



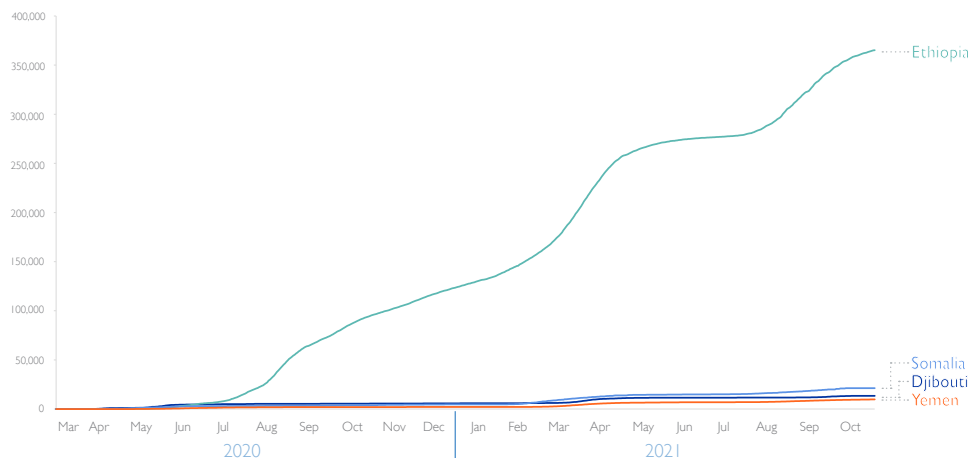
An IOM mobile unit assists migrants in the Obock desert. © IOM 2021 / Alexander Bee

BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 outbreak has restricted global mobility, whilst heightening the risk of exploitation of vulnerable populations. This report provides a snapshot of the **COVID-19 epidemiological situation** and **mobility restrictions**, and of the **current migration trends** along the Eastern Corridor migration route, in addition to an analysis of the impact that movement restrictions have had in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Yemen. Moreover, it provides **information on the main protection concerns for migrants** and **assistance provided**, and **COVID-19 risk mitigation measures**. This report utilizes data collected through IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Flow Monitoring Points (FMPs), Migration Response Centres (MRCs),¹ Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) data, as well as anecdotal information provided by IOM team members working in the region.

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL UPDATE AND RESPONSE TO THE OUTBREAK

Incidence Trend of Confirmed COVID-19 Cases as of 31 October 2021



	Djibouti	Ethiopia	Somalia	Yemen
Confirmed cases	13,478	365,167	21,269	9,791
Deaths	181	6,459	1,180	1,889
Recoveries	13,249	339,742	9,927	-
Active cases	48	18,966	10,162	-

