² and 1,647 were registered on the **Central Mediterranean route** (24%), arriving by sea to Italy and Malta in the same period. Hence, the Eastern Mediterranean route continues to surpass both the Western and Central Mediterranean routes as the main route taken by migrants and refugees travelling to Europe by sea and land, as it has done each month since February 2019. In February 2019, the Eastern Mediterranean route was recorded as the most active with 2,842 arrivals (67% of the total), followed by the Western Mediterranean route with 1,366 registered arrivals (32%) and the Central Mediterranean route with 60 registered arrivals (1%). In February 2018, 42 per cent of all arrivals in Europe were registered on the Eastern Mediterranean route (1,904), while arrivals on the Western Mediterranean route were 1,518 (34%) and on Central Mediterranean 1,065 (24%).

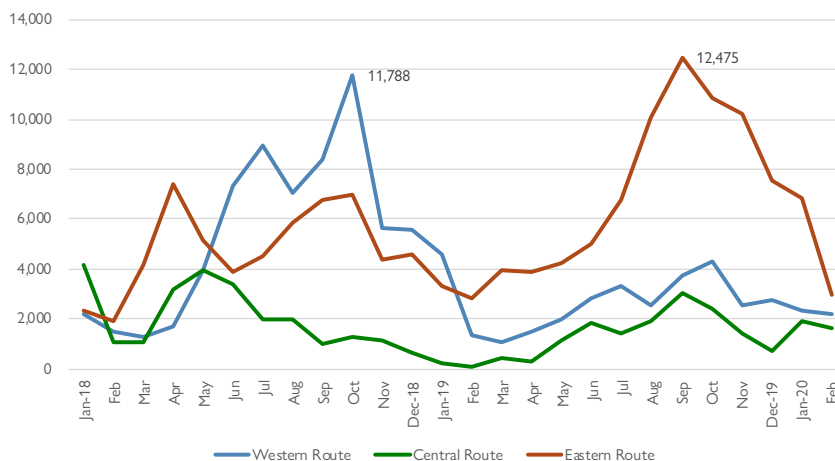
Hellenic Authorities reported 2,844 new arrivals in February 2020, which makes **Greece** the first arrival country in Europe so far in 2020. Arrivals in Greece are 27 per cent less than the 3,898 registered in the previous month (January 2020), 22 per cent higher than the 2,332 registered in February 2019, and almost two times the 1,610 reported in February 2018. Of all registered arrivals in Greece in February 2020, 74 per cent arrived by sea and the remaining 26 per cent were by land. According to available data, the most frequently registered nationality of arrivals to Greece by sea in February 2020 was Afghanistan (36%) followed by the Syrian Arab Republic (26%), the Democratic Republic of Congo (8%), and others. Authorities in **Bulgaria** registered 66 new arrivals in February 2020, maintaining the same trend of the previous month (65 in January 2020) and to the same month of last year (81 in February 2019).

A total of 2,175 migrants and refugees were registered entering **Spain** in February 2020, 8 per cent less than the previous month (2,365 in January 2019), more than half of the 1,366 registered in February 2019 and 43 per cent more than the 1,518 registered in the same period of 2018. Among the total arrivals to Spain in 2020, 79 per cent arrived by sea: this includes 51 per cent of the total arrivals to the Spanish peninsular coasts, 26 per cent to the Canary Islands, 1 per cent to the Balearic Islands and 1 per cent to the city of Ceuta. The remaining 21 per cent arrived by land to the Spanish autonomous cities of Melilla (18%) and Ceuta (3%) on the north coast of Africa.

Italian authorities reported the 1,211 arrivals in February 2020. Arrivals in this period have slightly decreased in comparison with the previous month (1,342 in January 2020), but were more than 20 times higher than the 60 arrivals registered in February 2019 and maintained the same trend of the 1,065 reported arrivals to Italy in February 2018. The most frequently registered nationality of migrants arriving to Italy in February 2020 was Bangladesh (25%), followed by Sudan (14%), Somalia (9%), and other African and Southern Asian countries. In addition, there were 436 registered arrivals in **Malta** in February 2020, 21 per cent less than the 553 arrivals registered in the previous month (January 2020). According to available data from national authorities, Sudan was the most frequently reported nationality at arrival in February 2020 (33%), followed by Somalia (26%) and Bangladesh (25%).

In addition to first-arrival countries, authorities in countries and areas in the **Western Balkans** region reported an increase in monthly registrations of new migrants and refugees in these last months. Reported registrations in February 2020 were 11,198, which is 64 per cent more than the 6,809 reported in January 2020 and almost three times as compared to the 4,172 reported in February last year and six times higher than the 1,852 reported in February 2018. Afghanistan continue to be the most frequently reported nationality among migrants and refugees intercepted transiting the Western Balkans in February 2020, as has been the case each month since October 2019, and particularly in North Macedonia (44%) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (33%). Nationals of Pakistan are also prominent among those recorded transiting the region, particularly in Slovenia (38%) and North Macedonia (28%). Morocco nationals are the third most frequently registered in the Western Balkans in February 2020, and the most common nationality of those registered in Montenegro (62%) and Albania (36%).

