

REGIONAL MOBILITY MAPPING

WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA
JANUARY 2020



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FUNDING SUPPORT

This report is produced by DTM Regional Support team for West and Central Africa through funding support from:



This project is funded by the European Union



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IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental organization, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration, advance understanding of migration issues, encourage social and economic development through migration, and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

For feedback, please contact:

RO Dakar, Data & Research Division – rodakar-dataresearch@iom.int

Damien Jusselme – djusselme@iom.int

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THIS REPORT

The development and implementation of policies and programmes in West and Central Africa promoting safe, orderly and humane migration require a better understanding of human mobility in the region.

Human mobility in the region take many different forms. Transhumance, seasonal migration conducted during the harvesting season, travel during religious festivities, tourism, economic migration to North Africa and Europe, the search for employment in the mining industry, forced displacements due to conflict, natural disasters or climate-related migration, rural exodus, are all examples of movements observes in West and Central Africa and show the many faceted nature of mobility in the region.

This document is an attempt to provide a dynamic and regularly updated portrait of mobility within, from and to West and Central Africa region, using data collected by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The maps contained in this document are not only meant to inform on ongoing mobility patterns, but also provide information to support direct programming (protection of migrants, management of transhumance flows, support to safe returns of displaced people) and policy.

DATA SOURCES

Data sources for the information displayed in this document are provided at the bottom of each page. When reference is made to IOM data, the data was collected during: 1) Flow Monitoring, 2) Mobility Tracking, 3) Interviews with individuals who benefited from voluntary returns and reintegration programs (AVRR), 4) Search and Rescue activities conducted in Niger and 5) Interviews with IOM Key Informants.

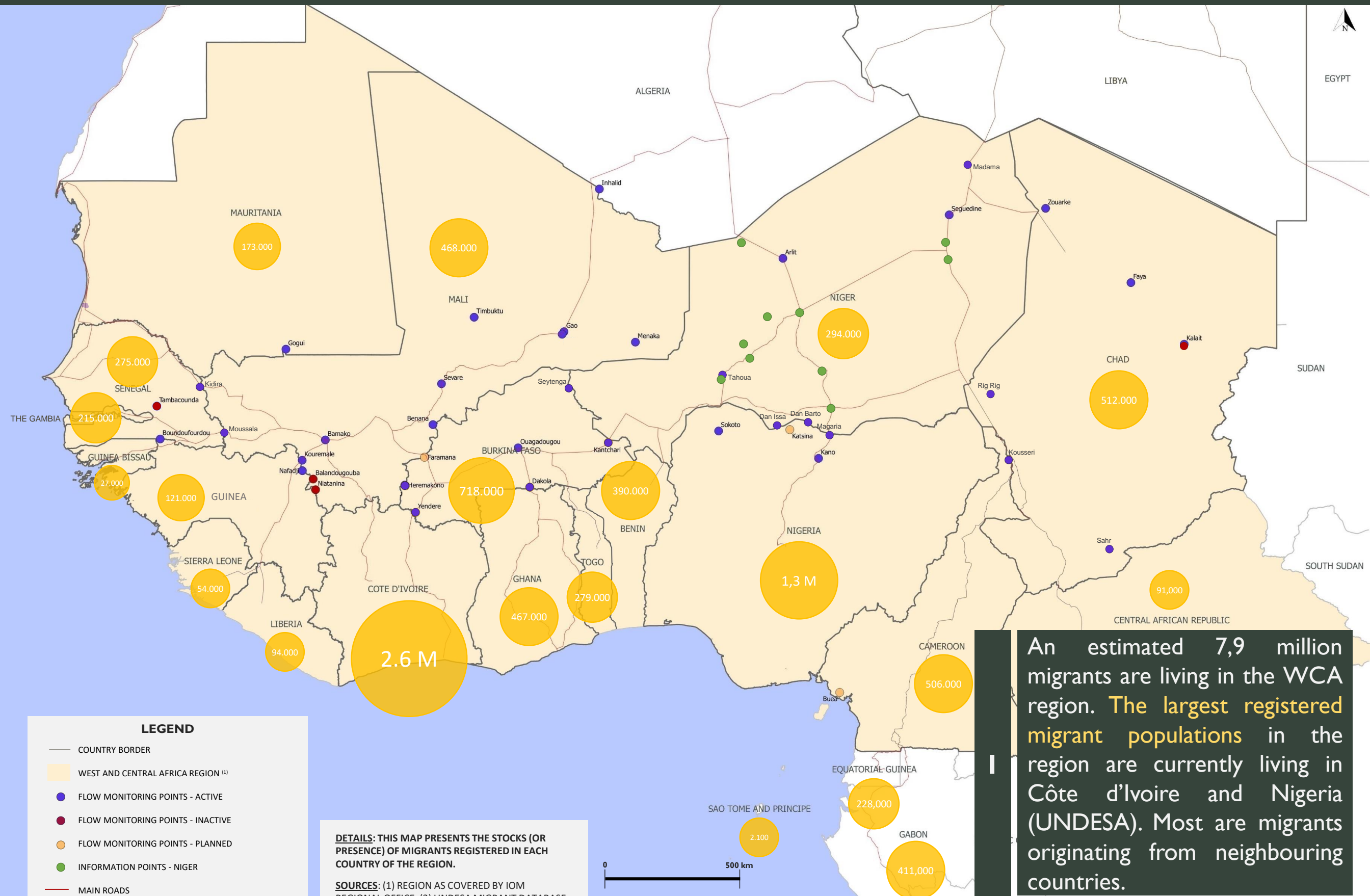
Further information on the data collection methodologies and on the activities referenced throughout the report is available in the following documents:

- Flow Monitoring activities in West and Central Africa – [Factsheet](#)
- Mobility Tracking activities in West and Central Africa – [Factsheet](#)
- Assistance to Voluntary Return and Reintegration – [Factsheet](#)
- DTM Monthly Regional Report - [Report](#)

Other data presented in this document is provided by the Ministries of the Interior of Spain, Italy and Greece, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA).

CONTENT

- **MIGRANT STOCKS** ◦ *Page 4*
- **MIGRATION FLOWS** ◦ *Page 5*
- **MIGRATION ROUTES** ◦ *Page 6*
- **LABOUR MOBILITY** ◦ *Page 7*
- **TRANSHUMANCE** ◦ *Page 8*
- **INTER-REGIONAL ROUTES** ◦ *Page 9*
- **INTER-REGIONAL TRENDS I** ◦ *Page 10*
- **INTER-REGIONAL TRENDS II** ◦ *Page 11*
- **TRAVELLER PROFILES** ◦ *Page 12*
- **REGIONS OF ORIGIN** ◦ *Page 13*
- **CONFLICT & DISPLACEMENT** ◦ *Page 14*
- **RETURN ASSISTANCE BY IOM** ◦ *Page 15*
- **IOM PRESENCE IN THE REGION** ◦ *Page 16*
- **NOTE ON METHODOLOGY** ◦ *Page 17*



LEGEND

- COUNTRY BORDER
- WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA REGION ⁽¹⁾
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - ACTIVE
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - INACTIVE
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - PLANNED
- INFORMATION POINTS - NIGER
- MAIN ROADS
- X M NUMBER OF MIGRANTS PRESENT IN COUNTRY ⁽²⁾

