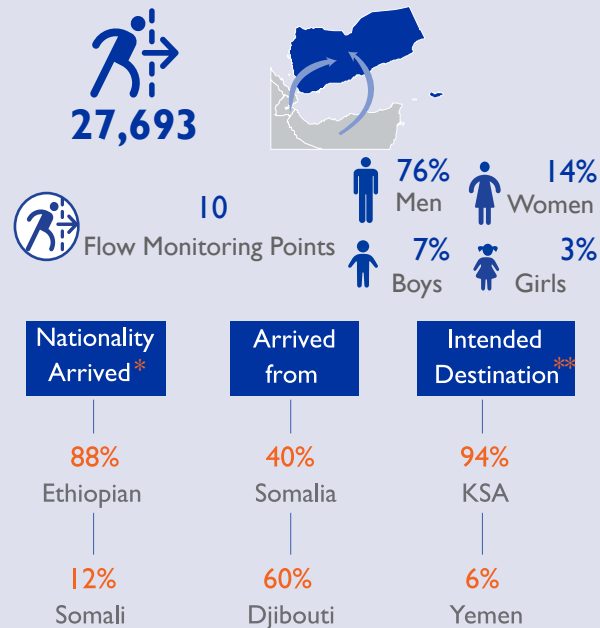
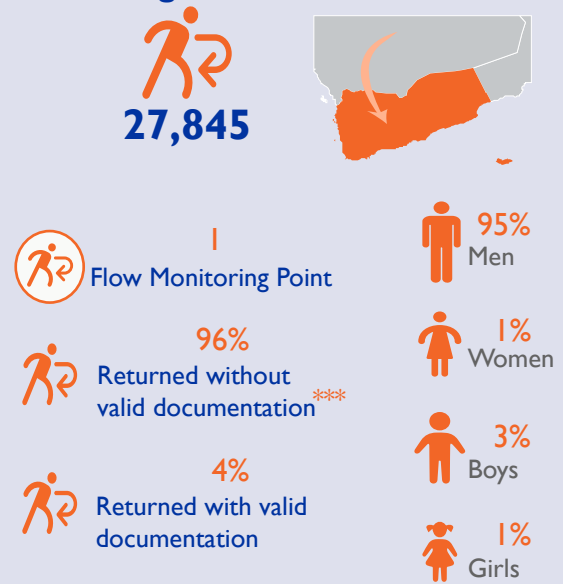


KEY FINDINGS

Migrants Reaching Yemen



Yemeni Migrants Returning from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



* All recorded migrants travel for economic reasons with the intention of remaining abroad for over 6 months.
 ** Nearly all intend to reach the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (94%) but most do not reach their destination.

*** Returns are largely understood to be due to push factors from KSA rather than pull factors in Yemen

FLOW MONITORING

IOM Yemen's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) was launched in Yemen in April 2015 in an effort to better inform the humanitarian community about the location and needs of the displaced populations in Yemen. By the end of 2016, IOM Yemen began implementing the Flow Monitoring (FM) assessments to track the movement flows of groups and individuals through key points of origin, transit locations and intended destinations. The information provided through the FM assessments contributes to the Flow Monitoring Registry (FMR) which provides up-to-date information on the scale of migrant and Yemeni migrant returnee population flows and profiles.

