

### About the report

The Horn of Africa and Yemen is one of the busiest and riskiest migration corridors in the world travelled by hundreds of thousands of migrants, the majority of whom travel in an irregular manner, often relying on smugglers to facilitate movement along the Eastern Route. This regional report provides monthly updates on the complex migratory dynamics through [Djibouti](#), [Somalia](#), [Yemen](#) and [Ethiopia](#) based on diverse data sources and consultations with key informants in the four countries. Moreover, it provides information on the main protection concerns for migrants along the journey, information on [the spillover effects of the conflict in Northern Ethiopia](#) observed at the border between Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan, [a specific focus on children](#) and information on the [returns from Saudi Arabia](#) to Ethiopia, Somalia and Yemen.

#### Data sources:

- [Displacement Tracking Matrix](#) data collected at Flow Monitoring Points (FMPs), which includes Flow Monitoring Registry (group level) and Flow Monitoring Survey (individual level) data
- [Registration data](#) for migrants seeking assistance at [Migration Response Centres](#) (MRCs) in Obock (Djibouti), Bossaso, Hargeisa (Somalia), Dire Dawa, Metema, Moyale, Semera and Togochale (Ethiopia), including information on [Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration](#)
- [Voluntary Humanitarian Return](#) from Yemen
- [Returns from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia](#)
- [Missing Migrants Project](#) data on migrant deaths and disappearances



# Migration Through Djibouti

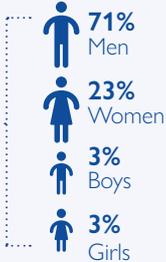
The number of migrants tracked entering Djibouti in December was similar to that of November. However, in 2022 overall, the number of migrants who entered Djibouti (145,545) almost doubled compared with 2021 (78,175). This increase could be attributed to various factors, such as eased COVID-19-related travel regulations at the border between Djibouti and Ethiopia, the worsening conditions of the ongoing drought in larger areas of Ethiopia, or the increase in access from areas affected by conflict in areas of origin. All these factors have pushed individuals to migrate. While less than 1% of movements were due to instability in 2021 (300), this percentage increased to 9% in 2022 (13,000). Similarly, drought-induced movements increased from representing less than 1% of all movements in 2021 (200) to 7% in 2022 (12,000). In December, the proportion of women and girls (26%) entering Djibouti from Ethiopia remained similar to that of previous periods, while 28% of the 782 children tracked were unaccompanied (90% of whom were boys). Over the course of 2022, 63% of children who sought assistance at MRC Obock were unaccompanied.