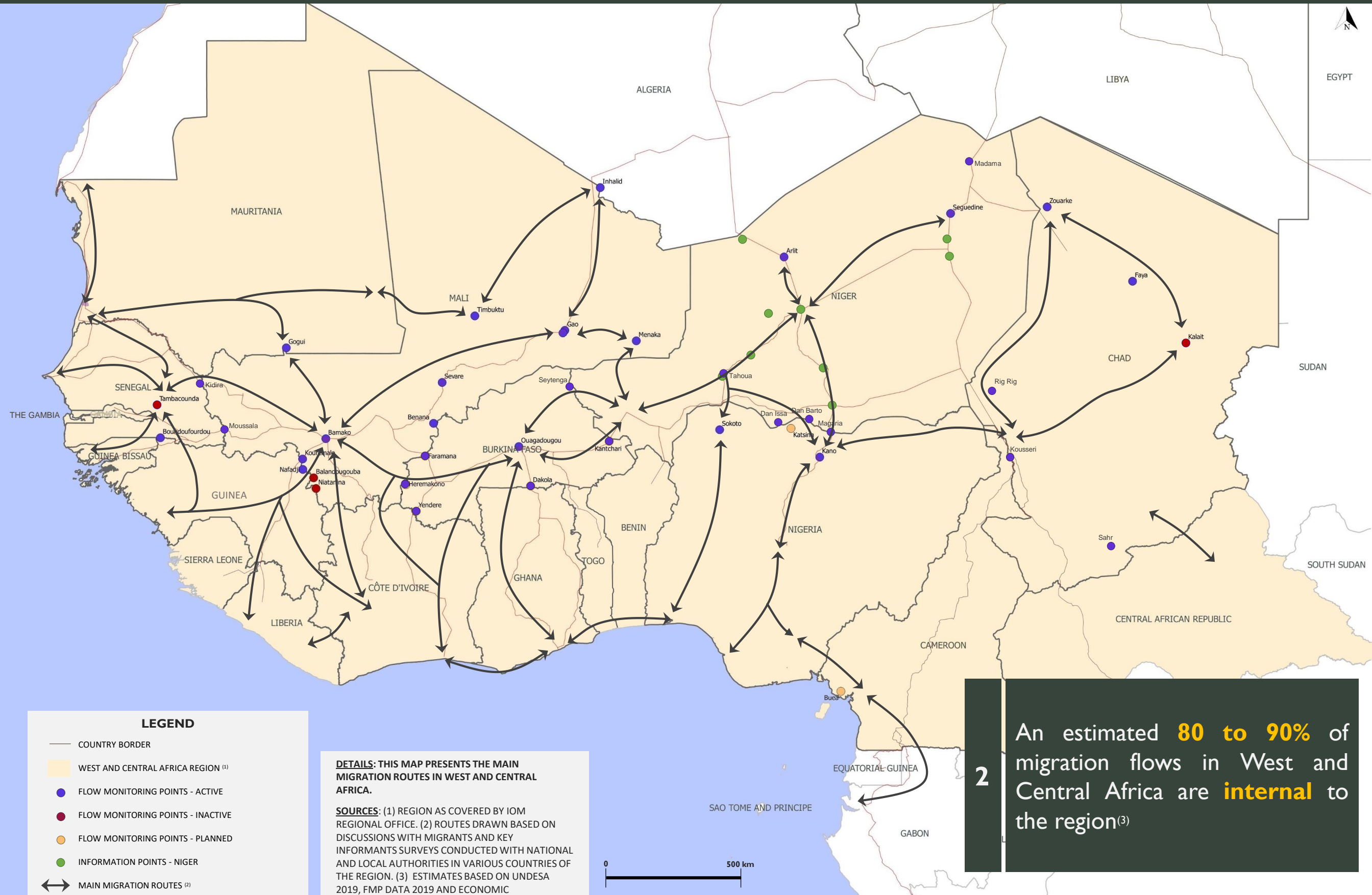
DETAILS: THIS MAP PRESENTS THE STOCKS (OR PRESENCE) OF MIGRANTS REGISTERED IN EACH COUNTRY OF THE REGION.

SOURCES: (1) REGION AS COVERED BY IOM REGIONAL OFFICE. (2) UNDESA MIGRANT DATABASE 2019

An estimated 7.9 million migrants are living in the WCA region. The largest registered migrant populations in the region are currently living in Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria (UNDESA). Most are migrants originating from neighbouring countries.



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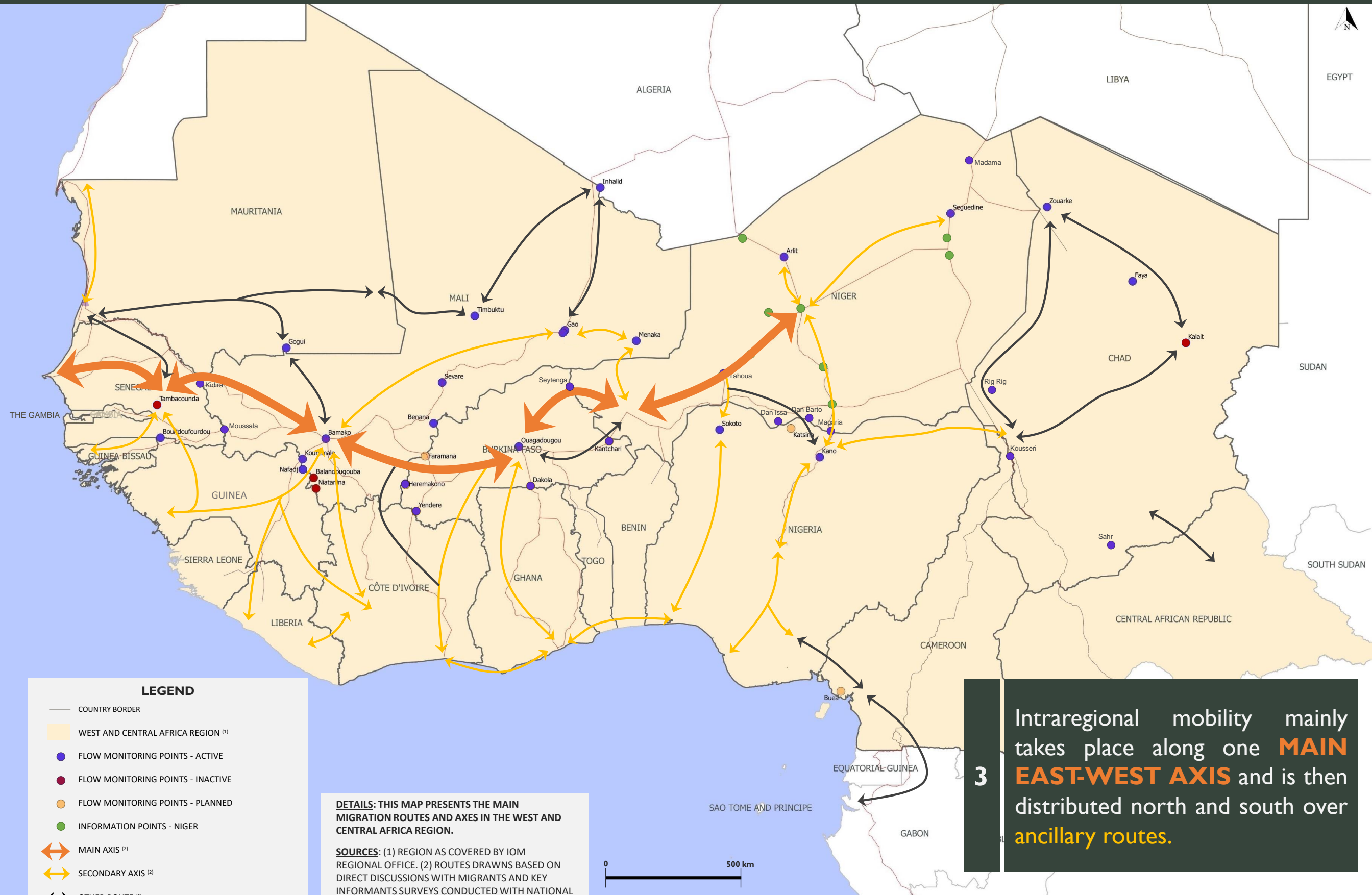
LEGEND

- COUNTRY BORDER
- WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA REGION ⁽¹⁾
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - ACTIVE
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - INACTIVE
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - PLANNED
- INFORMATION POINTS - NIGER
- ↔ MAIN MIGRATION ROUTES ⁽²⁾
- MAIN ROADS

DETAILS: THIS MAP PRESENTS THE MAIN MIGRATION ROUTES IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA.