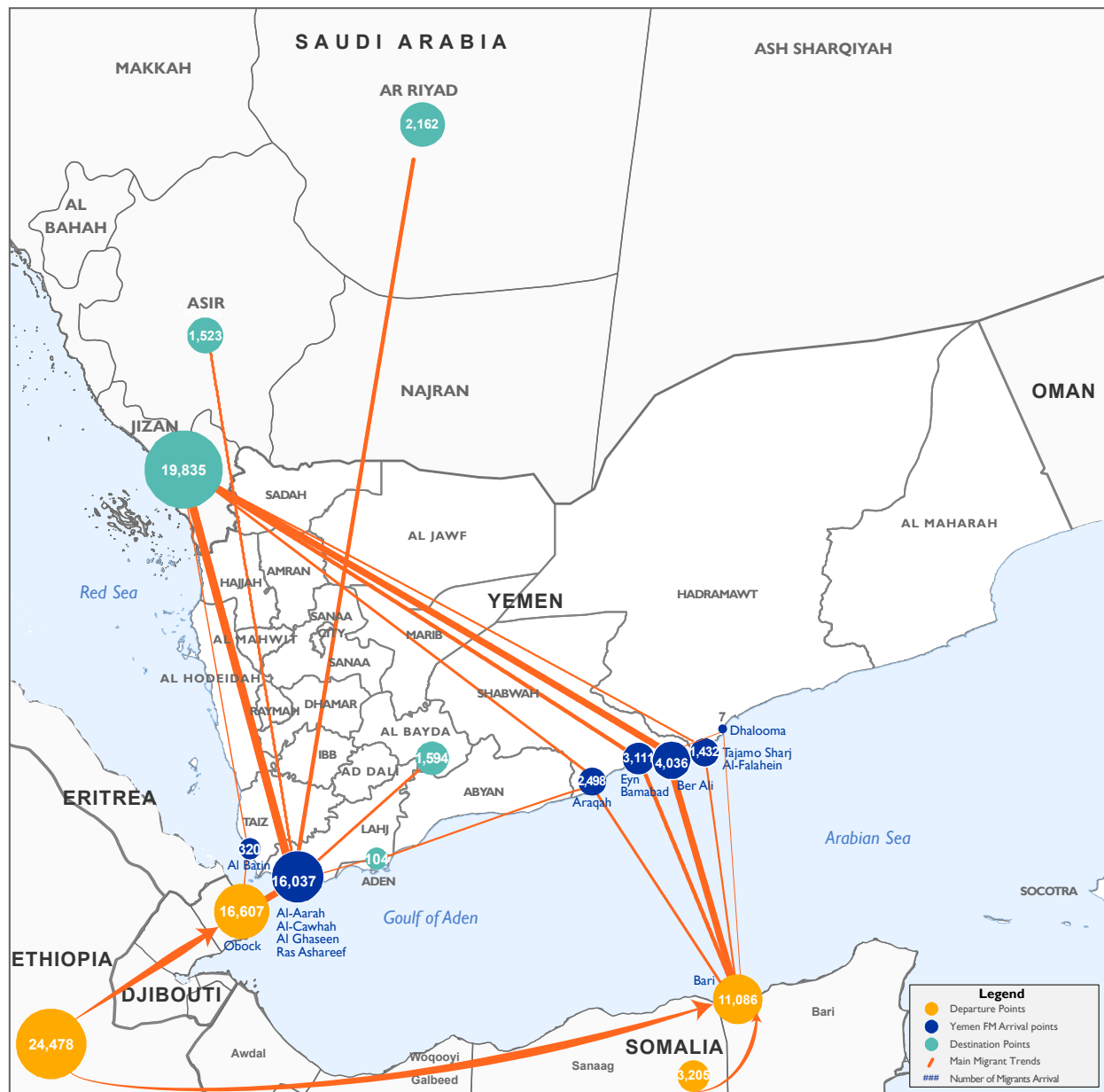
In Yemen, DTM's FMR monitors migrant arrival on the southern coastal border and Yemeni return locations on Yemen's northern border with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). Enumerators placed at Flow Monitoring Points (FMPs) document approximate arrivals of migrants and returning Yemeni nationals in order to identify different patterns of migration, and to provide quantitative estimates to help define the population of irregular migrants entering the country. FMR is not representative of all flows in Yemen and should be understood as only indicative of cross-border movement trends during the time frame indicated. Access constraints limit the ability to collect data at some migrant arrival points.



Newly arrived migrants walk along the coast near Ras Al'Ara after landing at Yemen's shores earlier that morning. They are bound for Aden, a city 50 kilometres away.

Photo: Rami Ibrahim / IOM. October 2021

2021 MIGRANT ARRIVALS MOVEMENT PATTERN



Yemen, despite the ongoing humanitarian crises in the country, continues to be a major transit point along the eastern migration route between the Horn of Africa (HoA) and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). IOM's DTM recorded 27,693 migrant arrivals in Yemen in 2021, through ten flow monitoring points (FMPs) operating at key migrant transit locations along the southern coast in the governorates of Lahj, Shabwah, Hadramawt and Ta'iz. Irregular migrants, mainly from Ethiopia, travel to Yemen via boats, from Djibouti and Somalia, and face severe protection risks, which worsen upon arrival in Yemen.