Figure 1: Arrivals to Europe via the Western, Central and Eastern Mediterranean routes by month, 2018-2020



1 Data on arrivals to Cyprus in 2020 are not available at the time of closing this report.

2 Arrivals to Spain include arrivals to the Canary Islands.

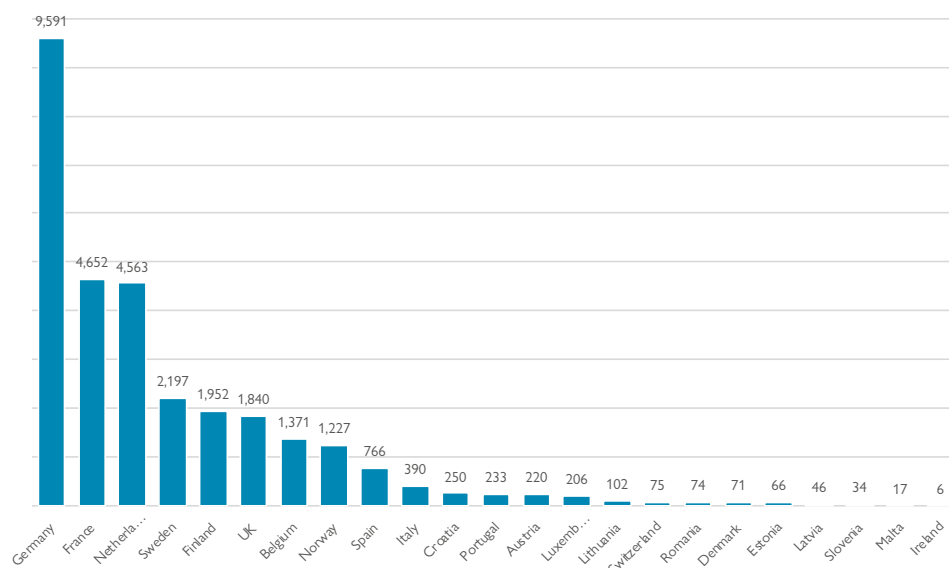
POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

EU – TURKEY STATEMENT AND THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN ROUTE

In response to the arrival of almost one million migrants and refugees from the Middle East and Africa through the Eastern Mediterranean route in the second half of 2015 and the first three months of 2016, the European Union (EU) and Turkey agreed on a plan to end irregular migration flows from Turkey to the EU on 18 March 2016. The document states that from 20 March 2016 all persons who do not have a right to international protection in Greece will be returned to Turkey, based on the Readmission Agreement from 2002 signed between the countries (the whole document is available [here](#)). At the same time, it was agreed to facilitate the resettlement of Syrian refugees from Turkey to many European countries (European Economic Area, EEA). The total number of Syrian refugees resettled so far, between April 2016 and February 2020 is 29,949.

A significant decrease in arrivals in Greece was observed starting from the second quarter (April – June) of 2016 until mid-2019. From the 152,617 arrivals in Greece registered in the first quarter of 2016, **a drastic drop was registered in the second quarter of 2016** with 7,498 new entries by land and by sea. Arrivals in 2017 were around 8,800 each quarter on average, with the second quarter marking a record low of 6,272 new entries that year. A more sustained trend was observed over 2018, with quarterly arrivals at around 12,500 new entries on average. Arrivals registered in the first half of 2019 (18,448) were 19 per cent lower than in the first half of 2018 (22,899), but **a new increase was observed during the third quarter** of the year: arrivals between July and September 2019 (26,852) are higher than the totals of the first and second quarter this year (8,162 and 10,286, respectively), and the trend was confirmed in the fourth quarter (26,086). Hence, **arrivals in Greece in 2019 (71,386)** were higher of arrivals registered in Spain (32,513) and Italy (11,471) for the same year, and represented a 42 per cent increase for registered arrivals in the country when compared to those in 2018 (50,215).

Figure 2: Number of Syrian refugees resettled from Turkey to Europe (EEA) between April 2016 and February 2020³



³ The figure includes the number of refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic assisted by IOM Turkey through the 1:1 resettlement scheme as well as other bilateral programs.

During the last weeks of February 2020, **groups of migrants have been reported to have moved from various locations in Turkey towards the country's borders with the European Union**, to try to cross from Turkey to Greece especially through the north-western province of Edirne. IOM and its partners have mobilized resources to offer support and assistance to these thousands of migrants as early assessments indicate that many are very vulnerable, with a high proportion of women, children and families amongst them.

IOM'S POSITION

IOM stands ready to support all concerned governments with any actions which may help achieve effective migration management, that can reduce vulnerabilities and ensure that the immediate needs of migrants are met. The Organization welcomes commitments made by the EU and its Member States to address the situation from humanitarian and political perspectives.