## Entries into Djibouti

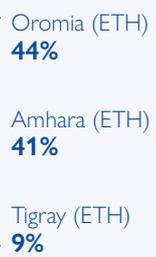
Cumulative  
2022  
**145,545**

**12,645**  
Entries  
December 2022

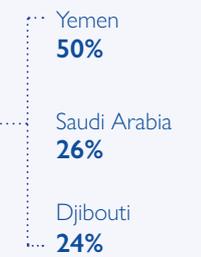
### Sex & Age Group



### Region of Origin



### Intended Destination



Migrants surveyed in  
December 2022

**419**

### Migration Drivers\*

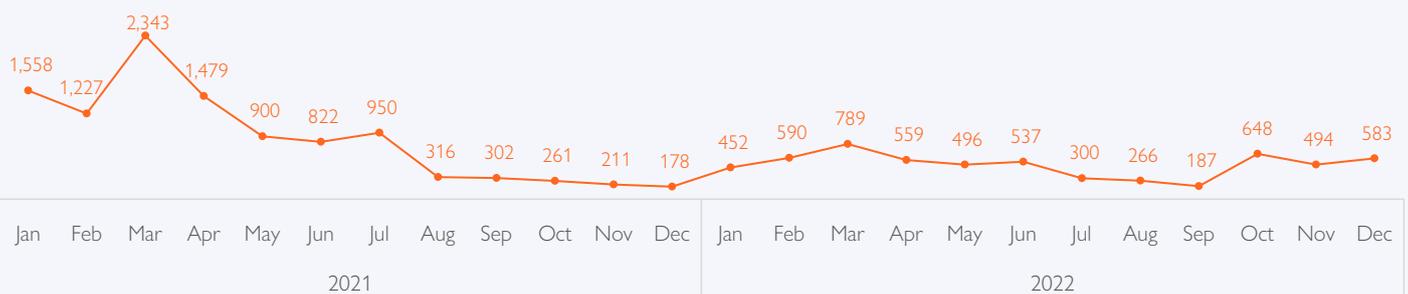


## Spontaneous Returns from Yemen to Djibouti

Cumulative  
2022  
**5,901**

**583**  
Returns  
December  
2022

### Sex & Age Group



## Migrants Seeking Assistance

Cumulative  
2022  
**1,658**

**123**  
MRC  
registrations  
December  
2022

### Sex & Age Group



**672** Stranded migrants  
December 2022

**0** Dead/missing migrants\*\*  
December 2022

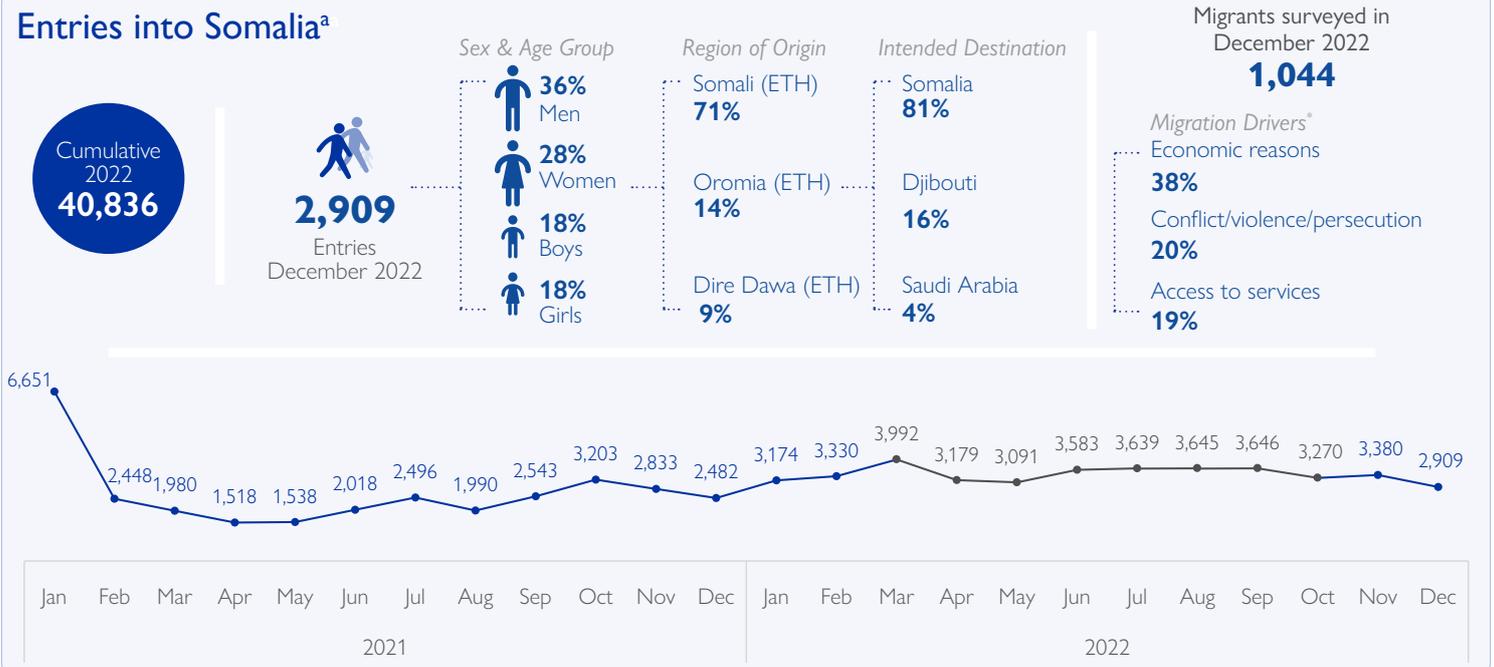
\* Multiple choice question.

\*\* Reporting is based on reports of deaths and missing migrants that could be verified.