The main migration route starts from Ethiopia to the seaport city of Obock in Djibouti. Migrants then depart Obock and arrive at Bab Al Mandeb water strait, an area that spans the coasts of Lahj and Ta'iz governorates. A secondary route via Somalia gained traction following increased military patrolling along the main route between Djibouti and Yemen. Migrants departing from Bosaso in Somalia arrive at the coasts of Shabwah and Hadramawt in Yemen, where the journey is longer and precarious.

The majority of migrants intend to reach Saudi Arabia but for most, as DTM field staff have observed, their journey ends in Yemen. Migrants attempt to reach KSA through the Monabih district in Sada governorate, mainly through Al Raq, Al Gar and Al Thabet towns which fall on the northern border.

In pursuit of better economic opportunities, migrants endure heightened inhumane conditions. Migrants are amongst the most underserved, marginalized and at-risk population groups in Yemen. With the deepening of the political and security crisis in Yemen, migration dynamics in the country have remained perilous. Fleeing destitution, poverty and often violence, migrants in Yemen experience aggression, abuse and exploitation. The majority are living in dire conditions with extremely limited-to-no access to essential services such as shelter, food, water and healthcare.

MIGRANT ARRIVALS TRENDS

In 2021, DTM estimates that 27,693 migrants entered Yemen, a 26 per cent drop compared to 37,484 migrant arrivals in 2020. However, almost 75 per cent of migrants who arrived in 2020 came in the first three months of the year, before strict COVID-19-measures came into force. DTM estimates that 138,213 migrants arrived in (pre-pandemic) 2019 alone.

Whilst flows have reduced due to the COVID-19 pandemic, intensified barriers to movements ([Yemen Covid 19 Mobility Restrictions Dec 2021](#)) brought on by the pandemic and the ongoing conflict have left thousands of migrants stranded across Yemen with limited options for safe movement and the risk of forcible transfer across frontlines ([Quarterly Migration Overview](#)). Reduced migrant arrivals throughout the years, as a consequence to the pandemic and increased controls along the KSA border, has resulted in smugglers adopting increasingly inhumane methods to ensure profit and maintain their networks. IOM estimates that nearly 35,000⁽¹⁾ migrants are stranded throughout the country, grappling with dire condition and vulnerable to experiencing grave abuse.

During the first quarter of the year, flow volumes significantly dropped compared to the same period in pre-pandemic years. Between January and March 2021, around 5,113 migrants arrived in Yemen, compared with 27,948 in the same period in 2020, and 37,109 in 2019.

During the second quarter of 2021, the number of migrant arrivals in Yemen remained low, relatively similar to the same period during 2020, when strict COVID-19 restrictions first took effect. DTM estimates that 4,876 migrants arrived in Yemen between April and June 2021, compared to 3,584 migrants in the same months of 2020- a significant drop compared to the same period in (pre-pandemic) 2019 when 47,269 migrants arrived.

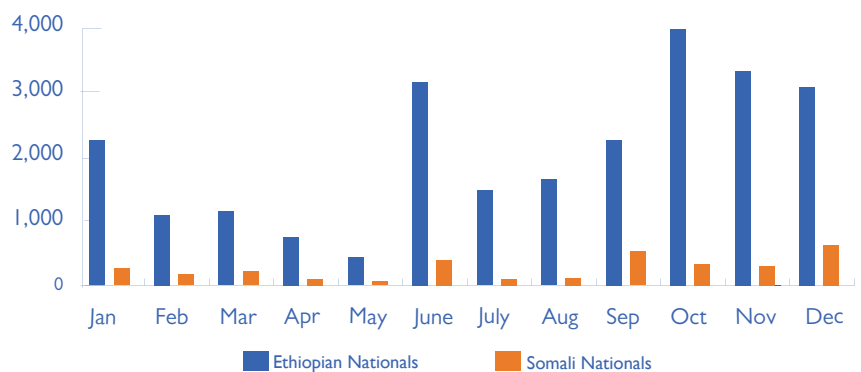
In pre-pandemic years, the third quarter usually witnessed a decreasing trend in migrant arrivals into Yemen because of the unfavorable seasonal and tidal changes. In 2019, between July and September, 23,403 migrants arrived in Yemen, the lowest number recorded in a single quarter that year. Even in 2020, when migrant flows significantly plummeted due to COVID-19 mobility restrictions, the third quarter continued to receive the lowest number of migrant arrivals.