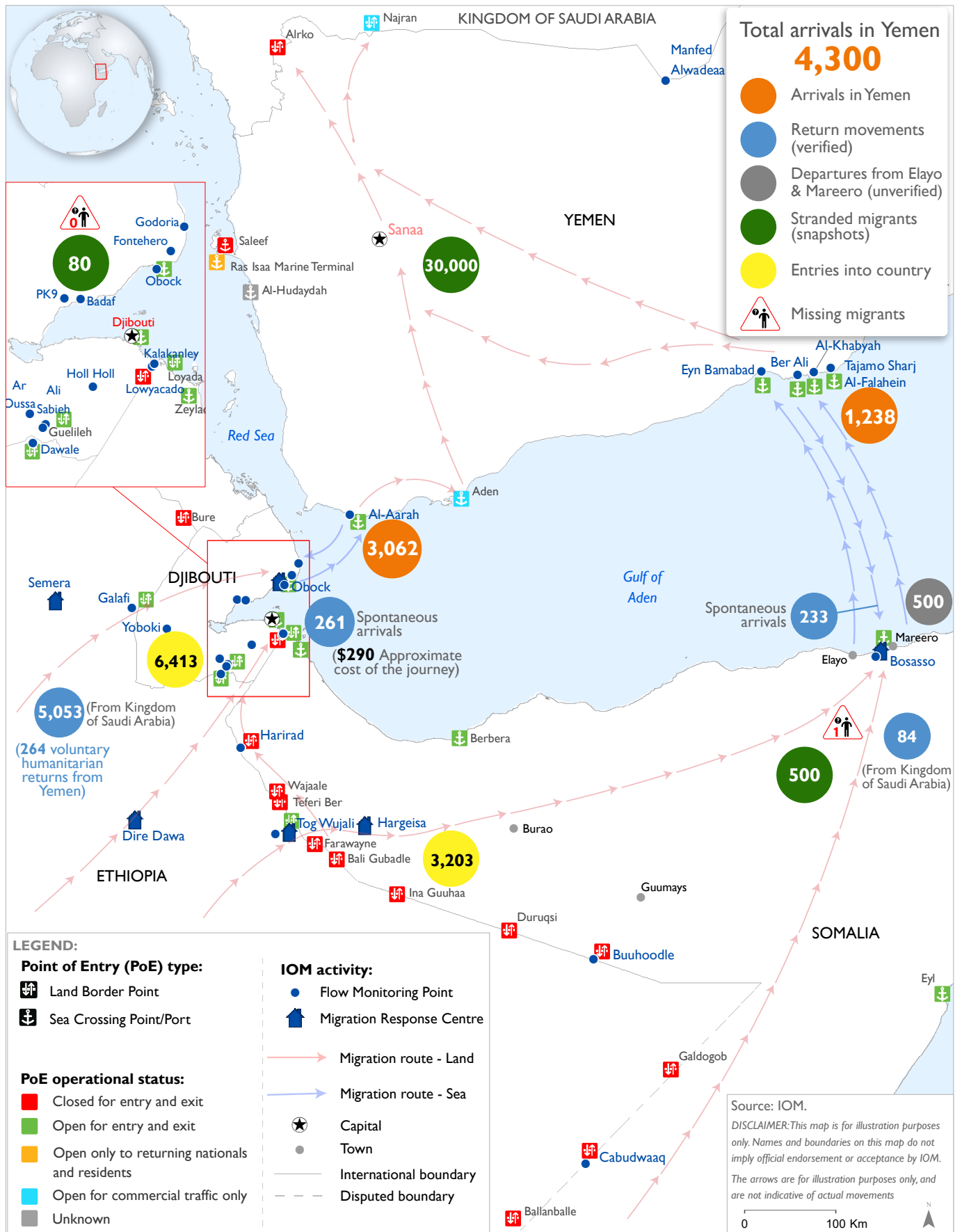
Source: IOM data as of 31 October 2021. Data for Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia and Yemen.

¹ Migration Response Centres (MRCs) are situated along key migration routes, where they fill critical gaps by providing direct assistance, including food and temporary shelter, information and service referrals to migrants on the move. MRCs bring together key partners to facilitate the identification of migrants in vulnerable situations, and ensure that they receive appropriate, immediate and longer-term support. Eight MRCs are currently operational in the Horn of Africa: Obock (Djibouti), Hargeisa, Bossaso (Somalia), Semera, Metema, Dire Dawa, Togochale and Moyale (Ethiopia).

CONTACT

Regional Data Hub (RDH), IOM Regional Office for East and Horn of Africa:
rdhronairobi@iom.int

For more information:
ronairobi.iom.int/regional-data-hub-rdh



COVID-19 Epidemiological Situation

As of 31 October 2021, the number of COVID-19 cases along the Eastern Corridor stood at 409,705. Ethiopia continued recording the highest number of confirmed COVID-19 cases (89% of total cases). The country distributed over 3.5 million vaccine doses obtained through the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) initiative by the end of October. Following Ethiopia are Somalia (5% of total cases) and Djibouti (3% of total cases), while Yemen cases represented 2% of the total cases. Since early October 2021, IOM in Djibouti has been working with the Ministry of Health to support vaccination activities, including at the Obock MRC. The ministry aims to vaccinate 25% of the population (above 18 years old) by the end of 2021. As of 31 October 2021, the number of COVID-19 related deaths along the Eastern Corridor stood at 9,709, the majority of which were recorded in Ethiopia (67% of total deaths). Yemen holds the highest case fatality rate (CFR) at approximately 19.3%, compared to Djibouti (CFR 1.3%), Ethiopia (CFR 1.8%) and Somalia (CFR 5.5%). This is much higher than the global average CFR of 2.0% and is largely attributable to the challenges of accessing a health care system which has been decimated by years of war. On 19 October, Yemen's Ministry of Public Health and Population in Aden announced that half a million Yemenis had received COVID-19 vaccine doses.