IOM recognizes that irregular migration and displacement have placed some countries, including Turkey and Greece, under great strain and that more efforts are required to share responsibility towards emergency support and durable solutions for migrants and refugees. At the same time, international legal obligations must be upheld, in particular with respect to those who may be in need of international protection.

In this regard, IOM also calls on the international community to sustain its support to Greece, which has faced considerable pressure in the past few years on behalf of the EU, and to Turkey, which has long hosted millions of refugees seeking protection from the conflict in Syria.⁴

⁴ Please see IOM full statement at <https://www.iom.int/news/iom-urges-restraint-calls-humane-response-eu-turkey-border>

OVERVIEW OF ARRIVALS & REGISTERED IRREGULAR APPREHENSIONS

Figure 3: Arrivals in Greece, Spain, Italy, Malta and Bulgaria, January–February 2017–2020

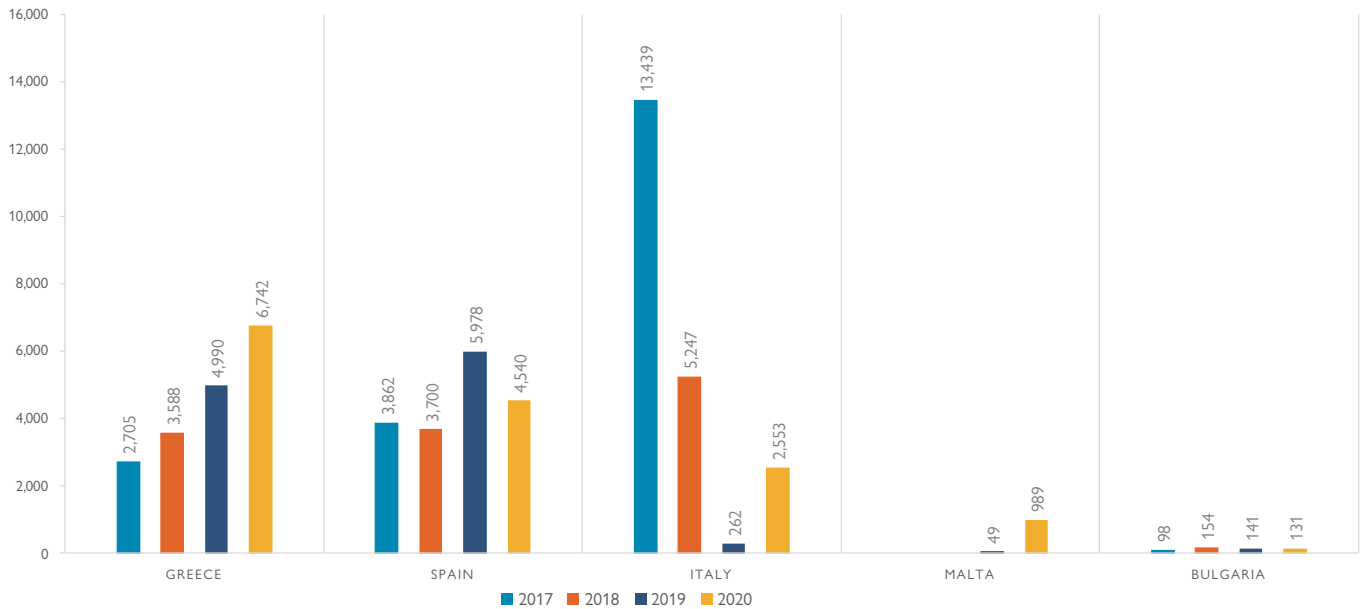
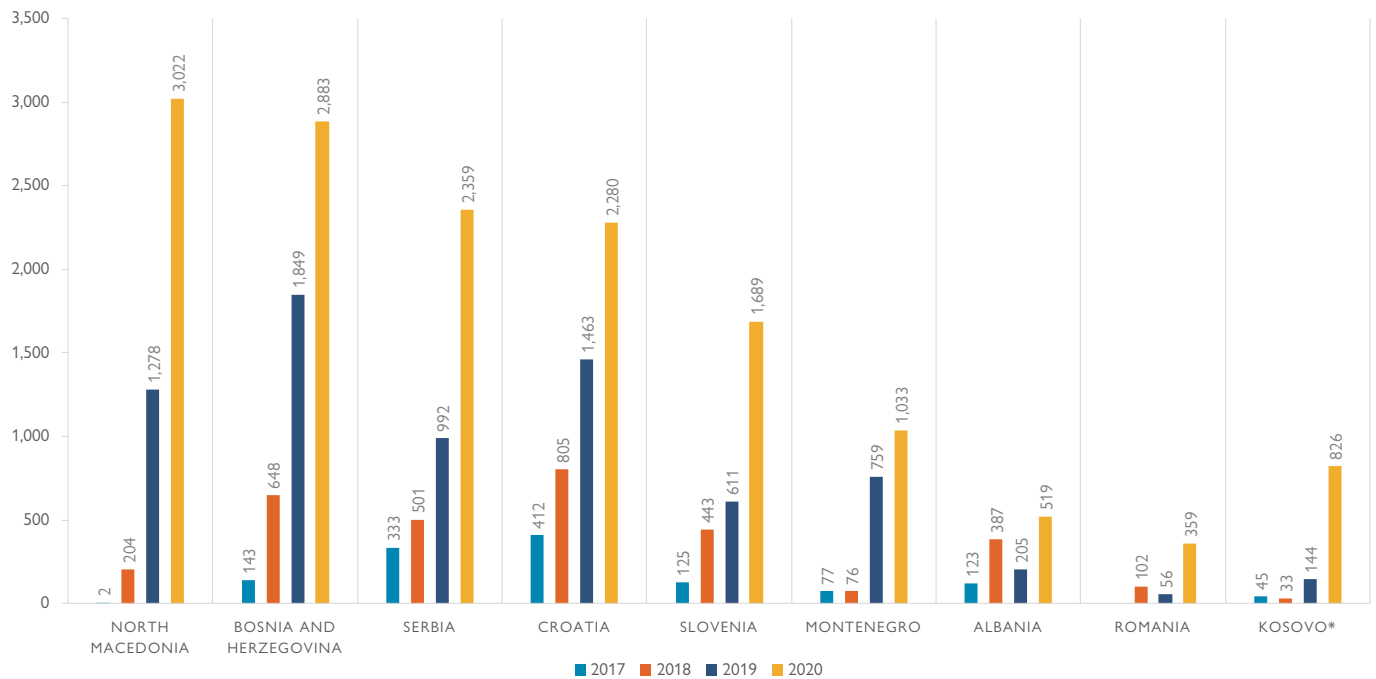