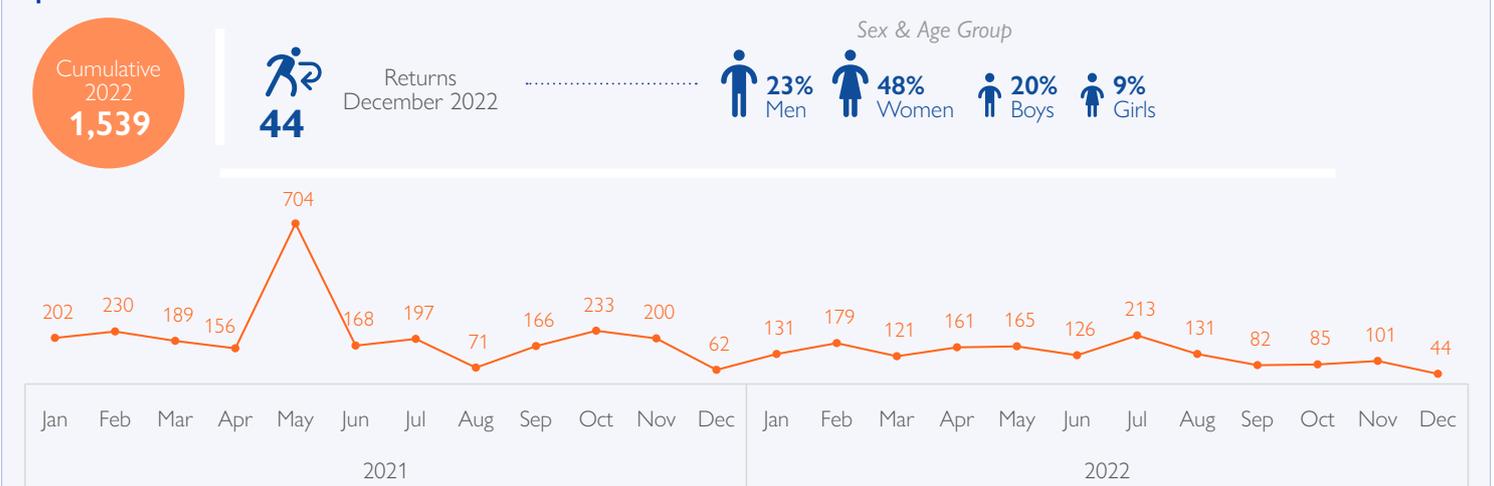
# Migration Through Somalia

Entries into Somalia decreased (-14%) from November to December, which could be attributed to various factors. For example, tensions renewed between the Somaliland region and Puntland, both of which claim authority over the Sool region. Also, officials tightened points of entry along the western border of the Somaliland region to curb irregular migration. As a result, officials in Borama caught smugglers transporting 42 Ethiopian migrants (mostly Oromo) who reported physical and emotional abuse from smugglers, while migrants in Bossaso reported being abused to DTM enumerators by smugglers along their journey from Ethiopia to Somalia, and those transiting through Buuhoodle FMP reported being exposed to continuous threats and lack of food and water. Moreover, as part of a directive from the Somaliland Immigration Authority, forced returns of stranded Ethiopian migrants have been reported. Around 1,400 migrants remained stranded along the shores of the Puntland region while awaiting more favorable sea conditions to cross the Gulf of Aden towards the Arabian Peninsula, which could also explain the 56% decrease in spontaneous returns from Yemen between November and December. As drought conditions worsen, an influx of movements from the Somali region of Ethiopia was observed at the Doolow FMP (+14% from November). Incoming migrants intended to reach IDP camps in the Gedo region to receive humanitarian aid. Movements observed in Somalia continue to be those with the largest proportion of women (28%) and children (36%). At the MRCs in Bossaso and Hargeisa, over 3,600 people sought assistance in 2022, of whom 23% were women and 40% children. Nearly half (45%) of registered children were unaccompanied in 2022 (69% in December alone).

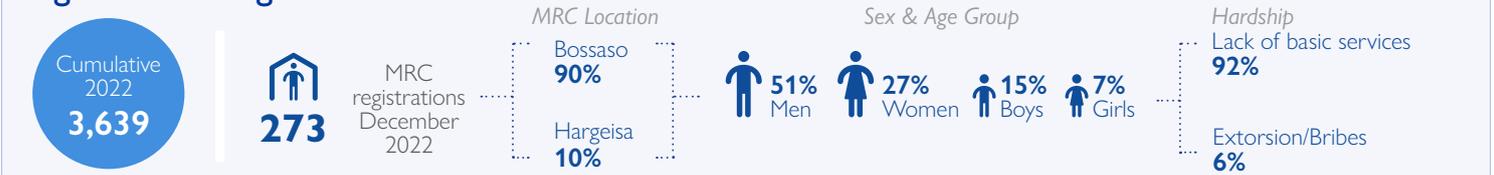
## Entries into Somalia<sup>a</sup>



## Spontaneous Returns from Yemen to Somalia



## Migrants Seeking Assistance



**1,400** Stranded migrants December 2022

**1** Dead/missing migrants\*\* December 2022

<sup>a</sup> Flow monitoring activities in Somalia were suspended between March 2022 and mid-October 2022. To address this gap, the Regional Data Hub built a predictive model to estimate the missing data, which explains the differences from the previous report.