COVID-19 Mobility Restrictions

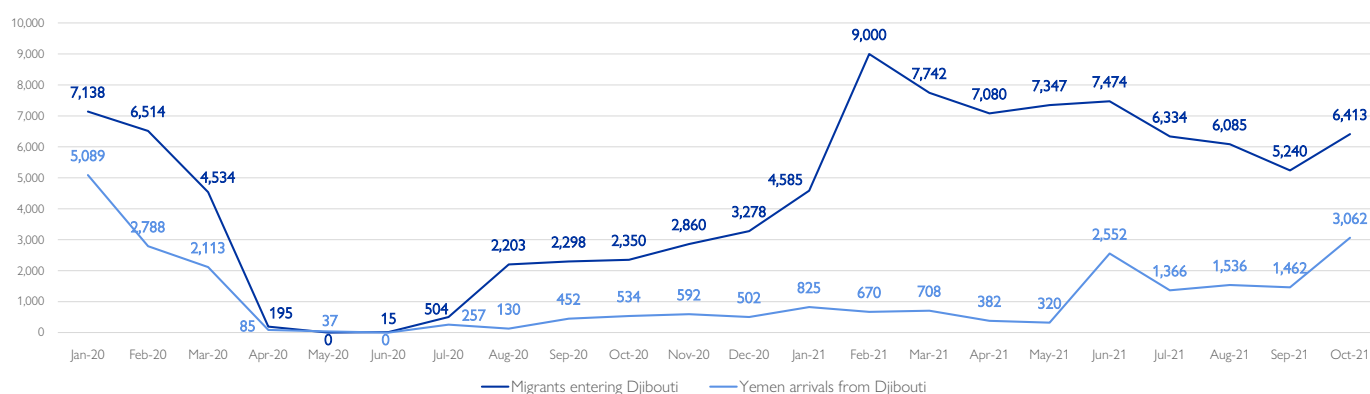
Mobility restrictions remain largely unchanged in Djibouti, Ethiopia and Somalia as of the end of October 2021. More than a year after the reopening of the country's air, land and sea borders in July 2020, the Djiboutian health authorities recorded a 2.42% COVID-19 positivity rate and a 100% recovery rate among all incoming passengers screened at the various Points of Entry (PoEs). In Yemen, mobility restrictions as well as health screenings at internal transit points have remained lifted, with a total of 15 sea border points and three land border points open for movement.

DJIBOUTI SITUATION

Migrant Flows Observed Through Djibouti and at Yemen Points of Entry

- Migrant movements into Djibouti increased in October 2021, with 6,413 entries observed from Djibouti's western borders, which is a 22% increase compared to September 2021. This brings the total entries into the country in 2021 to 67,300. Almost all migrants entering Djibouti were Ethiopian nationals while 22 were Somali nationals; the latter had reportedly travelled from Ethiopia (3) and Somalia (19) and were headed towards Djibouti. Around 91% of migrants were adults (82% men, 9% women) and 9% were children (8.6% boys, 0.1% girls).²
- Most entries into Djibouti were of migrants originating in the Oromia region of Ethiopia (55%), followed by Amhara (33%), while only 4% were from Tigray. Overall, 67% of the arrivals in Djibouti in 2021 originated in Oromia, 17% in Amhara and 10% in Tigray. Arrivals from Tigray remained in the single digits throughout 2021 with the exception of April-June 2021 when around 25% entries were from Tigray. During 2020, a similar spike was seen during the first two months as well as the last two months of the year.
- With 3,062 new migrant arrivals in October, a total of 12,883 migrants arrived in 2021 from Djibouti to Yemen. All migrants who arrived in October disembarked near Al-Aarah FMP in Lahj governorate in Yemen. Around 94% of the migrants tracked were adults (86% men, 8% women) and 6% were children (5% boys, 1% girls). Unlike the previous month, only nine unaccompanied migrant children (UMCs) were tracked upon entry from Djibouti (down from 53 UMCs tracked in September); these make up 5% of all children arriving in Yemen from Djibouti.

Migrant Movements through Djibouti to Yemen (January 2020 - October 2021)



Note: Small changes were made to migrants' entries for September 2021 due to data cleaning.

