



EUROPE / MEDITERRANEAN MIGRATION RESPONSE

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION

SITUATION REPORT • 24 September 2015



Migrants arriving from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to Serbia © IOM Belgrade 2015

Highlights

- In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, IOM has assisted the Government to establish a new centre for the registration of migrants.
- In Serbia, IOM is aiding in the movement of vulnerable families and individuals from the border towards the registration centre for temporary shelter and humanitarian assistance. Between 600 and 700 vulnerable individuals are being transported every day.
- IOM staff are offering emergency services in Samos and Lesbos islands to migrants and refugees arriving in Greece, as part of two mobile units for the First Reception Service.
- Based on the request and needs of the Turkish Coast Guards, IOM is procuring seven marine rescue platforms that will be used for rescue-at-sea operations.
- In Italy, IOM staff are present at all disembarkation points off the Italian southern coasts, namely Sicily, Apulia and Calabria, to provide legal orientation and counselling to all migrants and refugees arriving by sea.

Situation Overview

As of 24 September an estimated total of **491,005 arrivals by sea** has been reported in Italy (128,542) and Greece (362,463) since the start of the year.

In **Greece**, the total number of arrivals has reached **362,463** since the start of 2015, and IOM estimates that approximately 6,000 people are crossing daily into Greece, primarily through the islands of Lesbos and Kos. IOM reports that in one day, as many as 2,000 persons are reaching Kos island, with the majority being in poor health. IOM continues to coordinate with other international organizations, NGOs and local authorities in order to assess the current needs on the islands. The influx of new arrivals has strained the resources of the Government, who are attempting to manage the migration flows into their country, especially on the island of Lesbos.

CONTACTS

Preparedness and Response Division

✉ prd@iom.int

Donor Relations Division

✉ drd@iom.int

☎ +41.22.7179.271

🌐 <http://www.iom.int>

In the **former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**, the numbers crossing the border from Greece and entering into Gevgelija continue to grow with estimated arrivals of **over 6,000 persons per day**. Between 19 June and 19 September, the Ministry of Interior registered a total of 89,427 migrants, out of which about 66% were male, 14% were female, 17% were children (accompanied by a family member) and 3% were unaccompanied children.

Serbia continues to receive an average of **approximately 3,500 arrivals per day**. Following the completion of a fence at the Hungarian border with Serbia, the Serbian Government and partners are working to adjust the provision of assistance to adapt to the change in migrant flows and routes.

In addition to this, an increase in migrant flows into **Croatia** from Serbia has been observed. Although Croatia has closed seven out of its eight border crossings with Serbia, migrants continue to enter Croatia from Serbia in significant numbers. As of 23 September, **approximately 44,000** people have entered the country. Efforts are underway to resume registration processes at the border areas.

As of 22 September, IOM estimates that **127,605 people have arrived in Italy** since the start of 2015, and has recorded 2,621 deaths through the Central Mediterranean route. The top ten countries of origin of the arrivals are: Eritrea, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Gambia, Bangladesh, Mali, Senegal, and Ghana. The main departure country is Libya, with occasional departures from Egypt, Greece, and Turkey (in this latter case, the top two countries of origin are Iraq and Syria).

As **Turkey** continues to be one of the main transit and destination countries for migrants, IOM staff are working closely with border agencies, including the Turkish Coast Guard, to monitor the situation at Turkish borders.

As of September 15, the Turkish Coast Guard has reported **rescuing a total of 53,874 migrants** since the start of the year, of which 7,420 migrants were rescued between 31 July and 15 September. As of 20 August, 805 migrants were rescued with the help of the 157 Helpline, which is currently operated by the Turkish Directorate General of Migrant Management and supported by IOM.

On 17 September, the IOM Director General briefed Member States and partner agencies in Geneva on the complex migration flows in the Mediterranean Sea and Europe and on IOM's response to the crisis. The Director General stressed the need to take a holistic approach by taking into account the push factors contributing to the ongoing crisis, and recognized the paradox between national sovereignty and individual freedom when it comes to migrants on the move.

IOM Experts have supported the Government of Albania (GoA) to develop a **contingency plan** for the migration crisis. During the past two weeks, relevant Ministries, UN agencies, Red Cross and local NGOs have participated in this GoA/IOM initiative by contributing to the draft plan that will be endorsed by the Government.

Efforts to support other Governments in the Balkans to develop contingency plans for the potential mass influx of migrants and refugees are also underway.

IOM RESPONSE

IOM's humanitarian response has focused on the reception and registration of the newly arrived migrants and refugees in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, and Greece while an IOM Migration Crisis expert has been deployed to Croatia to assist in response planning and implementation. In Italy, IOM's response includes the provision of technical assistance to the Ministry of Interior with respect to the management of mixed migration flows arriving by sea and the identification of victims of trafficking. IOM staff in Turkey also continue to work closely with border agencies to monitor the migration flows at the Turkish borders.

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

IOM has assisted the Government to establish a **new centre for the registration of migrants** and has supported the Government in upgrading the registration process for migrants and refugees by moving from a manual to an automated computer system. This enhancement aims to improve the overall efficiency of the registration process.

To aid the Government's effort to **strengthen the registration process and to improve security measures**, IOM will upgrade their fingerprinting device, donate equipment, provide direct support to register migrants and refugees, and identify vulnerable people in need of assistance.

In coordination with the Government, IOM will also carry out **capacity-building training** and assist in the development of procedures for government officials to better provide reception assistance.