<sup>b</sup> Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region.

\* Multiple choice question.

\*\* Reporting is based on reports of deaths and missing migrants that could be verified.

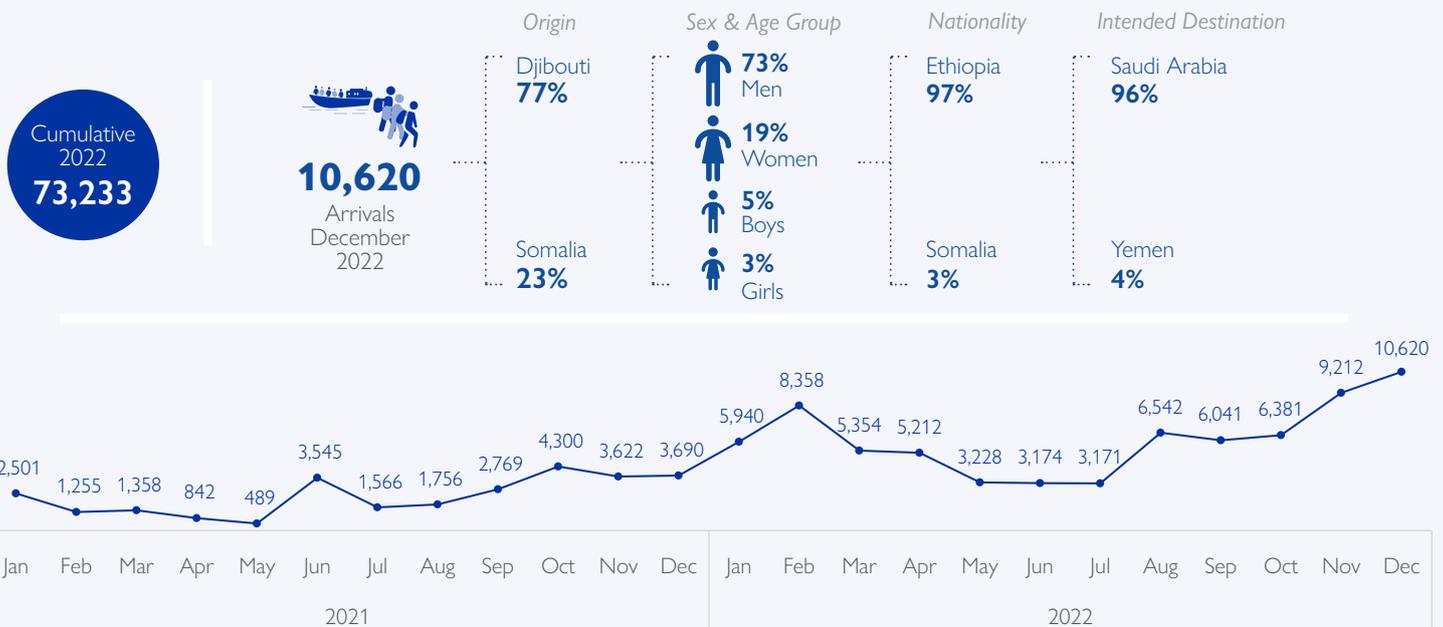
# Migration Through Yemen

Migrant arrivals increased by 15% from November to December, totaling to the highest number of recorded monthly arrivals in two years. More than three-quarters of these movements (77%) arrived in Yemen from Djibouti and almost a quarter from Somalia (23%). This increase has been particularly noticeable through the coast of Lahj in Yemen (from 5,081 in November to 8,220 in December) due to both **reduced patrolling by the Djibouti Coast Guard** and **improved sea conditions** along the Bab al-Mandab Strait. DTM field staff across the shores of Lahj observed smugglers using larger boats and increasing the frequency of trips (up to three per day) to increase the daily number of migrants crossing to Yemen. In contrast, there was a decrease (-42%) in the number of migrants arriving at the Shabwah coast in Yemen from Somalia through the Gulf of Aden due to difficult weather conditions and high tides.