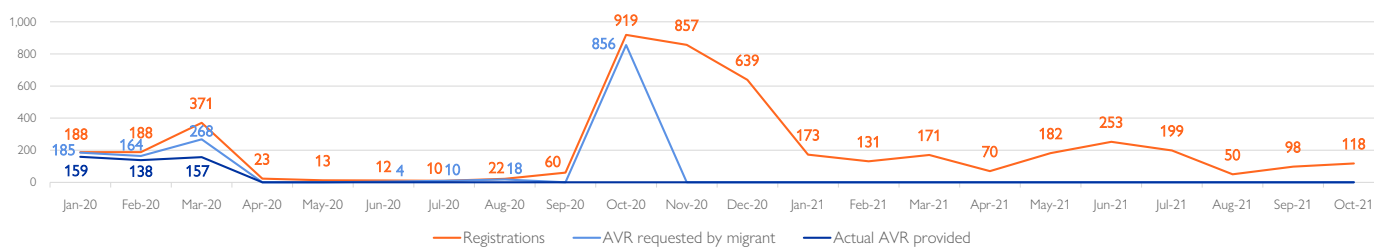
² The sex and age disaggregated data of entering migrants is an estimation because of the data collection methodology.

- Spontaneous return movements from Yemen to Djibouti continued in October with the return of 261 Ethiopian migrants (down from 302 returns reported in September); the majority of the returns were men. Since May 2020, IOM tracked 16,252 spontaneous returns of Ethiopian migrants, 10,185 of which were in 2021.

Migrant Protection and Assistance

- As of 29 October 2021, 80 migrants (48 men, 18 girls, 14 boys) on their way to the Arabian Peninsula were stranded in Djibouti and had gathered in two spontaneous sites located along the migration route; most migrants were stranded in the Tadjourah region.
- 118 new migrants were registered at the Obock MRC in October (108 male, 10 female).
- As part of IOM’s AVR programme, a group of 29 migrants were returned to Ethiopia in October.
- IOM in Djibouti started working with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and government counterparts to support migrants who wish to seek asylum in the country by facilitating the application process.

Registrations at the MRC in Obock and AVR Services Requested and Provided (January 2020 - October 2021)