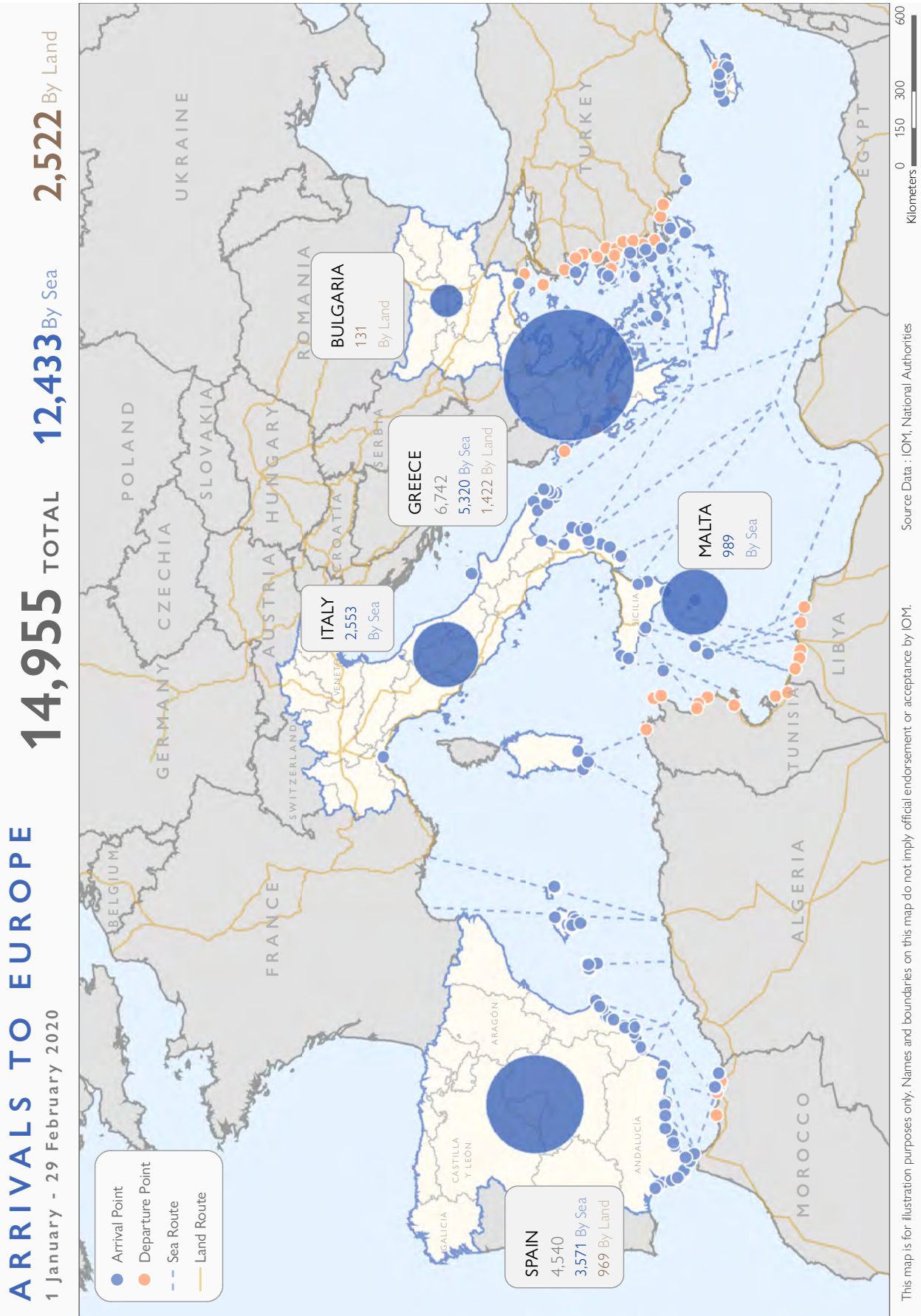
Figure 4: Registered irregular apprehensions in the Western Balkans and other transit countries/areas, January–February 2017–2020