Abuses against migrants continued to be reported along the border of Yemen and Saudi Arabia, resulting in deaths and severe injuries to migrants who required urgent lifesaving assistance via an IOM-supported clinic in the northern governorate of Saada. Further, involuntary returns have been reported from the north to the south of Yemen, while deportations from Saudi Arabia to Yemen continued with over 5,000 returns in December. Meanwhile, IOM is attempting to verify reports of migrants facing physical abuse and forced returns across the Oman–Yemen border. Exploitative practices at the hands of smugglers and traffickers in Yemen continue to compromise the safety and dignity of migrants, particularly women, who are systematically abused along the route.

In December, IOM continued offering voluntary humanitarian return (VHR) assistance. Two flights were organized to support 236 migrants stranded in Marib who returned to Ethiopia in early December. However, upon completion of these flights, and while returning to Marib from Seiyoun Airport, an IOM convoy was attacked, resulting in the death of several escorts. Therefore, IOM was forced to suspend road movements (Marib to Seiyun) and cancel two VHR flights from Marib that were scheduled to assist 150 migrants. Meanwhile, in Sana'a, 203 stranded migrants were able to return home on two more flights in late December, although operational constraints continue to compromise VHR activities.

## Arrivals in Yemen from the Horn of Africa



**43,000** Stranded migrants December 2022

**0** Dead/missing migrants\*\* December 2022

\*\* Reporting is based on IOM Yemen information and is being verified according to Missing Migrants Project criteria.

# Migration Through Ethiopia

The flow of migrants exiting Ethiopia along the Eastern Route decreased slightly (-5%) between November (25,732) and December (24,423). However, these movements experienced a noticeable increase (+38%) between 2021 (185,849) and 2022 (256,288). Similar to the increase in incoming movements to Djibouti from Ethiopia, this increase in outgoing movements from Ethiopia might be explained by different factors, such as eased COVID-19-related travel regulations at the border of Djibouti and Ethiopia, the worsening conditions of the ongoing drought in larger areas of Ethiopia, and increased access to areas affected by conflict and violence. Indeed, in the past year, there has been a significant increase in movements associated with the drought (from 4,408 in 2021 to 23,055 in 2022) and with conflict (4,926 in 2021 and 7,391 in 2022). Still, economic movements continued to be the main migration driver (86%) in 2022, although proportionally, they accounted for fewer movements than in 2021 (91%). Similarly, the number of forced returns from Saudi Arabia to Ethiopia almost tripled between November (5,656) and December (16,368). An increase in movements was also observed through MRCs in Ethiopia toward the Northern Route, a trend corroborated by DTM data – flows on this route nearly tripled in 2022 (+185%) compared to 2021. On the other hand, flows through FMP Moyale on the Southern Route reduced in December (-23%), as did the number of migrants seeking assistance at MRC Moyale, due to tensions at the Kenya–Ethiopia border. In all, 8,200 people sought assistance at MRCs in Ethiopia in 2022, 24% of whom were women and girls. Children on the move in Ethiopia continue to be extremely vulnerable, with 85% of those seeking assistance in 2022 travelling unaccompanied. Migrants of all ages in 2022 reported suffering from lack of basic services (78%), while one third (35%) had been detained (46% when accounting only for children) and 10% had their identification withheld. IOM staff at MRCs report that authorities in the Somali region of Ethiopia strengthened efforts in December to protect migrants and apprehend traffickers and smugglers.