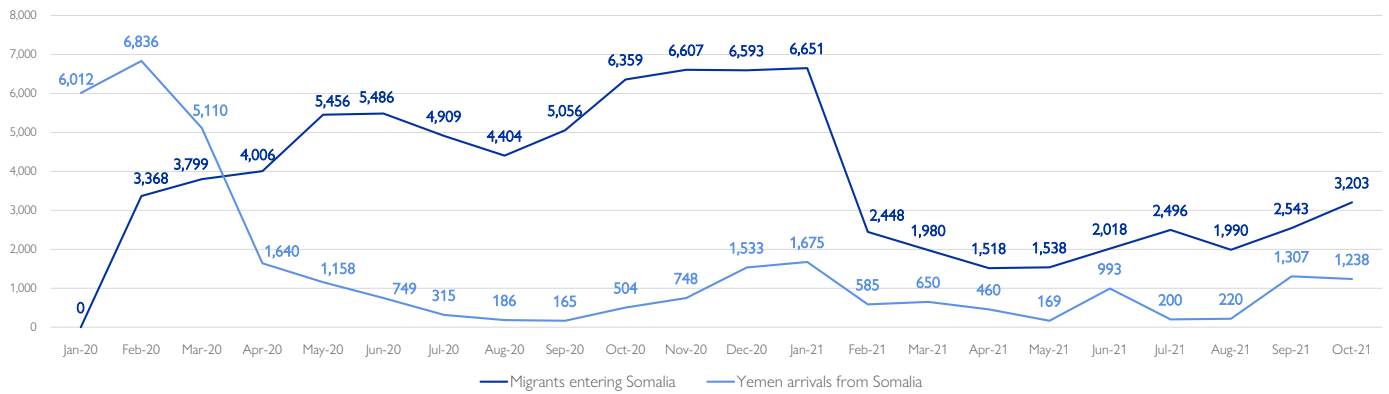


SOMALIA SITUATION

Migrant Flows Observed Through Somalia and at Yemen Points of Entry

- Migrant entries into Somalia increased by 26% between September (2,543) and October (3,203). Almost all migrants were Ethiopian nationals, although 53 movements of other nationalities were also tracked including 18 Yemeni nationals likely headed to Yemen, nine nationals of Guinea-Bissau headed to Saudi Arabia, seven Eritreans and seven Algerians .
- Entries of Ethiopian migrants into Somalia primarily originated in the Somali region of Ethiopia, with over 78% in October 2021 (77% in 2021), while only 12% originated in Oromia (8% in 2021). Less than 1% of migrants entering Somalia were from Tigray and there has been no significant change in the trends over the past two years.
- Migrant arrivals to Yemen from Somalia stood at 1,238 in October, which represents a 5% decrease compared to September (1,307) and brings the total arrivals from Somalia in 2021 to 7,497. Although the reason for this increase is unknown, it is likely that migrants are increasingly preferring to travel through Djibouti due to ease of travel; the available data suggests that smugglers in Djibouti are less concerned about the security situation and more willing to travel over the rough seas compared to smugglers in Somalia. Similar to what was observed in the past, a majority of the migrants tracked upon arrival in Yemen from Somalia were Ethiopian nationals (73%) with the remaining being Somali nationals (27%); the arrivals from Somalia were tracked through the FMPs on the southern coast of Yemen, along the Gulf of Aden. Around 88% of arrivals were adults (76% men, 12% women) and 12% were children (1% boys, 11% girls). Unlike previous months, this is the third consecutive month that no UMCs from Somalia were tracked.
- According to unverified reports received by IOM, the departures to Yemen from Mareero, a small town 15 km east of Bossaso, as well as Elayo, around 36 km from Bossaso, decreased by 77% between September (2,140) and October (500). These reports also stated that Elayo has become a hotspot for migrants as its location is far away from security surveillance. Since the Al-Shabaab attack against the Bossaso prison in March 2021, the Puntland police has established security bases near Mareero which has made it difficult for smugglers to operate there.
- Like in Djibouti, spontaneous return movements from Yemen to Somalia continued with 233 movements (70% male, 30% female) tracked upon arrival in Somaliland (71) and Puntland (162) in October (down from 166 in September). Most movements were returning Somali nationals (161), while 72 Yemeni nationals were also tracked. This brings the total returns from Yemen to Somalia since May 2020 to 3,314, of which 2,316 occurred in 2021.

Migrant Movements through Somalia to Yemen (January 2020 - October 2021)

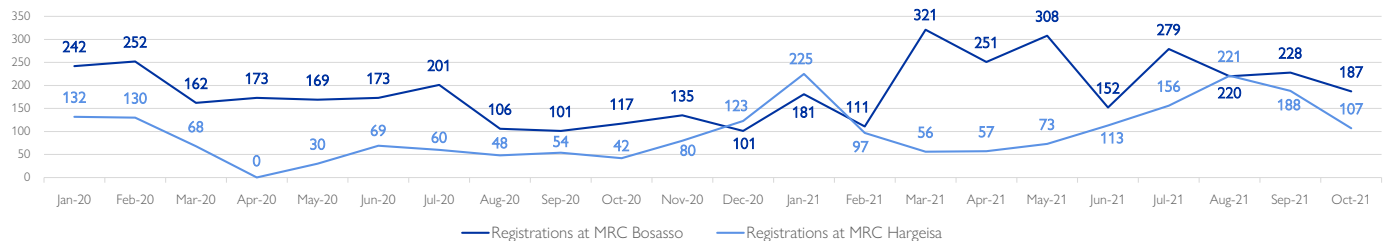


Source: IOM, based on UNHCR, UNWFP, and IOM data. For January 2020 and October 2021, the availability of data on the number of Tigray migrants fleeing to Somalia is limited.

Migrant Protection and Assistance

- IOM estimates that over 500 migrants continue to be stranded in and around Bossaso (300+) and Burao (200+), with few options available to continue their journey or return home.
- On 13 October 2021, a male migrant died while crossing Ruqi village near Baki town in the region of Awdal. The Ethiopian Community Center (ECC) opened an investigation and doctors confirmed that there was no sign of criminal injuries. The ECC traced the deceased’s family and handed over the body to relatives in Wajaale.
- A total of 294 migrants were registered at the Bossaso (187) and Hargeisa (107) MRCs; a 29% decrease from September. Migrant movements along the border with Ethiopia continued due to the ongoing Tigray conflict which has spilled over to other regions in the country. In October, the MRCs in Somalia registered eight Tigrayan migrants (7 male, 1 female), and most were young people aged between 15 and 29 years old.
- 96 AVR requests were received at the MRCs in Hargeisa (50) and Bossaso (46) in October. During this month, 66 AVR movements took place from the Bossaso MRC back to Ethiopia, including 24 UMCs.
- Saudi Arabia returned 84 Somali migrants to Mogadishu in October, including six children (3 boys, 3 girls). Returnees received onward transportation assistance (OTA) to their community of return as well as temporary accommodation prior to OTA.