Despite the harsh weather and rising tides, the number of migrant arrivals grew in the third quarter of 2021. DTM estimates that 6,091 migrants arrived, showing a slight rise from preceding quarters and a significant upsurge from the same period in 2020 when 1,505 migrants arrived. This increase is reportedly due to the loosening of COVID-19 related mobility restrictions.

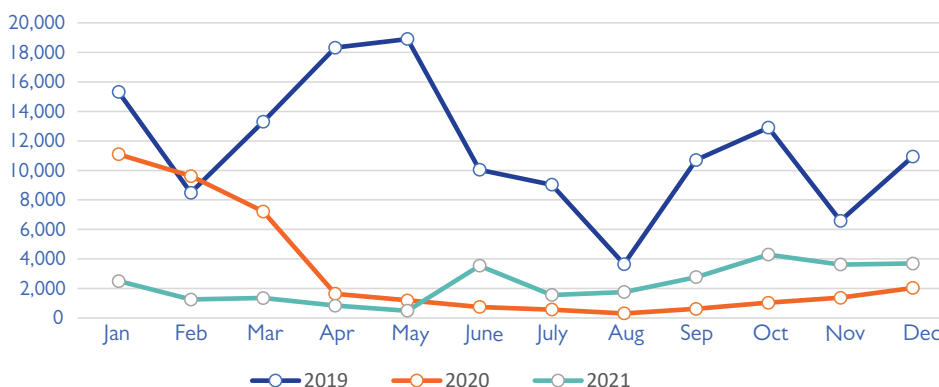
The rising trend of migrant flows continued in the fourth quarter of 2021 and is most likely linked to improved weather conditions and the easing of COVID-19 related mobility restrictions. According to anecdotal evidence, the rise was also heavily influenced by the worsening security situation in Ethiopia, with the recently imposed mandatory enlistment in the military service, along with the deteriorating economic conditions in

Somalia. Between October and December 2021, an estimated 11,612 migrants arrived in Yemen, marking the highest number recorded in a single quarter in 2021. This represents an increase compared to the same period in 2020 when 4,447 migrants arrived, yet a decrease from (pre-pandemic) 2019 when 30,432 migrants arrived.

Number of Migrant Arrivals Tracked per Month and Year



Number of Migrant Arrivals Tracked per Month and Year



(1) IOM estimated the number to be 35,000 migrants during 2021, but is likely to have increased since due to a continued positive net influx of migrants.

MIGRANT PROFILES AND ROUTES

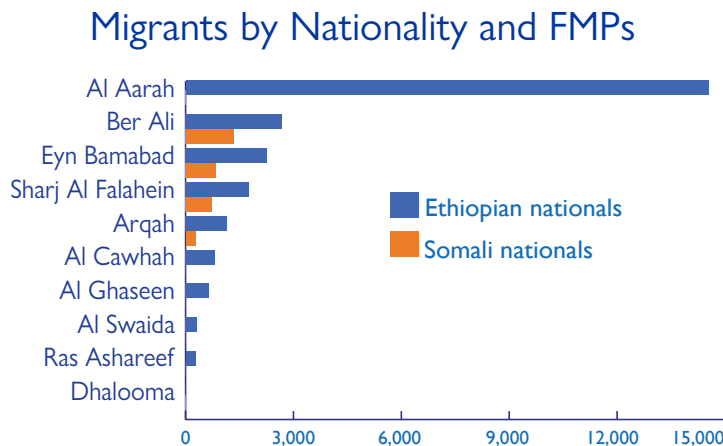
As in previous years, the majority of migrants during 2021, an estimated 16,607 total (60%), arrived from Djibouti to Lahj and Ta'iz governorates, while 11,086 (40%) arrived through Somalia to Shabwah and Hadramawt governorates. Among migrants arriving from Djibouti, 16,287 were recorded in Lahj's FMPs, and 320 in Ta'iz. Of the 11,086 arriving from Somalia, 3,201 migrants were recorded in Shabwah's FMPs, and 1,441 in Hadramawt. Despite the significant decrease in arrivals since the pre-pandemic period, the profile of migrants in Yemen remains the same. The majority were Ethiopian (24,478 migrants), comprising 88 per cent of the migrant population, and a smaller 12 per cent Somali (3,205 migrants).