Serbia

The IOM team is assisting Border Police at the security check point at the "green border" between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia by **facilitating the arrivals** at the border and **providing necessary information** to migrants and refugees. Moreover, IOM is also aiding in the movement of vulnerable families and individuals from the border towards the registration centre for **temporary shelter and humanitarian assistance**. Between 600 and 700 vulnerable individuals are being transported every day.

In close coordination with the Government Working Group on Mixed Migration Flows, IOM teams are being deployed to locations where large groups of migrants are gathering. On 17 September, the IOM team provided support at Horgos (near the border with Hungary) to facilitate communication with migrants and refugees and to inform them on available reception facilities. Also, **IOM provided three buses** to facilitate the movement of vulnerable migrants and refugees towards the reception centres.

IOM RESPONSE (continued)

Greece

IOM staff are present in Lesbos, Samos, Kos and Crete islands and work closely with authorities (Frontex, the Hellenic Coastguards and the First Reception Service) to **identify vulnerable populations** including un-accompanied and separated children, the elderly, and those with medical needs. Vulnerable groups are referred to authorities in order to be provided with the necessary care.

IOM staff are **offering emergency services** in Samos and Lesbos islands, for migrants and refugees entering Greece, as part of two mobile units for the First Reception Service. As a partner to this service, IOM provides qualified staff to the mobile units, including interpreters in Arabic and Dari, an advisor to inform migrants and refugees of their rights and responsibilities, and a supervisor who coordinates the provision of services among the mobile unit staff.

IOM has established a **permanent presence** on the island of Kos. Along with gathering data on the migrant flows and identifying vulnerable migrants, IOM is also providing direct relief assistance to new arrivals at the entry points of the island.



IOM distributes bottled water to arriving migrants on the island of Kos
© IOM Greece, 2015

Efforts to improve conditions and provision of services at the Greece-former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia border are underway in close partnership with the local government, UNHCR and MSF. IOM is in the process of setting up **two pre-fabricated structures including sanitation facilities**, to temporarily host migrants at the border area.

In addition to this, IOM is also working closely with Hellenic Border Police to improve their capacity to carry out **registration** in the islands of Lesbos and Kos through the provision of additional registration equipment.

Croatia

IOM has deployed a **Migration Crisis expert** to Croatia to assist in response planning and implementation. IOM is also working in close coordination with the Government as well as the Croatian Red Cross to address the immediate needs as a result of the sudden increase of migration flows into Croatia. Led by Government efforts, a centre in Opatovac, approximately 10 km away from the border (Tovarnik), has been set up to provide temporary accommodation for migrants and refugees arriving in the country.

Italy

IOM staff are present at all disembarkation points off the Italian southern coasts, namely Sicily, Apulia and Calabria, to provide **legal orientation and counselling** to all the migrants and refugees arriving by sea. IOM also monitors the reception conditions of migrants and supports the authorities in the identification of vulnerable groups.

IOM gives special attention in **identifying victims of trafficking** (VoT) and once detected, VoTs are immediately transferred to dedicated safe shelters. It is worth noting that in 2014, IOM created two anti-trafficking teams who are fully dedicated to the early identification and assistance of VoTs. Since April 2014, IOM staff have identified more than 600 potential victims of trafficking, most of whom were Nigerians, at landing points and in first reception centres. Together with UNHCR, IOM is working on the identification of VoTs that are in the refugee status determination process.

IOM is also supporting the Ministry of Interior in the elaboration of specific **guidelines for the reception of all migrants and refugees** arriving by sea and in the monitoring of all reception and detention facilities along the Italian territory. As part of its monitoring activities, IOM regularly visits these facilities and reports on their conditions to the Ministry of Interior.

Turkey

IOM continues to coordinate with the Turkish Coast Guard (TCG) on **monitoring the migrations flows** at the borders. Based on the request and needs of the TCG, IOM is procuring seven marine **rescue platforms** that will be used for rescue-at-sea operations. The platforms have a raft capacity to keep 10 adults afloat and out of the water until further assistance arrives. While the Turkish Coast Guard leads the rescue operations, IOM is **mobilizing resources and staff** to provide essential core relief items as well as food to migrants and refugees who are rescued at sea. IOM will continue to coordinate its activities with other UN agencies and NGOs involved in the response.

Europe / Mediterranean Migration Response

Movement Trends and Numbers

ARRIVALS

Italy **128,542**

Estimate arrivals as of 24 Sept
Source: IOM

Greece **362,463**

Estimate arrivals from land and sea
as of 24 Sept
Source: IOM

Macedonia **89,427**

People registered between June to
21 Sept 2015
Source: Government

*Reports from the field indicate that the number of people registered
represents approximately 50% of the migrants entering Macedonia*

Croatia **44,000**

Initial arrival estimate as of 23 Sept.
Efforts to establish formal registration
system is ongoing.
Source: Government

Slovenia **1,307**

Initial estimate as of 21 Sept 2015.
Source: Government


Serbia **173,891**

Estimate arrivals as of 22 Sept
Source: IOM

Spain **2,819**

Estimate arrivals as of 22 Sept
Source: IOM

MOBILITY TRACKING & MAPPING

 **POINTS of INTEREST** includes Border Crossing Points, Organized and Spontaneous transit point, and Reception Centres.

**Mapping and tracking exercise is ongoing and points will be refined on the next update.*

This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

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As of 24 September 2015
sources: IOM • feedback: prd@iom.int