SOURCES: (1) REGION AS COVERED BY IOM REGIONAL OFFICE. (2) ROUTES DRAWN BASED ON DISCUSSIONS WITH MIGRANTS AND KEY INFORMANTS SURVEYS CONDUCTED WITH NATIONAL AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES OF THE REGION. (3) ESTIMATES BASED ON UNDESA 2019, FMP DATA 2019 AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA, REPORT 2018 FROM UNCTAD

2 An estimated **80 to 90%** of migration flows in West and Central Africa are **internal** to the region⁽³⁾



LEGEND

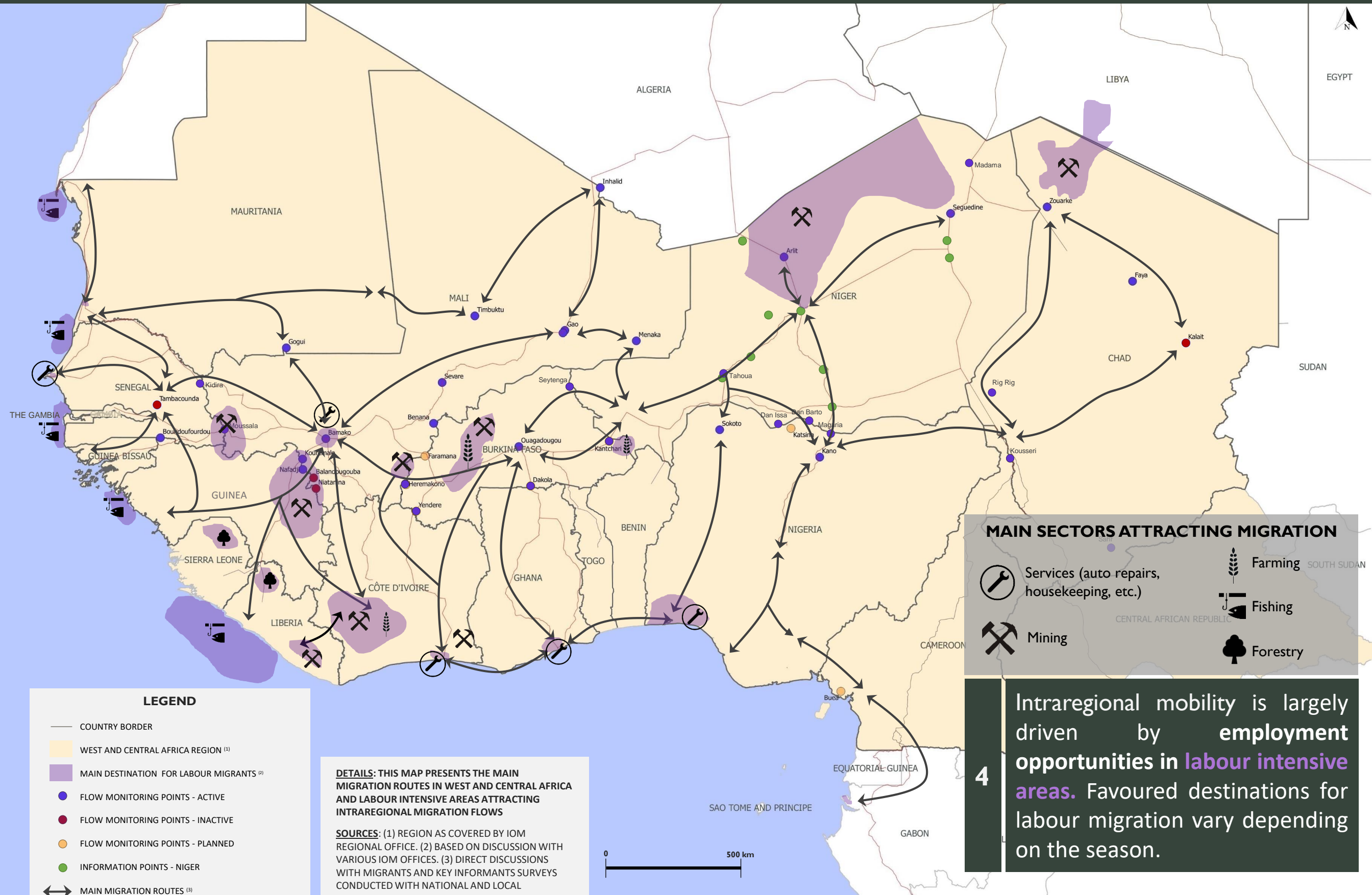
- COUNTRY BORDER
- WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA REGION ⁽¹⁾
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - ACTIVE
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - INACTIVE
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - PLANNED
- INFORMATION POINTS - NIGER
- ↔ MAIN AXIS ⁽²⁾
- ↔ SECONDARY AXIS ⁽²⁾
- ↔ OTHER ROUTE ⁽²⁾
- MAIN ROADS

DETAILS: THIS MAP PRESENTS THE MAIN MIGRATION ROUTES AND AXES IN THE WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA REGION.

SOURCES: (1) REGION AS COVERED BY IOM REGIONAL OFFICE. (2) ROUTES DRAWNS BASED ON DIRECT DISCUSSIONS WITH MIGRANTS AND KEY INFORMANTS SURVEYS CONDUCTED WITH NATIONAL AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES OF THE REGION.

3 Intraregional mobility mainly takes place along one **MAIN EAST-WEST AXIS** and is then distributed north and south over **ancillary routes**.





MAIN SECTORS ATTRACTING MIGRATION

- Services (auto repairs, housekeeping, etc.)
- Mining
- Farming
- Fishing
- Forestry

LEGEND

- COUNTRY BORDER
- WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA REGION ⁽¹⁾
- MAIN DESTINATION FOR LABOUR MIGRANTS ⁽²⁾
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - ACTIVE
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - INACTIVE
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - PLANNED
- INFORMATION POINTS - NIGER
- MAIN MIGRATION ROUTES ⁽³⁾
- MAIN ROADS

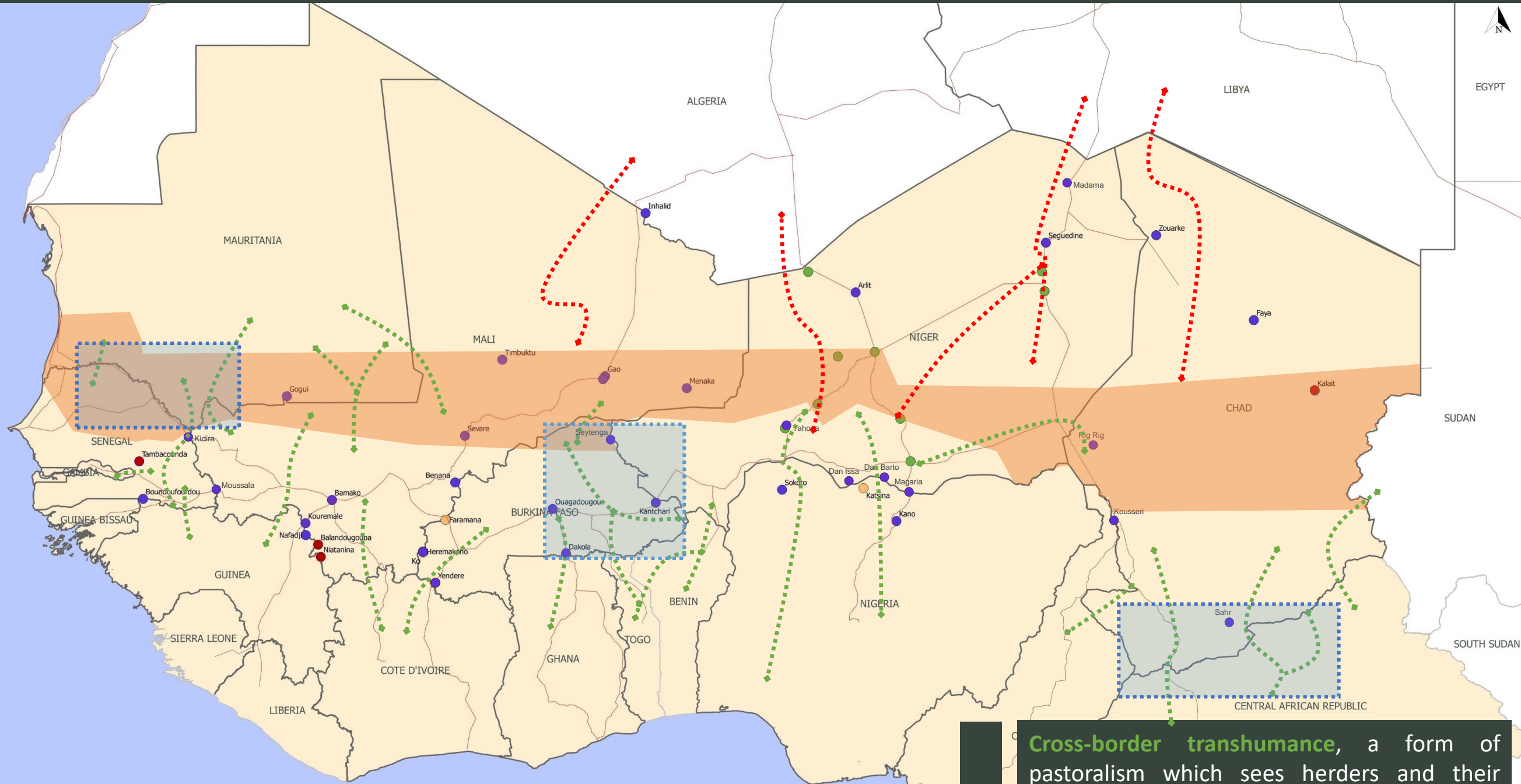
DETAILS: THIS MAP PRESENTS THE MAIN MIGRATION ROUTES IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA AND LABOUR INTENSIVE AREAS ATTRACTING INTRAREGIONAL MIGRATION FLOWS

SOURCES: (1) REGION AS COVERED BY IOM REGIONAL OFFICE. (2) BASED ON DISCUSSION WITH VARIOUS IOM OFFICES. (3) DIRECT DISCUSSIONS WITH MIGRANTS AND KEY INFORMANTS SURVEYS CONDUCTED WITH NATIONAL AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES OF THE REGION

4 Intraregional mobility is largely driven by employment opportunities in labour intensive areas. Favoured destinations for labour migration vary depending on the season.