Over three-quarters (21,011 migrants) of those traveling in 2021 along this route continue to be men and seven per cent (884 migrants) boys⁽¹²⁾. Women and girls, making up 17 per cent of arrivals in 2021 (3,973 women and 825 girls) are increasingly being forced into domestic labor, and many report experiencing sexual and gender-based violence ([Quarterly Migration Overview](#)).

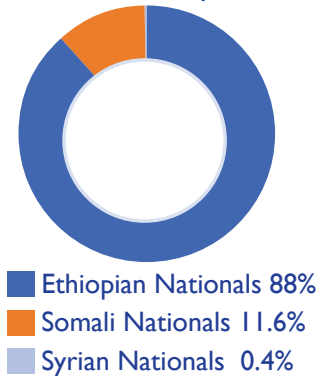
Some 94 per cent, or 25,986 migrants, intended to reach KSA, seeking better economic opportunities, primarily from Sadah governorate in Yemen. The majority of (19,835 migrants or 76%) indicated Jizan was their destination point, a port city in southwest KSA that lies directly to the north of Yemen's border. Others (9%) indicated Al-Riyad, and the remaining (15%) did not have a specific destination point in KSA. According to anecdotal evidence, the majority expressed being unaware of the conflict and challenges in Yemen, only learning of the harsh realities of the situation upon arrival. DTM field staff observed that some migrants were unaware of COVID-19 related mobility restrictions and had not taken any infection prevention measures during their journey.

In 2021, DTM teams in Djibouti and Somalia recorded that during 2021, a total of 11,620 migrants took the risky return by boat from Yemen to travel home. As conditions for stranded migrants in Yemen have continued to deteriorate, migrants often feel that they have no options other than to put their lives back into the hands of smugglers to travel home to the HoA.

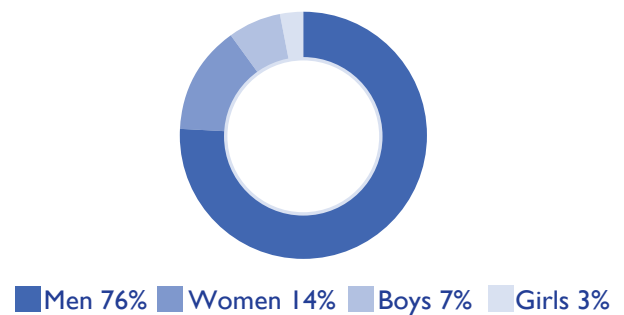
(2) Boys and girls are 17 years of age or younger.