* References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

OVERVIEW MAPS

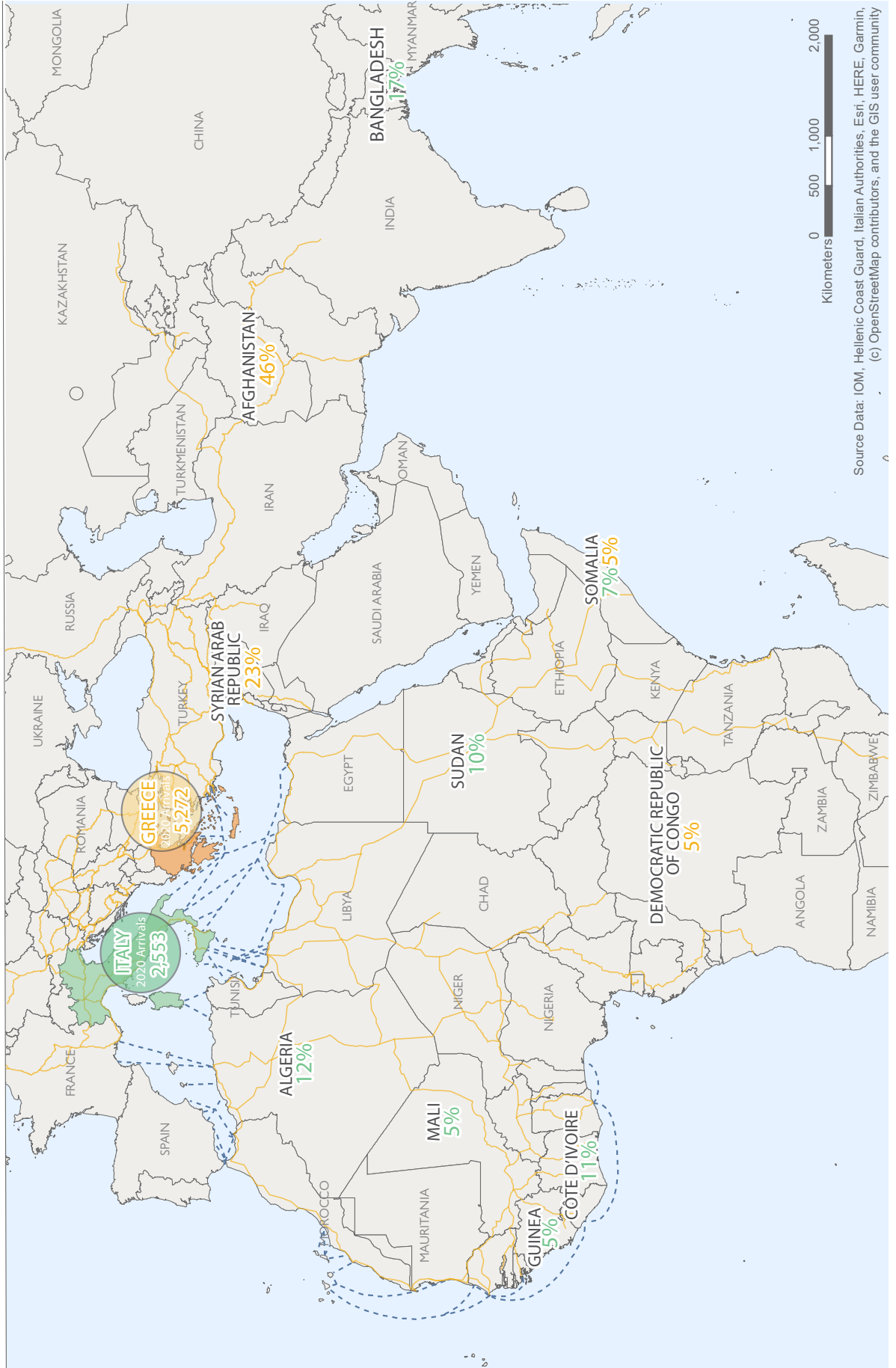
Map 1: Arrivals in Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Malta, Spain in February 2020



Map 2. Main countries of origin reported at arrival in Greece and Italy in February 2020.