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EGYPT

SUDAN

SOUTH SUDAN

LEGEND

- COUNTRY BORDER
- WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA REGION ⁽¹⁾
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - ACTIVE
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - INACTIVE
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - PLANNED
- INFORMATION POINTS - NIGER
- PASTORAL ZONE ⁽²⁾
- ◆◆◆◆◆ TRANSBOUNDARY TRANSHUMANCE ROUTE ⁽²⁾
- ◆◆◆◆◆ ROUTE TAKEN BY NOMADIC CARAVANS ⁽²⁾

ONGOING IOM DATA COLLECTION ON TRANSHUMANCE

DETAILS: THIS MAP PRESENTS THE MAIN TRANSHUMANCE AND NOMADIC ROUTES IN THE WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA REGION.

SOURCES: (1) REGION AS COVERED BY IOM REGIONAL OFFICE. (2) OECD 2014, AN ATLAS FOR SUB-SAHARA SAHEL: GEOGRAPHIC, ECONOMICS AND SECURITY, OECD PUBLISHING, PARIS. FROM: SAHEL AND WEST AFRICA CLUB SECRETARIAT (SWAC/OECD)

5 **Cross-border transhumance**, a form of pastoralism which sees herders and their livestock migrate on a seasonal basis between complementary ecological areas, from areas with scarce grazing lands and water sources to areas with more abundant pastures and water, is a common occupation across West and Central Africa which contributes significantly to human mobility in the region.

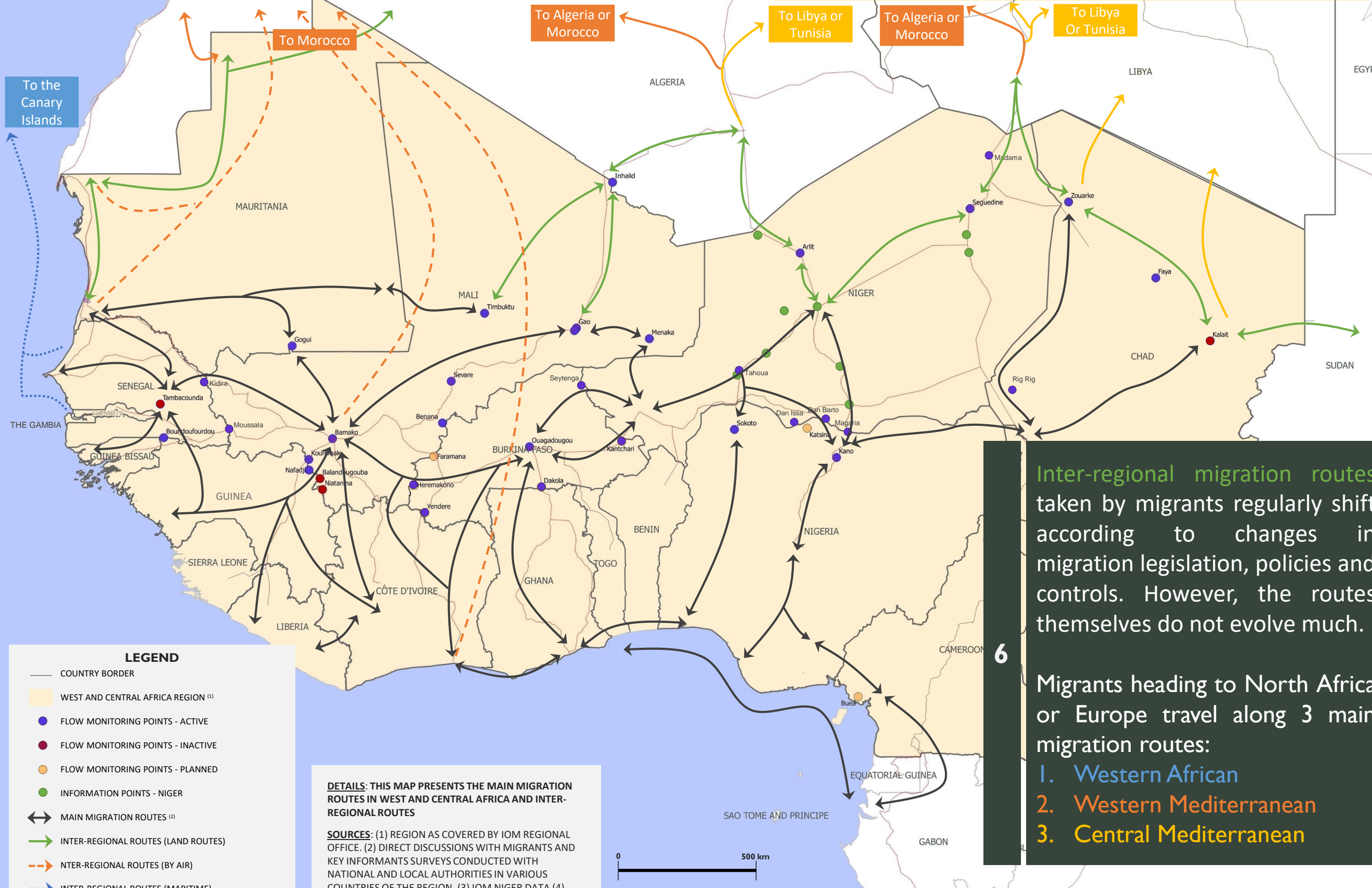


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WESTERN AFRICAN ROUTE

WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN ROUTE

CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN ROUTE



6 Inter-regional migration routes taken by migrants regularly shift according to changes in migration legislation, policies and controls. However, the routes themselves do not evolve much.

Migrants heading to North Africa or Europe travel along 3 main migration routes:

1. Western African
2. Western Mediterranean
3. Central Mediterranean

DETAILS: THIS MAP PRESENTS THE MAIN MIGRATION ROUTES IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA AND INTER-REGIONAL ROUTES

SOURCES: (1) REGION AS COVERED BY IOM REGIONAL OFFICE. (2) DIRECT DISCUSSIONS WITH MIGRANTS AND KEY INFORMANTS SURVEYS CONDUCTED WITH NATIONAL AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES OF THE REGION. (3) IOM NIGER DATA (4) FMP MALI AND NIGER DASHBOARDS

SPAIN

2014 – XXXX 2017 – 28,707
2015 – 5,309 2018 – 65,325
2016 – 14,558

Arrivals: **32,513**

January to December 2019

2019: 34% of arrivals from WCA

Deaths: 464

2018: 71% of arrivals from WCA

57% fewer arrivals to Spain than in 2018

Of which TOP 5 Nationalities is (October 2019)

MOROCCO: 7,623 (23%)

ALGERIA: 4,237 (13%)

GUINEA: 3,577 (11%)

MALI: 2,928 (9%)

OTHER: 2,472 (8%) (May include WCA nationals)

LAND (Ceuta, Melilla) - 20%

SEA - 80%

ITALY

2014 – 170,100 2017 – 119,369
2015 – 153,842 2018 – 23,370
2016 – 181,436

Arrivals: **11,471**

January to December 2019

2019: 21% of arrivals from WCA

Deaths: 743

2018: 20-25% of arrivals from WCA

62% fewer arrivals to Italy than in 2018

Of which TOP 5 Nationalities (October 2019)

TUNISIA: 2,654 (23%)

PAKISTAN: 1,180 (10%)

CÔTE D'IVOIRE: 1,139 (10%)

ALGERIA: 1,009 (9%)

IRAQ: 972 (8%)