## Exits out of Ethiopia

Cumulative 2022  
**256,288**

**24,423**  
Migrant exits from Ethiopia December 2022

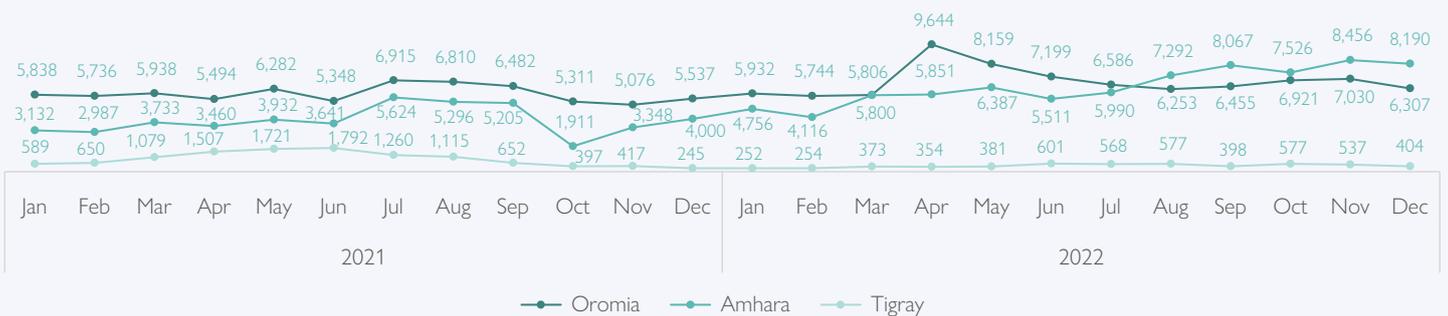
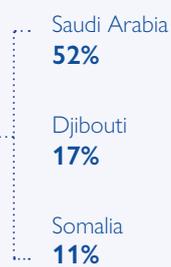
### Sex & Age Group



### Region of Origin



### Intended Destination



Note: Movements from selected regions of origin

## Migrants surveyed in December 2022

**854**  
Surveyed migrants exiting Ethiopia December 2022

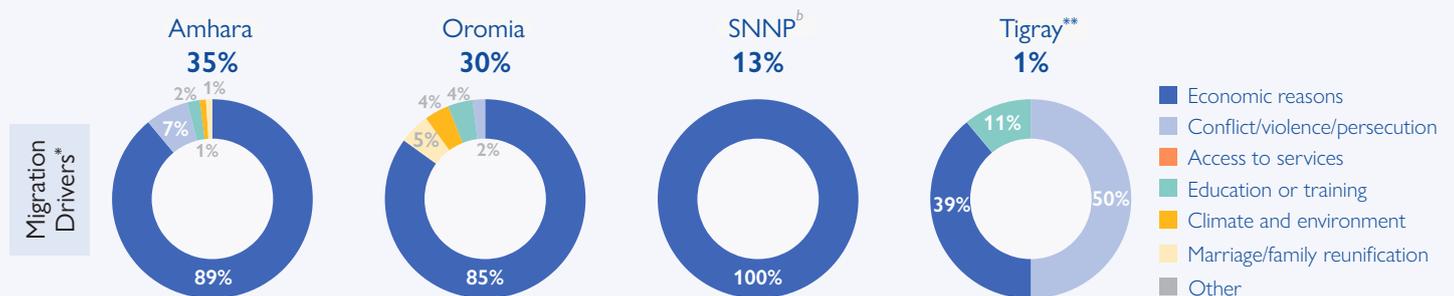
### Sex & Age Group



### Migration Drivers\*



### Intended Destination

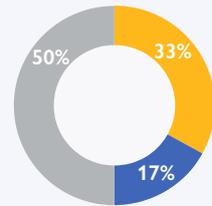
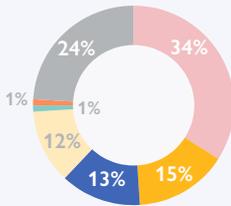
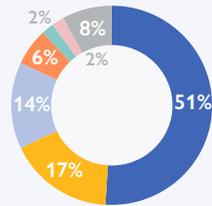
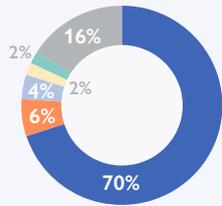


<sup>b</sup> Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region.

\* Multiple choice question.

\*\* Only 12 respondents surveyed from Tigray.

Intended Destination



- Saudi Arabia
- Yemen
- Djibouti
- Somalia
- Kenya
- United Arab Emirates
- South Africa
- Other