OVERVIEW: COUNTRIES OR AREAS OF ORIGIN

Arrivals to Greece and Italy according to available data from 1 January to 29 February 2020



* Excluding nationality data for arrivals to Spain in December 2019, which is not yet available.

Map 3: Presence of migrants and asylum seekers in reception in the region as of the end of February 2020.

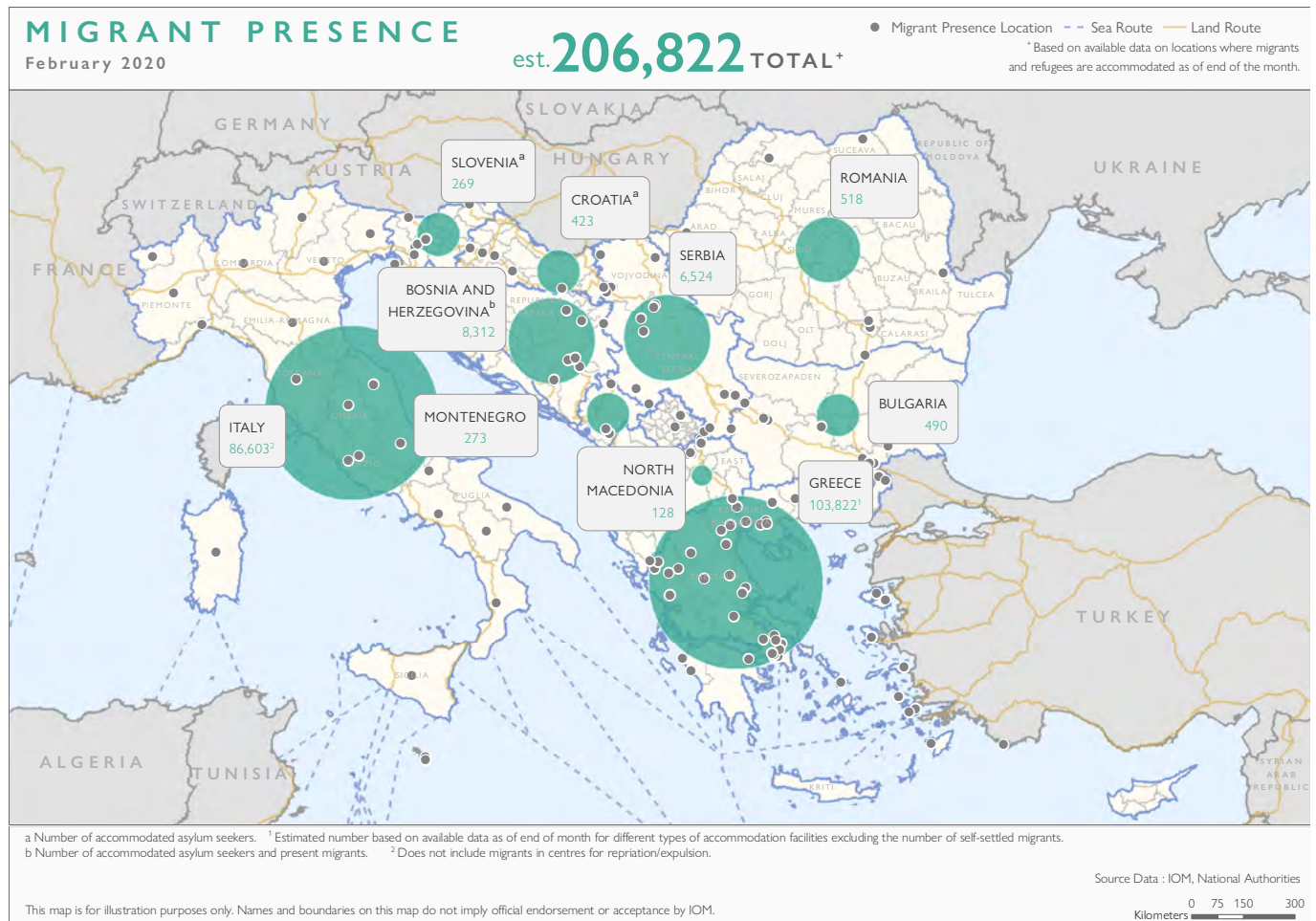


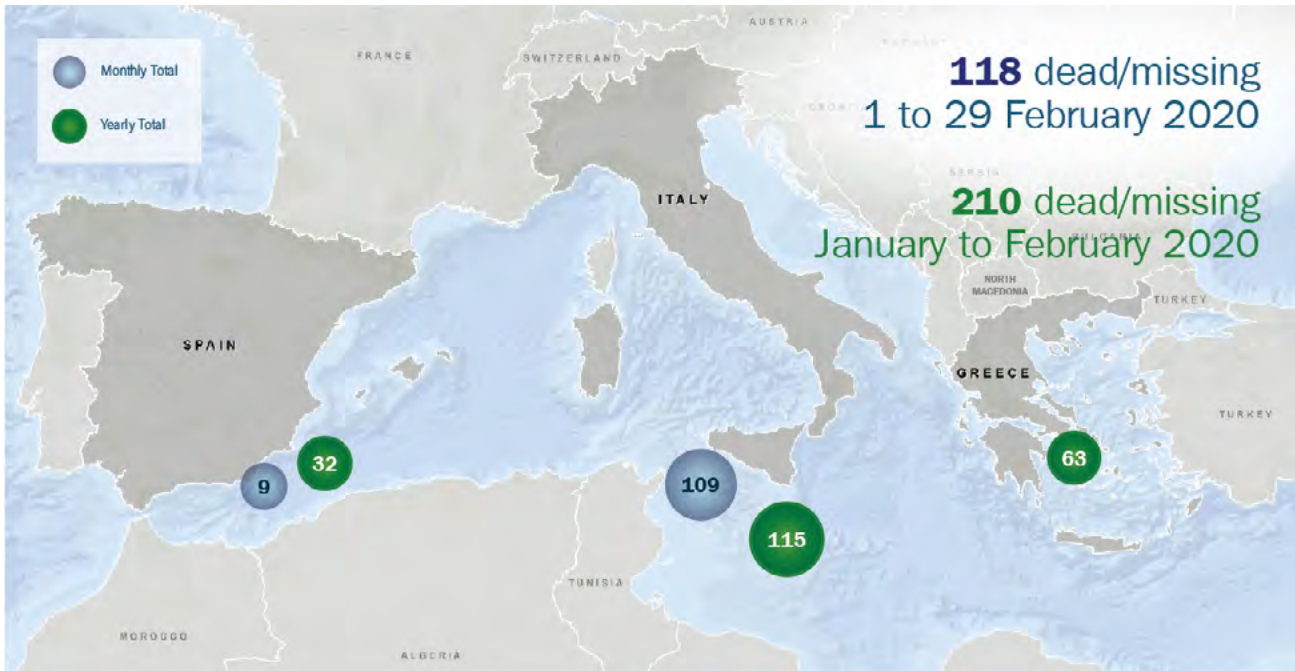