An additional 3,405 individuals arrived in Malta

GREECE

2014 – XX,XXX 2017 – 35,052
2015 – 857,363 2018 – 50,125
2016 – 176,906

Arrivals: **70,651**

January to December 2019

2019: 5% of arrivals from WCA

Deaths: 71

2018: 9% of arrivals from WCA

24% more arrivals to Greece than in 2018

Of which TOP 5 Nationalities (October 2019)

AFGHANISTAN: 20,607 (29%)

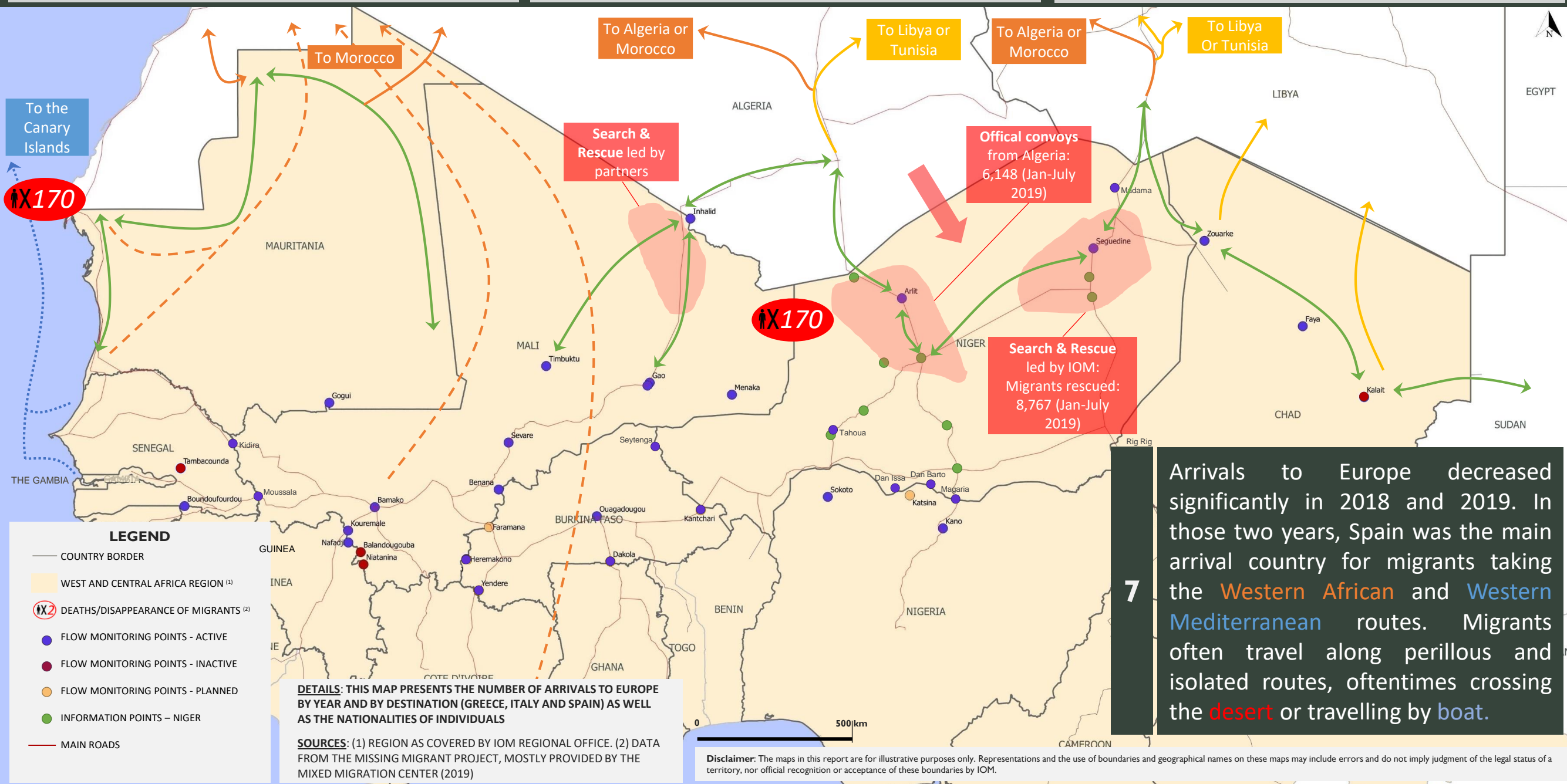
SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC: 14,868 (21%)

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO: 3,662 (5%)

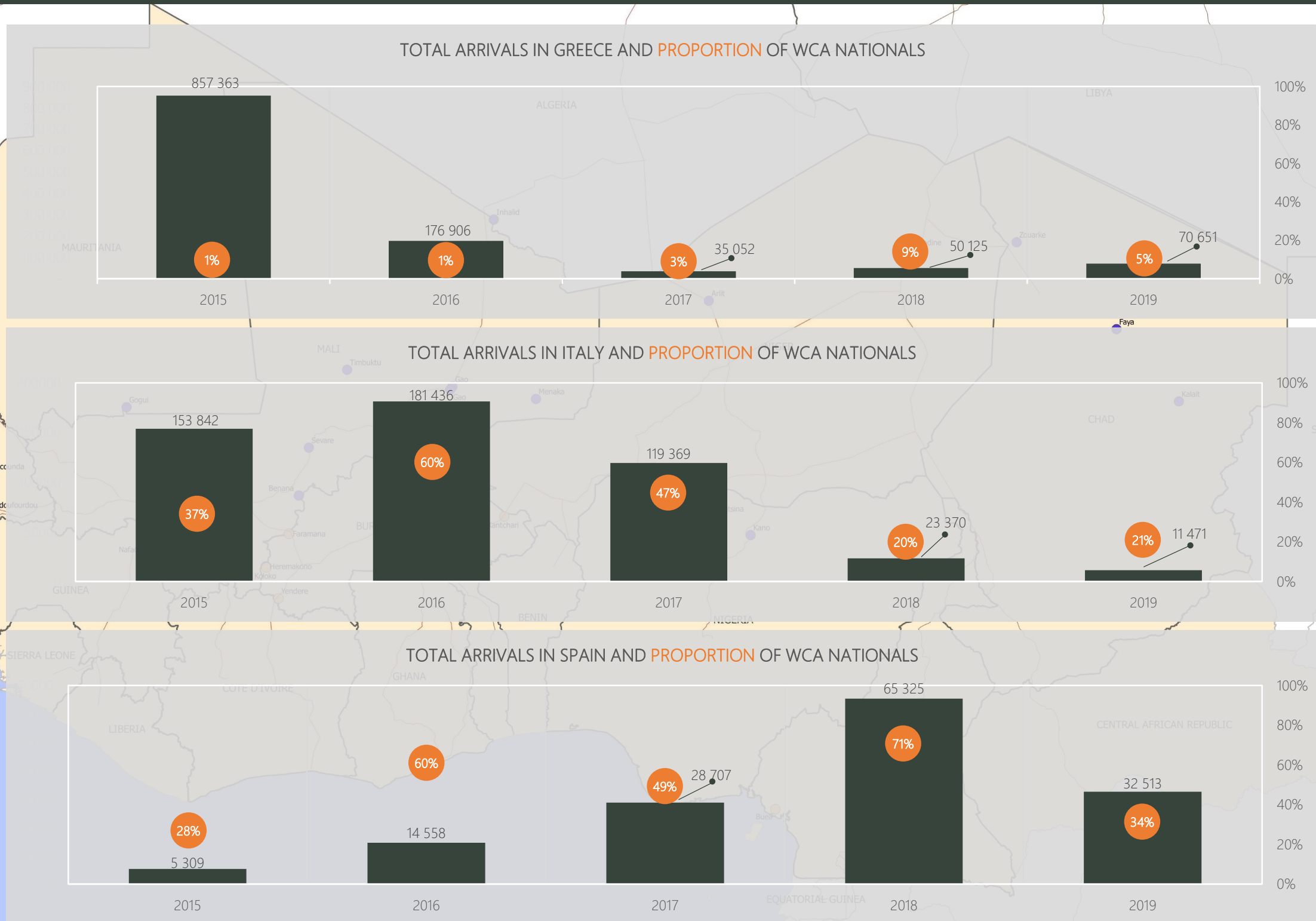
IRAQ: 3,355 (5%)

OTHER: 6,629 (9%)

An additional 7,647 individuals arrived in Cyprus and 1,952 in Bulgaria



Arrivals to Europe decreased significantly in 2018 and 2019. In those two years, Spain was the main arrival country for migrants taking the **Western African** and **Western Mediterranean** routes. Migrants often travel along perillous and isolated routes, oftentimes crossing the **desert** or travelling by **boat**.



