



# MIXED MIGRATION: LIBYA AT THE CROSSROADS

Mapping of Migration Routes from Africa to Europe and Drivers of Migration in Post-revolution Libya

Prepared by Altai Consulting for the UNHCR | TRIPOLI – NOVEMBER 2013



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was written by Arezo Malakooti, with the assistance of Tahar Benattia and under the supervision of Eric Davin (Altai Consulting).

Field research was conducted by Arezo Malakooti, Tahar Benattia, Laurence Hargreaves, Chashah Nicholas, Usama Al Senosy, Karim Nabata and Guleid Hassan Dirir.

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of UNHCR Libya in the design and structure of this project as well as the collaboration of IOM Libya.

The assistance of UNHCR and IOM teams in Ethiopia, Niger, Somaliland, Sudan, Malta and Italy, as well as that of the agencies and authorities interviewed is also gratefully acknowledged.

Last but not least, we thank all the migrants who kindly offered their opinions and stories for the purposes of this research.

## ALTAI CONSULTING

Altai Consulting provides strategy consulting and research services to private companies, governments and public institutions in developing countries.

Altai teams operate in more than 25 countries in Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia. Since its inception 10 years ago, Altai Consulting has developed a strong focus on migration and labour market related research and program evaluations.

Contact Details:

Arezo Malakooti (Project Director): [amalakooti@altaiconsulting.com](mailto:amalakooti@altaiconsulting.com)

Eric Davin (Altai Partner): [edavin@altaiconsulting.com](mailto:edavin@altaiconsulting.com)

[www.altaiconsulting.com](http://www.altaiconsulting.com)

To download this report online: [www.altaiconsulting.com/mixedmigrationlibya](http://www.altaiconsulting.com/mixedmigrationlibya)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Acronyms	4
<b>I. FOREWORD</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>II. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>III. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>IV. METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>14</b>
1. Objectives	14
2. Approach	15
3. Secondary Research	16
4. Fieldwork	20
5. Sample Analysis	27
<b>V. MAIN ROUTES OF TRAVEL AND THE JOURNEY TO LIBYA</b>	<b>30</b>
1. Countries of Origin	30
2. Routes of Travel	31
3. Conditions of Journey	46
4. Smuggling	48
5. Transit Countries	57
6. The Circulation of Information	62
7. The Role of Networks	67
<b>VI. INFLOWS AND DYNAMICS IN LIBYA</b>	<b>71</b>
1. Push and Pull Factors	71
2. Types of Migrants and Reasons for Migration	76
3. Entry Points	93
4. The Libyan Labour Market	98
5. Quantifying the flows of migrants in Libya	100
6. Human Rights Issues	105
<b>VII. OUTFLOWS TO EUROPE AND RETURNS HOME</b>	<b>109</b>
1. Onward Journey from Libya to Europe	109
2. Returns From Libya to Country of Origin	124
<b>VIII. CHANGES SINCE THE REVOLUTION</b>	<b>131</b>
1. Migration Trends Under the Gadhafi Regime	131
2. Impact of the Libyan Revolution	132
3. Changes Post-revolution	133
<b>IX. THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE JOURNEY</b>	<b>136</b>
<b>X. RECOMMENDATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES</b>	<b>139</b>
1. A Comprehensive Approach for the Management of Mixed Migration	139
2. Recommendations	143
3. Perspectives	145
<b>XI. ANNEX 1: LISTS OF FIGURES</b>	<b>148</b>

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AVR	Assisted Voluntary Return
AVR&R	Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration
DCIM	The Department for Combatting Illegal Migration (Libya)
DRC	The Danish Refugee Council
ECOWAS	The Economic Community Of West African States
EU	The European Union
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
ICRC	The International Committee for the Red Cross
IDI	In-depth interview
IDP	Internally displaced person
IOM	The International Organization for Migration
KII	Key informant interview
OAU	The Organisation for African Unity
RSD	Refugee Status Determination
UNHCR	The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

# I. FOREWORD

The vast majority of the migration routes through the central Mediterranean transit through Libya. Yet, despite regular press coverage of the too often recurring tragedies unfolding at sea between the Libyan coast and the islands of Lampedusa and Malta, little is actually known about the part of the journey through Libya and further afield. How are the migrants and asylum seekers entering Libya? Which routes do they use? What are the profiles of the migrants? Which countries do they come from? What are their motives? Do all of them intend to travel to Europe by boat? How many of them are arriving in Libya and departing for Europe? What are the risks, dangers and constraints they face throughout their journey to Libya and eventually onto Europe? While on paper there is a clear distinction between economic migrants and asylum seekers, how does this distinction play out in reality?

These are some of the questions we had in mind when the idea of this study was first conceived in 2012. Prior to the 17-February Revolution in Libya, access to the southern areas of the country, and to the various detention centres where irregular migrants are kept, was at best difficult, and usually not possible at all. Before 2011, little research on the migration phenomenon in Libya had been conducted, let alone any field study.

Gaining first-hand information directly from the people involved in the migration flow; developing a greater insight into the drivers at play and the dynamics of the mixed migration flow; identifying the key dangers and risks involved in the journey; in a nutshell, gaining a better understanding of a fast changing and increasingly complex phenomenon, are some of the key objectives that the study 'Mixed Migration: Libya at the Crossroads' was meant to achieve. The study was carried out by Altai Consulting and commissioned by UNHCR.