Table 1: Presence of migrants and asylum seekers in reception as of the end of February, comparison 2018–2020

Country	Feb-18	Feb-19	Feb-20
Greece ⁵	49,201	61,703	103,822
Bosnia and Herzegovina	n.a.	4,039	8,312
Bulgaria	1,059	532	490
Croatia ⁶	397	255	423
Cyprus	228	255	n.a.
Montenegro	110	251	273
North Macedonia	114	74	128
Romania	518	317	518
Serbia	3,816	4,423	6,524
Slovenia ⁵	288	325	269
Italy	178,788	126,287	86,063

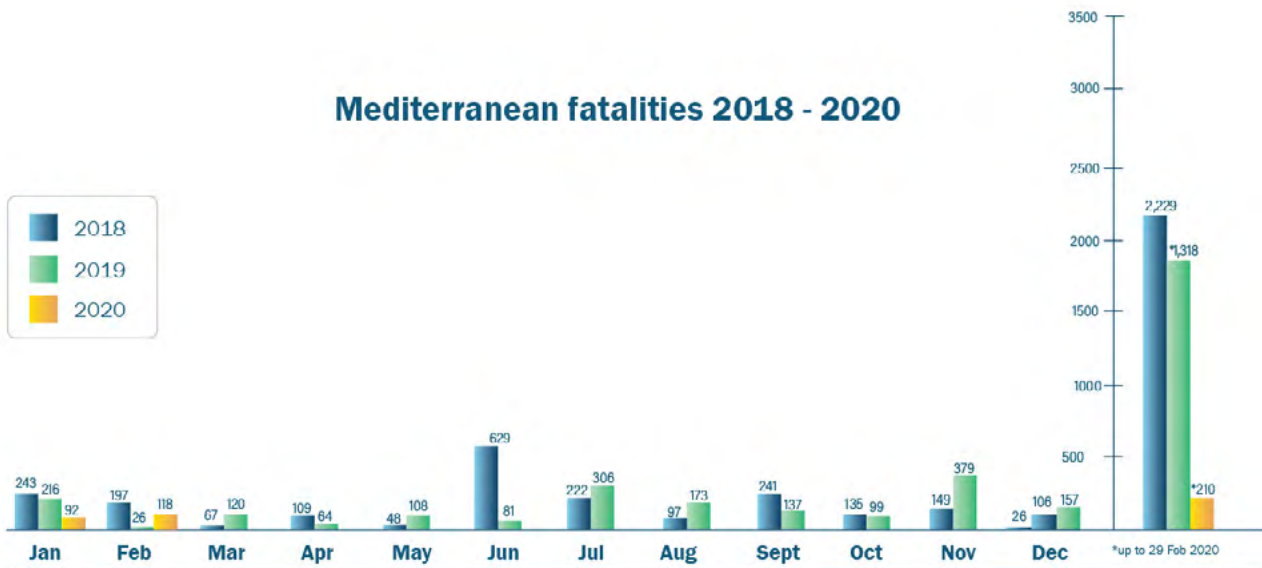
5 Data for Greece excludes self-settled migrants and asylum seekers.