Registrations at the MRCs in Bossaso and Hargeisa (January 2020 - October 2021)



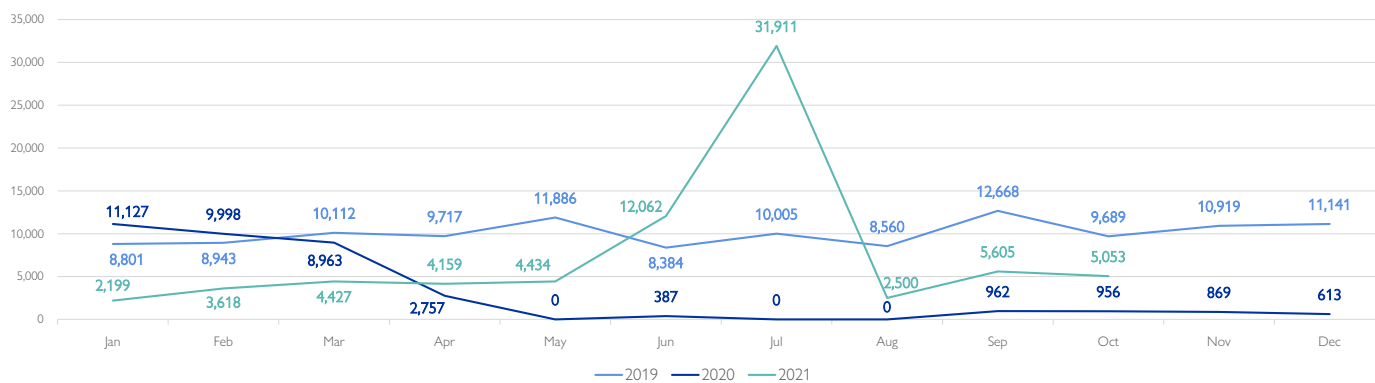
ETHIOPIA SITUATION

Migrant Flows, and Protection and Detention Concerns

- Returns of Ethiopian nationals from Saudi Arabia continued with a total of 5,053 returns in October, at a rate of around 1,200 returns per week. Returnees from the Tigray region continue to arrive in great numbers from Saudi Arabia, roughly 22% of all arrivals in October (1,117 in total). The vast majority were male (62% versus 38% female), and a total of 123 returnees were children under the age of five years old.
- The Government of Ethiopia has arranged dedicated shelter sites in Addis Ababa to accommodate Tigrayan returnees who have no family members to rely on for a possible extended period of time, while those with relatives in Addis Ababa are encouraged to reunite with their family members. Some of the most vulnerable returnees are hosted in shelters run by IOM and other organizations.

- With the conflict spreading to new parts of Amhara, Afar and Oromia, the safety and accessibility of migrants' home communities/final destinations is becoming a concern for an increasing number of returnees. This has implications for the response in Addis Ababa as well as in terms of temporary accommodation and direct assistance to stranded migrants. A total of 209 migrants, including 33 UMCs, were registered at MRCs bordering Djibouti and Somalia in October, namely in Dire Dawa (123), Togochale (65) and Semera (21). Migrants mainly departed from Oromia (55%) and Somali (41%). No migrants from the Tigray region were registered by MRCs in Ethiopia during this month.

Returns of Ethiopian Nationals from Saudi Arabia Electronically Registered by IOM



- Around 2,700 Ethiopian migrants travelled from Ethiopia to Kenya in October 2021, of which 43% originated in Oromia, 41% in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's (SNNP) region, while only 3% were from Tigray. All of these were tracked through the Moyale FMP which has been reactivated during the last quarter of 2020. Although arrivals from Tigray remained low over the past two years, slight spikes that correspond to Djibouti entry spikes were observed, especially during the second quarter of 2021 and the last two months of 2020. Similarly, when reviewing the 193 migrant entries into Sudan from Ethiopia in October 2021, most were from Amhara (34%), while 32% were from Tigray. Although entries into Sudan have remained low in 2021, a spike was seen during July 2021, when almost 1,000 such entries were tracked, though 86% were from Amhara and almost none were from Tigray.

YEMEN SITUATION

Migrant Flows Observed in Yemen

- 20,380 migrant arrivals from the Horn of Africa were tracked on the shores of Yemen in 2021, of which 4,300 arrivals were recorded in October; this is a 55% increase from September as the harsh weather conditions at sea begin to improve and the arrival of migrants to Yemen increases correspondingly.
- Migrants travelled from Djibouti (71%) or from Somalia (29%); the arrivals from Somalia decreased by 5% while the arrivals from Djibouti increased by 109%.³ 92% of all arrivals were Ethiopian nationals and 8% were Somali nationals.
- Around 92% of migrants were adults (83% men, 9% women) and 7% were children (down from 17% in September). Nine UMCs were also tracked; these make up 3% of the overall number of children arriving in Yemen.