DETAILS: THIS PAGE PRESENTS THE NUMBERS OF ARRIVALS TO EUROPE BY MAIN COUNTRY OF ARRIVAL (GREECE, ITALY, SPAIN), YEAR, AND PROPORTION OF WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICAN NATIONALS

SOURCES: National Government of Spain, Italy and Greece as well as IOM and UNHCR data were used for this infographic.

Migrant and refugee arrivals to Europe have changed significantly since 2015. In 2015, an estimated 857,363 migrants and refugees reached Greece, with only 1% originating from West and Central Africa (WCA). The highest proportion of WCA nationals among arrivals in Greece was in 2018 (9% of all arrivals originating from WCA), with the share dropping to 5% in 2019. Arrivals of WCA nationals in Italy were stable in 2018-2019 (respectively 20% and 21%) but dropped significantly since 2016 (60% of arrivals in 2016 were WCA nationals). The share of WCA nationals amongst migrant and refugee arrivals to Spain has fluctuated from 2015 to 2019, and witnessed a sharp decrease between 2018 (71% of all arrivals in Spain, the highest observed in the 2015-2019 time period) and 2019 (34%).

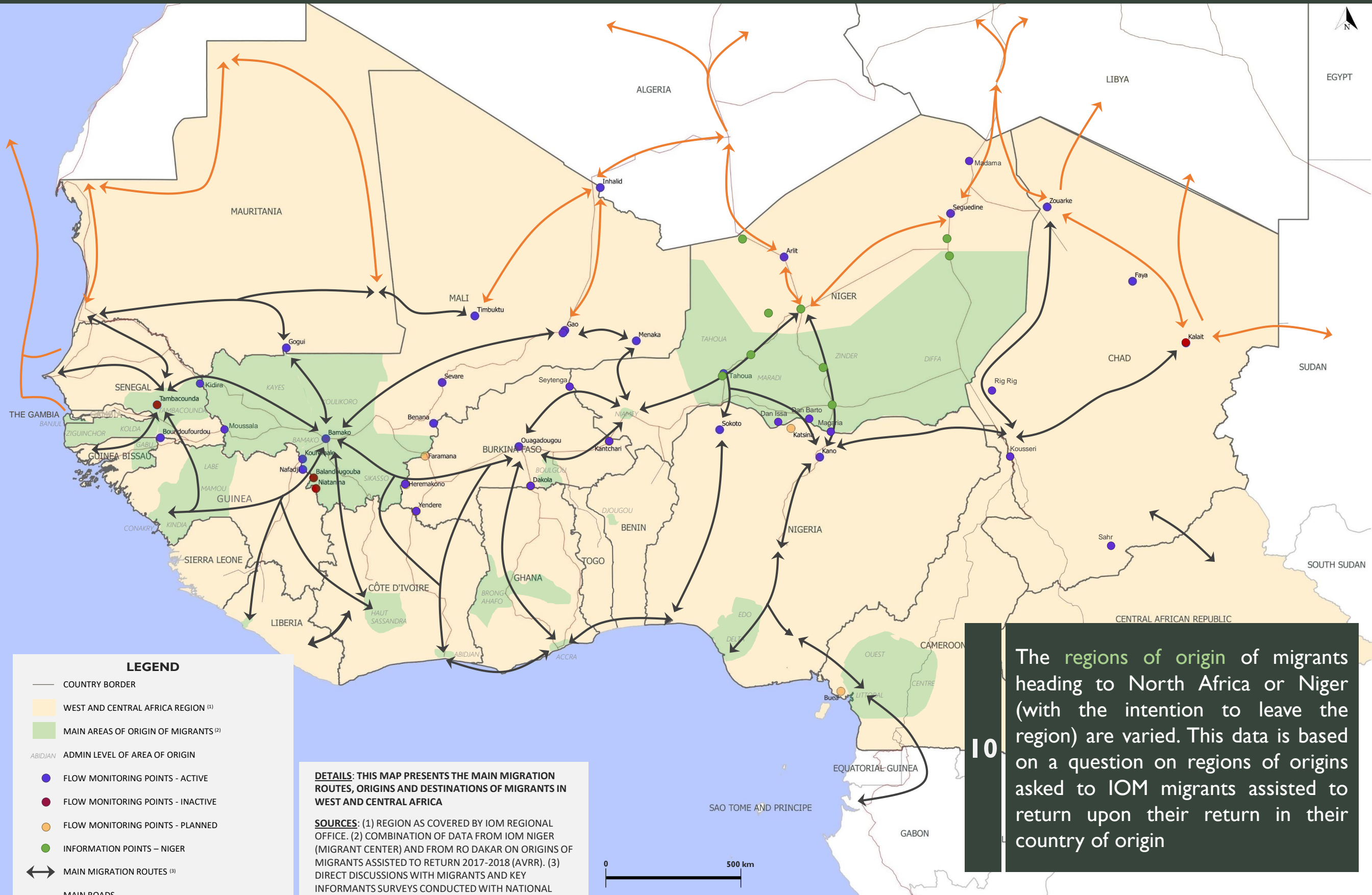
INTENDED DESTINATION



9

Travellers moving within West and Central Africa, headed for North Africa, and migrating to Europe showcase significant differences in age, marital status, education level and employment status in country of habitual residence. The unemployment rate of travellers also varies according to the nature of the movements and the intended destination: migration to a country in West and Central Africa is more likely to be conducted in response to concrete job opportunities than migration to Europe or North Africa.

*The profile of travellers (individuals crossing IOM FMPs) by intended destination presented on this page is based on data collected during **Flow Monitoring Surveys conducted with over 50,000 travellers across the region between January and September 2019.** Further information on methodology is available at the end of the document.*



LEGEND

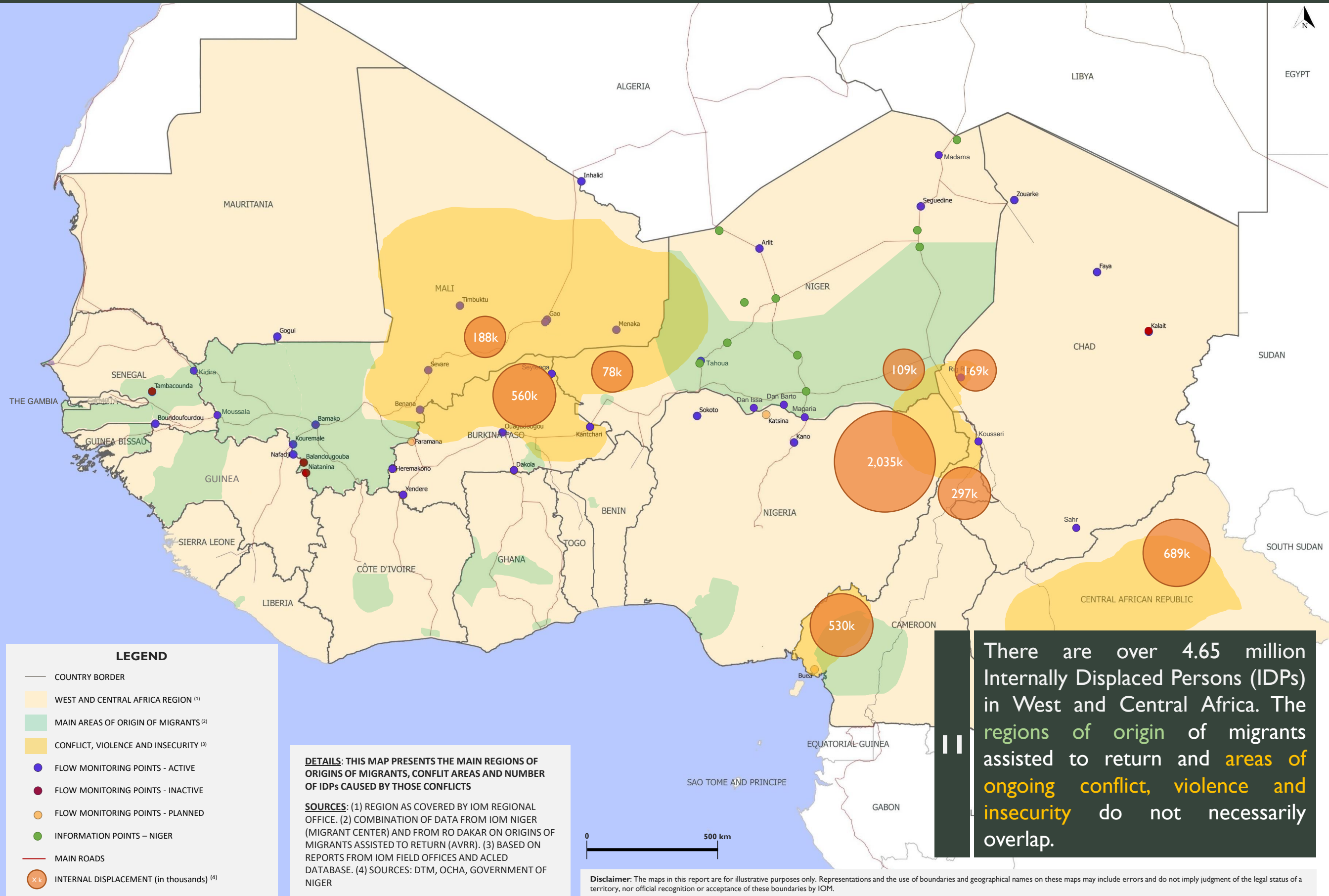
- COUNTRY BORDER
- WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA REGION (1)
- MAIN AREAS OF ORIGIN OF MIGRANTS (2)
- ABIDJAN ADMIN LEVEL OF AREA OF ORIGIN
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - ACTIVE
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - INACTIVE
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - PLANNED
- INFORMATION POINTS - NIGER
- ↔ MAIN MIGRATION ROUTES (3)
- MAIN ROADS
- ↔ MAIN INTER-REGIONAL ROUTES