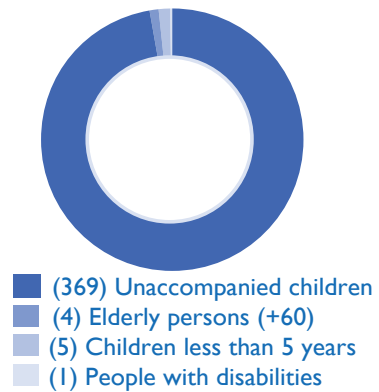
Migrants Arrivals by Nationality



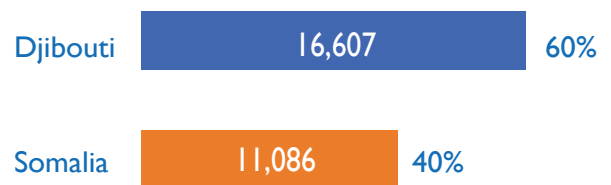
Migrant by Sex & Age Groups



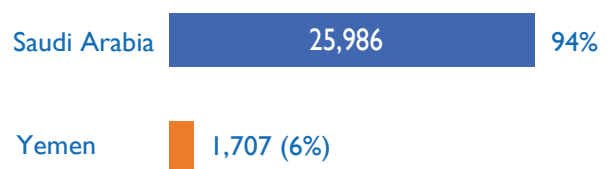
Vulnerabilities



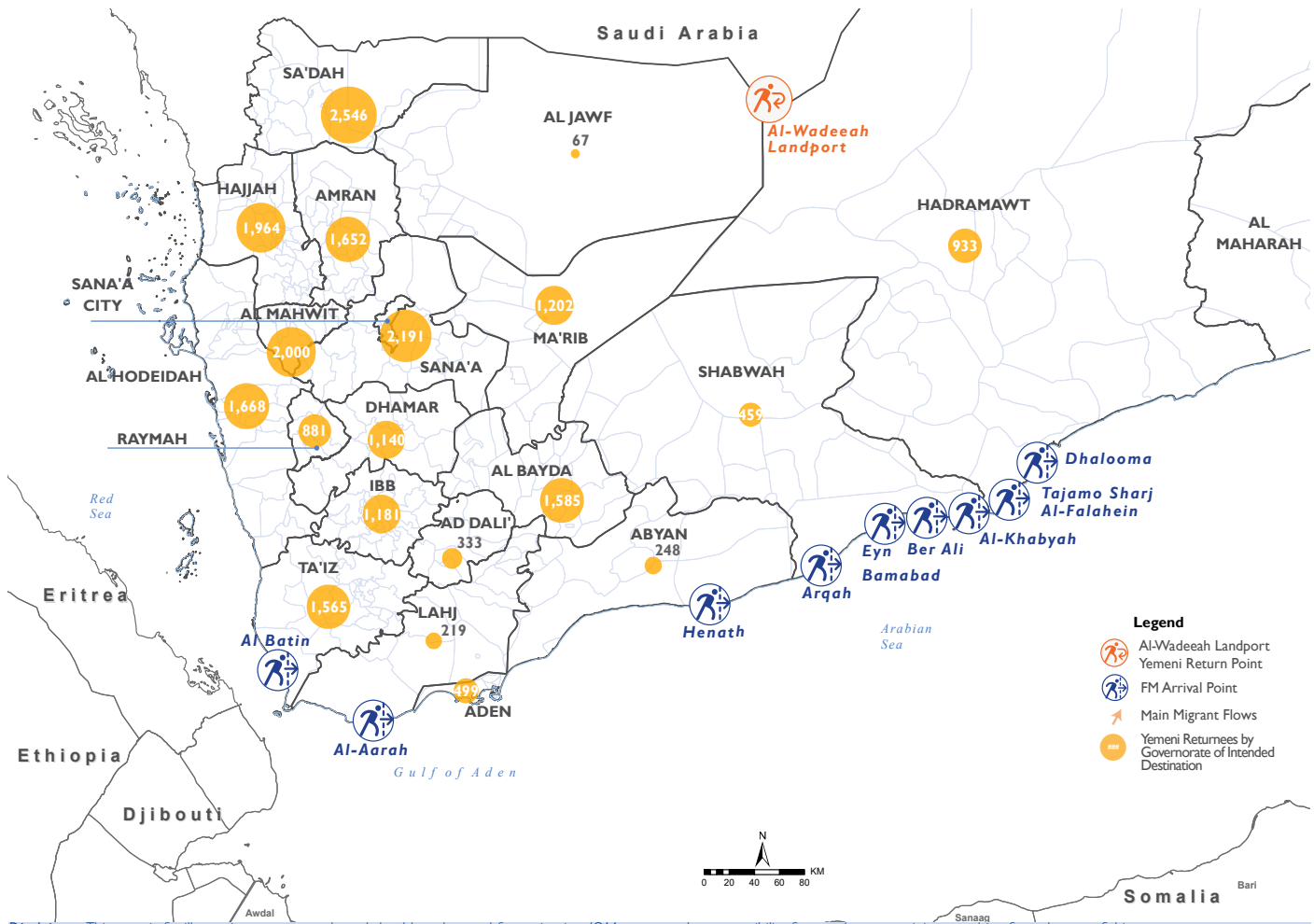
Migrants by Country of Departure



Migrants by Country of Destination



NON-YEMENI MIGRANT RETURNEES FROM SAUDI ARABIA TO YEMEN



Disclaimer: This map is for illustration purposes only and should not be used for navigation. IOM can not take responsibility for any damage or injury resulting from the use of this map.