## Migrants Seeking Assistance

Cumulative 2022  
**8,233**

**846**  
MRC registrations  
December 2022

### MRC Location

- Dire Dawa **38%**
- Moyale **18%**
- Metema **16%**
- Togochale **28%**

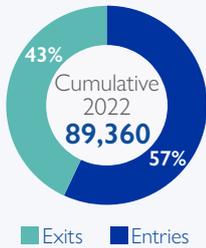
### Sex & Age Group

- 51%** Men
- 29%** Women
- 11%** Boys
- 9%** Girls

### Top 3 Hardships

- Lack of basic services **67%**
- Imprisonment/detention **29%**
- Other **4%**

## Impact of the Northern Ethiopia Conflict Along the Northern and Southern Corridors Ethiopia - Sudan Border (Metema)



**5,465**  
Migrant exits from Ethiopia  
December 2022

**137**  
Surveyed migrants exiting Ethiopia  
December 2022

**6,946**  
Migrant entries into Ethiopia  
December 2022

**43**  
Surveyed migrants entering Ethiopia  
December 2022

### Migration Drivers\*

- Economic reasons **91%**
- Conflict/violence/persecution **7%**
- Marriage/family reunification **1%**
- Marriage/family reunification **98%**
- Other **2%**

## Ethiopia - Kenya Border (Moyale)



**2,347**  
Migrant exits from Ethiopia  
December 2022

**87**  
Surveyed migrants exiting Ethiopia  
December 2022

**1,069**  
Migrant entries into Ethiopia  
December 2022

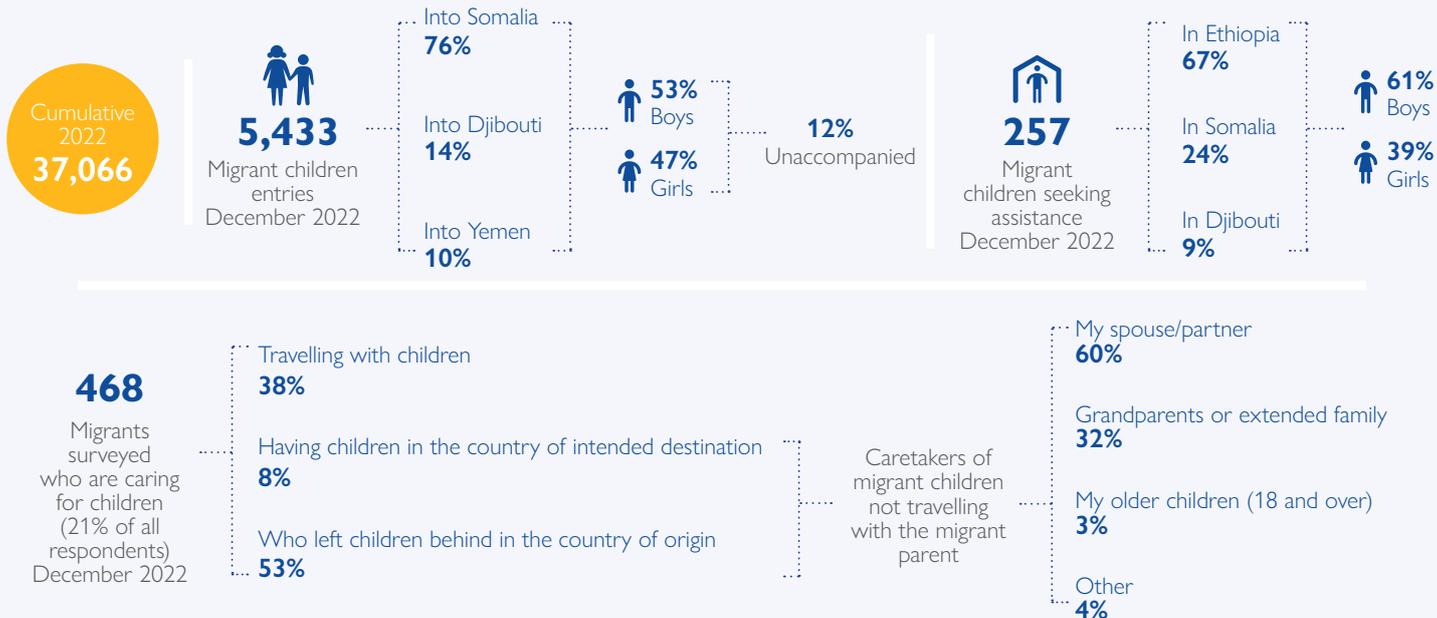
**35**  
Surveyed migrants entering Ethiopia  
December 2022