6 Data for Slovenia and Croatia includes number of asylum seekers only.

Map 4: Missing Migrants: Fatalities/Missing in the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas.



Mediterranean fatalities 2018 - 2020



Child fatalities in the Mediterranean 2018 - 2020



*Data for child fatalities on the Central Mediterranean route is incomplete as most bodies are never recovered. The true number is not known. Map is for illustrative purpose. Boundaries and names used and designations shown do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

ABOUT

Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)

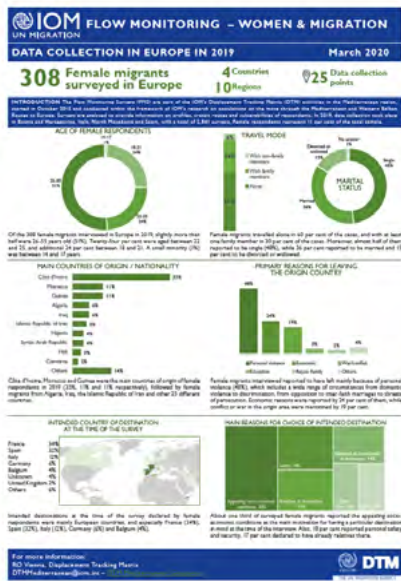
IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) is a suite of tools and methodologies designed to track and analyse human mobility in different displacement contexts in a continuous manner; to provide critical information to decision-makers and responders during crises, and contribute to better understanding of population flows. Firstly conceptualized in 2004 to monitor internal displacement in Iraq, it has since been adapted for implementation in over 60 countries, including in contexts of conflict, natural disaster, complex emergencies and protracted crises. More information about the Methodological Framework in DTM operations can be found on the [global displacement.iom.int](http://global.displacement.iom.int).

DTM Europe

In 2015, DTM established a Flow Monitoring System to gather and disseminate information about the migrant populations moving through the Mediterranean, up the Western Balkan Route and through the Northern Route into Europe. This includes monthly flows compilation reports, quarterly regional overviews and datasets on migration flows in countries of first arrival and other countries along the route in Europe. All data is collated by IOM through consultations with ministries of interior, coast guards, police forces and other relevant national authorities, and it is displayed and regularly updated on the IOM's Flow Monitoring Europe Geoportal.

The DTM system also includes flow monitoring surveys to capture additional and more in-depth data on the people on the move, including age, sex, areas of origin, levels of education, key transit points on their route, motives and intentions. The questionnaire also has a module with a set of questions on human trafficking, exploitative practices and abuse, including two indicators on sexual and physical violence. The analyses of data collected since 2015 is also available on the Flow Monitoring Europe Geoportal.

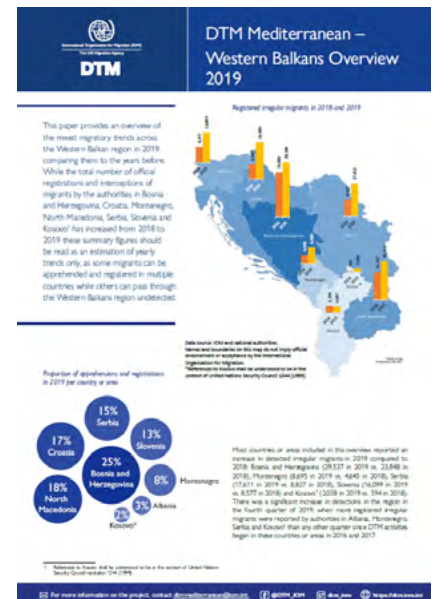
[Europe — Flow Monitoring Surveys - Women & Migration 2019](#)



[Europe – Mixed Migration Flows to Europe – Quarterly Overview \(October – December 2019\)](#)

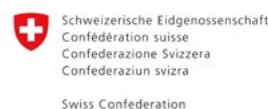


[DTM Mediterranean – Western Balkans Overview 2019](#)



Information contained in this document has been received from a variety of sources including: national authorities, national and international organizations as well as media reports. Specific sources are not named in the report. The information collected has been triangulated through various sources in efforts to ensure accuracy of the content, and where information has not been confirmed, this has been noted in the report.

Data collection activities in Turkey supported by:



Data collection activities supported by:



The depiction and use of boundaries, geographic names, and related data shown on maps and included in this report are not warranted to be error free nor do they imply judgment on the legal status of any territory, or any endorsement or acceptance of such boundaries by the IOM.