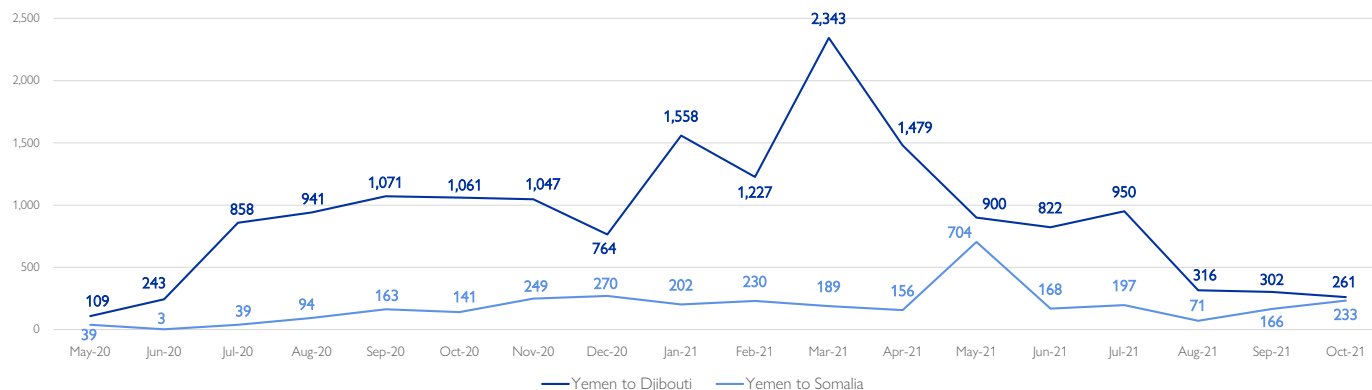
Migrant Arrivals to Yemen from the Horn of Africa (January 2020 - October 2021)



³ 46 migrants were also tracked internally, travelling within Yemen, while 300 departures to Djibouti were also tracked at Al-Aarab FMP.

- DTM Yemen continued tracking returning migrants from Saudi Arabia in October as access to the FMP at the Saudi Arabia-Yemen border remains possible. A total of 16,207 returns were tracked in 2021, of which 6,158 (38%) were tracked in October.
- Due to the difficulties faced by migrants upon arrival in Yemen with their inability to move onwards towards Saudi Arabia, as well as ongoing conflict and living conditions in Yemen, many migrants opt to return back to the Horn of Africa. Since May 2020, 19,566 migrants have made this perilous return journey back to Djibouti (16,252) and to Somalia (3,314) including 12,474 returns in 2021.

Spontaneous Returns from Yemen (May 2020 - October 2021)