### Migration Drivers\*

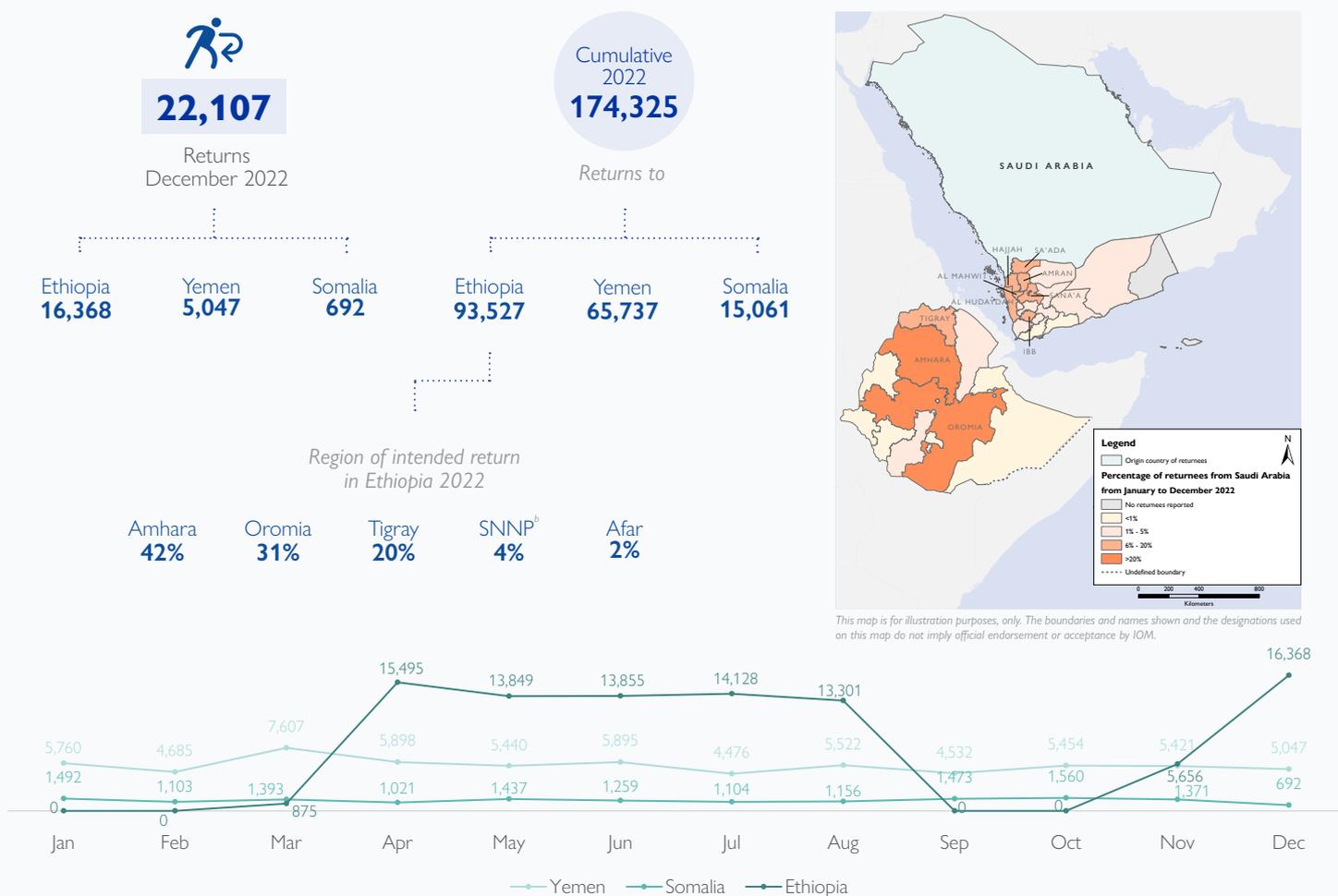
- Economic reasons **81%**
- Conflict/violence/persecution **7%**
- Marriage/family reunification **6%**
- Economic reasons **30%**
- Marriage/family reunification **28%**
- Education or training **6%**

\* Multiple choice question.

## Migrant Children Along the Eastern Corridor



## Returns from Saudi Arabia



Note: From January to May 2021, DTM in Yemen could not track returning migrants from Saudi Arabia due to the inaccessibility to the FMP at the Saudi Arabia–Yemen border. From December 2021 to February 2022 and from September to October 2022, returns to Ethiopia were temporarily suspended due to the Northern Ethiopia conflict. IOM was able to gather all return data for Somalia, which explains the differences from the previous month. For more information on forced returns to Ethiopia, visit: [Returns from Saudi Arabia](#).

<sup>b</sup> Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region.

## Contact