DETAILS: THIS MAP PRESENTS THE MAIN MIGRATION ROUTES, ORIGINS AND DESTINATIONS OF MIGRANTS IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

SOURCES: (1) REGION AS COVERED BY IOM REGIONAL OFFICE. (2) COMBINATION OF DATA FROM IOM NIGER (MIGRANT CENTER) AND FROM RO DAKAR ON ORIGINS OF MIGRANTS ASSISTED TO RETURN 2017-2018 (AVRR). (3) DIRECT DISCUSSIONS WITH MIGRANTS AND KEY INFORMANTS SURVEYS CONDUCTED WITH NATIONAL AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES OF THE REGION.

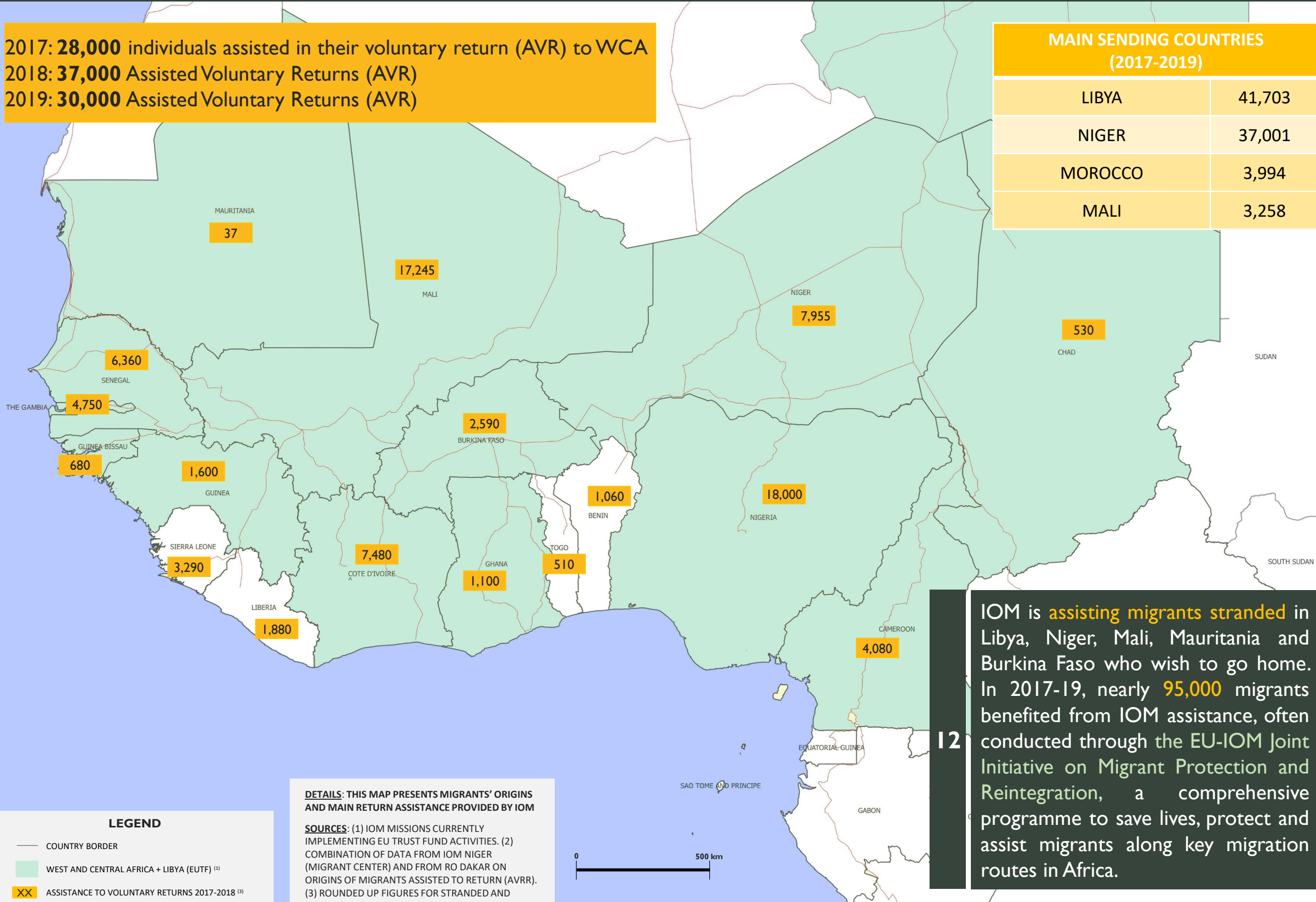
10 The regions of origin of migrants heading to North Africa or Niger (with the intention to leave the region) are varied. This data is based on a question on regions of origins asked to IOM migrants assisted to return upon their return in their country of origin





2017: 28,000 individuals assisted in their voluntary return (AVR) to WCA
2018: 37,000 Assisted Voluntary Returns (AVR)
2019: 30,000 Assisted Voluntary Returns (AVR)

MAIN SENDING COUNTRIES (2017-2019)	
LIBYA	41,703
NIGER	37,001
MOROCCO	3,994
MALI	3,258



12 IOM is assisting migrants stranded in Libya, Niger, Mali, Mauritania and Burkina Faso who wish to go home. In 2017-19, nearly **95,000** migrants benefited from IOM assistance, often conducted through the EU-IOM Joint Initiative on Migrant Protection and Reintegration, a comprehensive programme to save lives, protect and assist migrants along key migration routes in Africa.