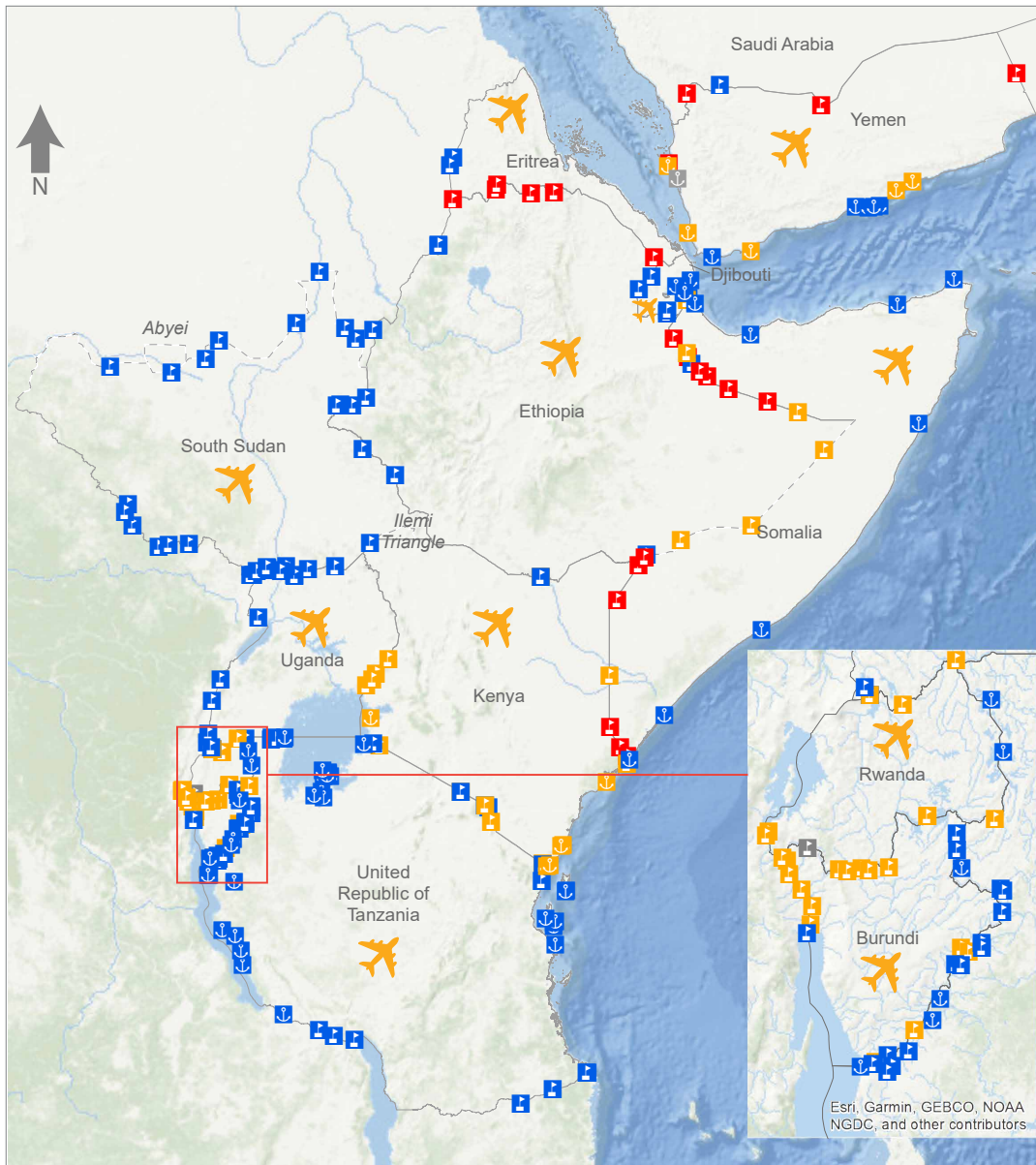
Migrant Protection and Assistance

- IOM estimates that approximately 30,000 migrants are stranded or trapped within Yemen’s borders, requiring urgent humanitarian assistance and being at-risk of grave protection risks along endemic smuggling and trafficking routes. The escalation of violence in Ma’rib, particularly in Al Jubah and Harib districts, is leaving migrants susceptible to increased protection risks and threats and often diverting their journeys and making them more transient.
- Thousands of stranded migrants have approached IOM’s Aden Migrant Response Point (MRP) asking for return assistance to Ethiopia through VHR. These VHR flights resumed in March 2021 after months of disruption, and 264 migrants were returned to Ethiopia in October (204 men, 6 women, 52 boys, 2 girls). Planned movements are now occurring every Tuesday and Thursday on a regular basis. However, challenges remain due to delays in the process of verification of nationality.

ANNEX 1 | 2021 MRC REGISTRATION DATA

MRCs	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	MRC Total
Bossaso	181	111	321	251	308	152	279	220	228	187	2,238
Dire Dawa	0	0	0	0	6	14	1	8	119	123	271
Hargeisa	225	97	56	57	73	113	156	221	188	107	1,293
Metema	0	0	72	80	15	36	336	188	134	139	1,000
Moyale	-	-	187	230	44	59	51	314	50	71	1,006
Obock	173	131	171	70	182	253	199	50	98	118	1,445
Semera	0	0	71	33	34	213	112	12	32	21	528
Togochale	31	126	14	61	49	45	76	88	26	65	581
Monthly Total	610	465	892	782	711	885	1,210	1,101	875	831	8,362

ANNEX 2 | STATUS OF POINTS OF ENTRY IN THE EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA REGION AND YEMEN



Status of international flights*

- Not Restrictive
- Partially Restrictive
- Totally Restrictive
- Not available
- Disputed Areas
- Countries East and Horn of Africa

Status of other border points

- Sea Border Point
- Land Border Point
- Closed for entry and exit
- Partial closure
- Open for entry and exit
- Unknown

*Details of the travel restriction can be found on IATA website: <https://www.iata.org/>

SOURCE:
International Air Transport Association (IATA)
Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)

DATE: 31 October 2021

DISCLAIMER: These maps are for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.