In April 2017, the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia launched a campaign titled “A Nation without Violations”, granting all irregular migrants an amnesty period of 90 days to leave the country without facing penalties. In July 2021, Saudi authorities imposed new regulations requiring businesses to limit the number of workers in the country from certain nationalities, by not renewing and even terminating their working permits. Workers who couldn't find other employers to sponsor them were forced to leave the country or faced deportation. During 2021, thousands of Yemenis began returning to the country after reportedly facing visa issues in neighboring KSA. Return numbers can therefore not be seen as sign of improved conditions in Yemen but rather as indicative of worsening conditions for Yemenis living abroad.

Most Yemenis return through the border crossing point of Al Wadeeah land port in the north of Al Abr district in Hadramawt governorate, established along the KSA border. In June 2021, DTM began monitoring these returns by reactivating Al Wadeeah Flow Monitoring Point (FMPS). DTM scaled up activities at the border by coordinating with local authorities, to include day and night flows and thus capturing more accurate figures.




Despite DTM not being active in Manfath Al Wadeeah until June 2021 (6 months of data collection), the overall number of Yemeni returnees in 2021 increased about 97 per cent compared to 2020 (12 months of data collection)- when intensified barriers to movement brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic also played a role in reducing returnee flows.

In 2021, DTM recorded 27,845 Yemeni migrants returning from Saudi Arabia to Yemen, compared to 14,161 in 2020 and 50,065 in 2019.

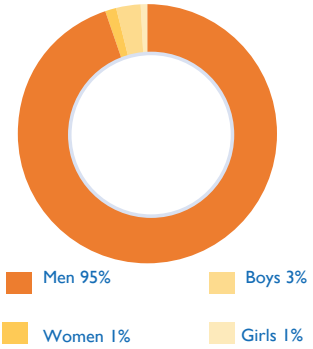
Throughout the reporting period, the majority of Yemeni returnees had faced deportation after irregularly entering KSA. Others did not have any other option but to return to Yemen because they could no longer afford the recent immigration and taxation rules. Around 96 per cent of Yemeni returnees (26,845 individuals) returned without travel documents and only four per cent (978) returned with a final exit stamp.

Yemeni returnees were predominately men (95%), only one per cent women and four per cent children. This route continues to be characterized by a high volume of unaccompanied migrant children. In 2021, roughly one in seven children was unaccompanied.

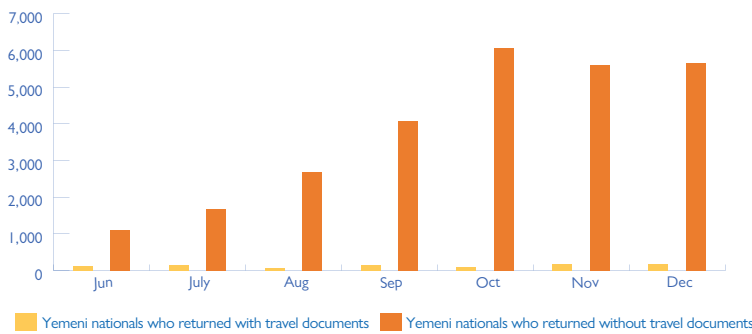
VULNERABILITIES FOR YEMENI RETURNEES

-  582 Unaccompanied children
-  324 Elderly persons (60+)
-  46 Children less than 5 years of age
-  26 Pregnant or lactating
-  1 Physical disability

Returnees Sex & Age Groups



Returnees by Travel Documents and Month



Irregular migrants (those who do not possess legal residence in KSA) make up most of the flow from Saudi Arabia to Yemen and their movement is relatively constant- throughout the entire week and during the day and night.

Regular Yemeni migrants (with valid documents) return to Yemen in fewer numbers. They mainly return because their residency period has expired, and they are unable to renew their permits or to visit family during the holidays.



IOM's protection team checks the condition of four migrants walking along the coastline in Lahj as they start the 100 kilometre journey to Aden. Photo: Rami Ibrahim / IOM. October 2021

To access the Flow Monitoring Report's 2021 dataset, please click [here](#).

Disclaimer: Flow Monitoring Registry (FMR) is not representative of all flows in Yemen and should be understood as only indicative of migration trends of the unknown total number of migrants arriving in Yemen at Flow Monitoring Points (FMPs) during the time frame indicated. Access constraints limit the ability to collect data at some migrant arrival points.

Flow Monitoring Activities are Supported by



<https://migration.iom.int/yemen>

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