LEGEND

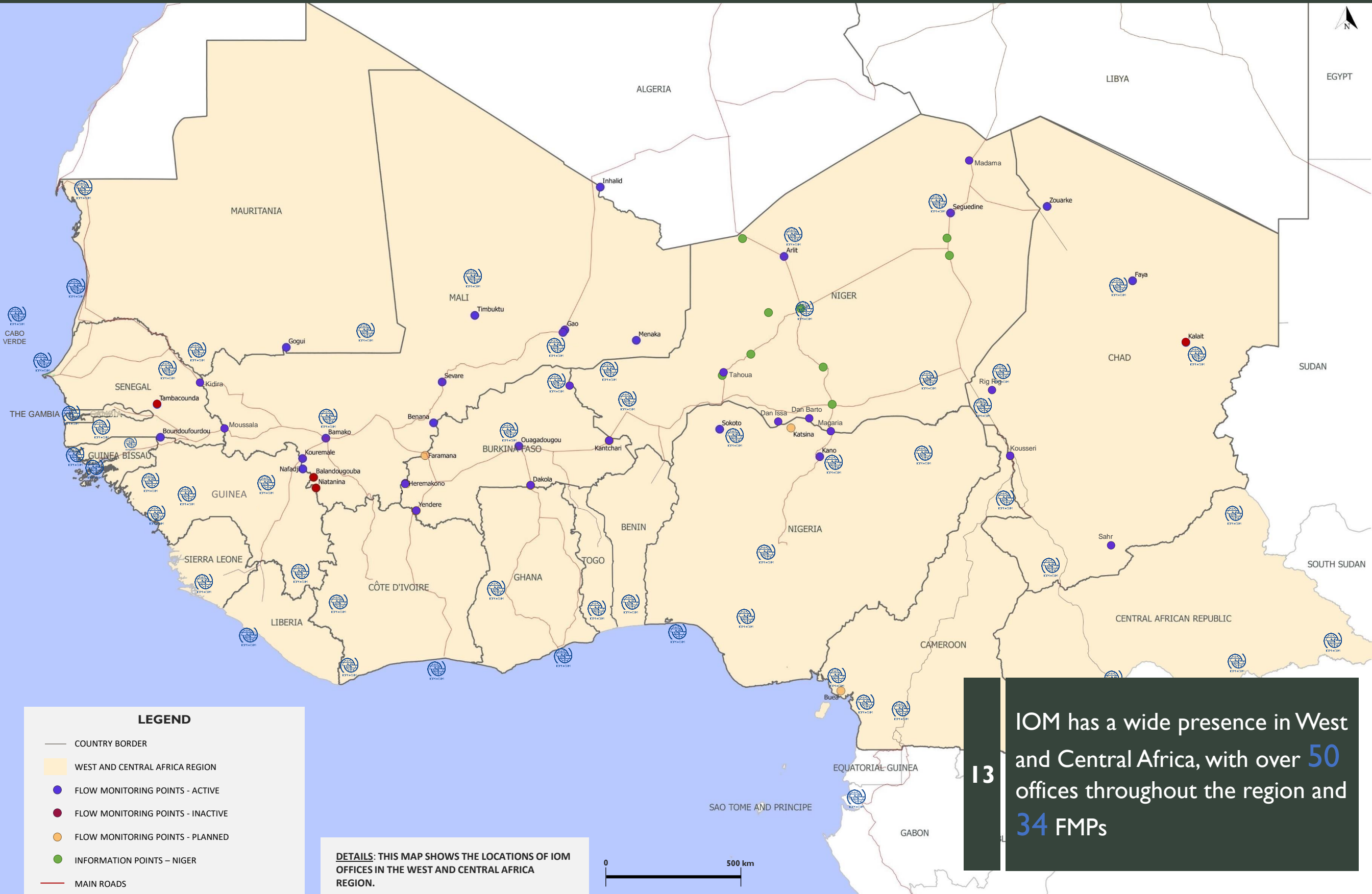
- COUNTRY BORDER
- WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA + LIBYA (EUTF) ⁽¹⁾
- XX ASSISTANCE TO VOLUNTARY RETURNS 2017-2018 ⁽²⁾
- MAIN ROADS

DETAILS: THIS MAP PRESENTS MIGRANTS' ORIGINS AND MAIN RETURN ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY IOM

SOURCES: (1) IOM MISSIONS CURRENTLY IMPLEMENTING EU TRUST FUND ACTIVITIES. (2) COMBINATION OF DATA FROM IOM NIGER (MIGRANT CENTER) AND FROM RO DAKAR ON ORIGINS OF MIGRANTS ASSISTED TO RETURN (AVRR). (3) ROUNDED UP FIGURES FOR STRANDED AND VULNERABLE MIGRANTS SUPPORTED BY IOM WITH THEIR VOLUNTARY RETURN IN 2017 AND 2018.



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LEGEND

- COUNTRY BORDER
- WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA REGION
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - ACTIVE
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - INACTIVE
- FLOW MONITORING POINTS - PLANNED
- INFORMATION POINTS – NIGER
- MAIN ROADS
- IOM OFFICES OR SUB-OFFICES (1)

DETAILS: THIS MAP SHOWS THE LOCATIONS OF IOM OFFICES IN THE WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA REGION.

SOURCES: (1) IOM MISSIONS.



13 IOM has a wide presence in West and Central Africa, with over **50** offices throughout the region and **34** FMPs

NOTE ON METHODOLOGY

This section provides additional details on data sources used in this report

FLOW MONITORING METHODOLOGY

This report presents an analysis of 50,000 surveys conducted with mobile populations in the West and Central Africa region between January and September 2019. These surveys are part of IOM DTM's Flow Monitoring activities, which gather information on the numbers and characteristics of travellers observed in high mobility areas of origin, transit and destination. Surveys are conducted at Flow Monitoring Points on a sample of travellers on a daily basis (travellers may or may not be nationals). The purpose of these surveys is to collect more in-depth information on travellers, such as their nationalities, educational and vocational backgrounds, reasons for departure and intended destinations.

Page 10 presents cross-border movements based on the Flow Monitoring Registry (FMR); Page 11 presents a regional analysis of the intended destination of travellers as provided by respondents to Flow Monitoring Surveys.

METHODOLOGY: At Flow Monitoring Point (FMP), enumerators collect information on the number, frequency and defining features of individuals transiting through a particular location. Prior to the establishment of an FMP, areas of high mobility are identified following discussions with national and local actors. The locations at which FMPs are set up, key points of transit such as border points or coach stations, are then identified based on participatory mapping of main migration routes conducted

in partnership with national and local authorities. As of 31 December 2019, more than 34 FMPs are active in seven countries of the West and Central Africa region (Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal).

Data is collected at FMPs using two main tools: Flow Monitoring Registry (FMR) and Flow Monitoring Survey (FMS). The FMR includes direct observations at places of entry, transit or exit, as well as interviews with key informants (including transportation workers, housing workers, and migration officials) to assess movement trends, routes, and countries of origin and destination. The FMS entails more detailed individual surveys to profile people on the move, including education levels and skills/employment; drivers of migrations; and needs, risks and vulnerabilities. This document presents an analysis of surveys conducted using the FMS tool. A similar methodology is used in other regions (Horn of Africa and Europe) to allow for comparative analysis of flows and individuals' characteristics.

LIMITS: The data presented on Page 11 is based on surveys conducted with travellers at FMPs in Senegal, Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Niger and Chad during the timeframe indicated. The data should not be generalized and does not present a full picture of inter- and intra-regional migration, but rather a snapshot of migration flows at specific locations. For example, while IOM aims to establish Flow Monitoring Points at locations with high transit flows (based on information from key informants), flows are changing and FMPs can only provide a partial picture.

DATA ON RETURNS THROUGH ASSISTED VOLUNTARY AND HUMANITARIAN RETURN PROGRAMMES

Data collected on the regions of origin of migrants provides details on individuals assisted in voluntary or humanitarian return by IOM. It is based on databases from Libya and Niger that have been aggregated and uses more than 60,000 entries dating from 2016 to 2019.

It does not necessarily present the origins of all migrants moving in WCA and focuses on a very specific migrant population (those trying to move to other regions)

EXTERNAL SOURCES

UNDESA: the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) provides regular update on its migrants' stocks. Data presented does not reflect all migration stocks in each country and are likely underestimating total migrants' population in the region.

ARRIVALS IN ITALY, GREECE AND SPAIN: data presented on arrivals to Europe is taken from figures provided by Greek, Italian and Spanish national authorities. However, the complete nationality breakdown of migrants is not available; only the top 10 nationalities of arriving migrants is provided. Therefore, nationality figures presented are likely fragmented.

DATA SOURCES

IOM FLOW MONITORING POINTS (migration.iom.int)

IOM (AVRR)

IOM NIGER (regions of origins)

IOM NIGER (Search & Rescue)

NATIONAL WORKSHOPS ON CAPTURING
DISPLACEMENT AND MOVEMENTS DATA (Capo Verde,
Mauritania, Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau,
Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ghana,
Côte d'Ivoire, Togo and Benin)

IOM ITALY, IOM SPAIN, IOM GREECE

IOM COUNTRY OFFICES (labour intensive areas)

MINISTRIES OF INTERIOR (Spain, Italy, Greece, Niger)

UNDESA (migrant stock database)

ACLED (security incidents)

OECD (transhumance)



DATA COLLECTION OVERVIEW & METHODOLOGY

MOBILITY TRACKING



PUBLICATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS



FLOW MONITORING



International Organization for Migration (IOM)

The UN Migration Agency

Regional Office for West and Central Africa

Zone 3, Route des Almadies

Dakar BP 16 838

Senegal: Tel: +221 33 689 62 00 - Fax: +221 33 869 62 33

Information management: RO Dakar – Data & Research Unit

rodakar-dataresearch@iom.int or djusselme@iom.int