'Mixed Migration: Libya at the Crossroads' represents, to date, the first and most comprehensive and updated attempt to map out the different elements at play in the mixed migration flow, involving extensive field work in ten different key locations in Libya but also in some of the key countries of origin and transit (Niger, Sudan, Ethiopia and Somaliland) and the main countries of destination (Malta and Italy). While it builds on past studies and existing literature, it presents a fresh set of data and a new perspective on a set of issues ranging from travel routes; cost of travel; entry points; conditions of the journey; the dynamics and economics of the smuggling business; the push and pull factors of migration; types of migrants; factors influencing decisions to move on or to settle in Libya; the various protection problems migrants, and particularly asylum seekers, are facing during their journey; attempts to quantify the flow of migrants in Libya and the issues and dangers associated with the onward journey to Europe.

The study is part of a wider research project that was commissioned by UNHCR and carried out by Altai Consulting to look at three issues of key concern to UNHCR in post-Gaddafi Libya: namely the dynamics of mixed migration ('Mixed Migration: Libya at the Crossroads'), the situation of refugees in urban settings ('A Social and Economic Assessment of Urban Refugees in Three Libyan Cities') and the status of southern populations ('Assessing Genealogical Profiles, Access to Documentation and Access to Services in Southern Libya'). In addition to contributing to developing greater insight on each of the concerned topics, all three studies are meant to inform and improve the design of operational interventions and programs in support of people in need of international protection, not only for the UNHCR but also for other actors serving these populations.

Beyond the information and insight they provide on the concerned matters, the three studies also propose a set of recommendations targeting the international organizations in Libya, the UNHCR and the Government of Libya.

While the issue of security, border control and enforcement of the rule of law are top priorities for the Libyan government, post-revolution Libya still lacks a proper migration and asylum framework for the proper management of the mixed migration flow into the country that guarantees the physical integrity and protection of the migrants, particularly the asylum seekers fleeing their countries for fear of persecution.

Since it re-established its presence in Libya in 2011, the UNHCR has been assisting vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers with relief items, cash assistance and the facilitation of medical referrals. UNHCR is continuously visiting detention centres where persons of concern to the organization are held, providing relief items and medical attention. Through numerous capacity-building initiatives, the office has been advocating for the identification of alternatives to detention and the establishment of procedures that expand the protection space and address the basic needs of refugees and asylum seekers. Yet, the protection needs remain as diverse as they are challenging.

By making available this study and sharing new data, UNHCR hopes to generate a renewed interest and attention to the issue of mixed migration in Libya and more particularly to the situation of asylum seekers and refugees. We hope it will lead to reinvigorated efforts by the government, as well as local and international partners, for the development of protection solutions for refugees and asylum seekers in Libya. More opportunities for those seeking asylum need to be made available inside Libya to prevent them from going underground, resorting to illicit activities and risking their lives at sea.

As the study suggests, the issue of mixed-migration in Libya has bearings well beyond Libya. In this optic, this study seeks to encourage efforts to bring together the various concerned actors in the region, and along the migration routes, to work in a concerted manner at developing solutions for the many issues associated with mixed migration, but particularly for the achievement of durable solutions for those persons in need of international protection.

I wish to extend my gratitude and express my admiration for the work conducted by the Altai Consulting teams, particularly the field teams who spent a great deal of time, and had to endure numerous constraints and challenges, to collect the data for this study. My thanks extends also to the numerous partners, including UNHCR colleagues in Libya and abroad, who supported and brought valuable contributions to this study. I want to highlight in particular the contribution made by the IOM team in Libya for the quality of its input and comments. Many others; key informants, whether they be government officials, local authorities, Libyans, migrants, asylum seekers or refugees, are essential contributors to this study and ought to be mentioned here and thanked.

Emmanuel Gignac,  
Chief of Mission  
UNHCR Libya.

## II. INTRODUCTION

Since the turn of the century, migration flows into Libya, thanks to its geographic location amongst six bordering countries, and through the country, due to its strategic positioning between Africa and Europe, have steadily increased. While the countries of origin vary, most migrants claim to be drawn to Libya for the opportunities that exist in the arena of income generation. Some arrive and work for a few years before returning to their country of origin with a pool of savings, some repeat the pattern over and over again at different points in their lives, and some are passing through only long enough to generate the requisite funds for their onward journey to Europe, their final destination.

There is also a community of asylum seekers who fled their countries without a definitive plan and spent time in transit countries, as well as in Libya, before deciding to move on to Europe because of the lack of jobs and the poor treatment they experienced by locals in those countries, particularly in Libya. There is also a community of regular economic migrants passing through the country, however the demarcation between regular and irregular migrants is blurry at best with some migrants moving between regularity and irregularity frequently.

Most of these migrants enter the country irregularly, typically from one of its southern borders, and few register with the UNHCR. Economic migrants, who travel voluntarily, either regularly or irregularly, have little or no access to humanitarian assistance. It is clear that all types of migrants experience some level of abuse and a breach of their human rights, however the extent of the problem is hard to determine as most do not report these abuses and do not seek avenues for redress. The lack of a coherent legal framework, coupled with the absence of implementation, lends itself to a legal insecurity for migrants and means that the relative ease of access to the country is tempered by the heightened risk of arbitrary detention and harassment.

Moreover, the mixed nature of these migration flows means that these communities of different types of migrants move along the same routes for different reasons passing through a number of countries and being exposed to a number of vulnerabilities along the way, making it impossible to address these issues through the work of a single agency in a single country.

Between January and May 2013, Altai Consulting conducted a research study to better understand the routes that these migrants are taking in order to reach Libya and to better understand the drivers of their migration. Fieldwork was conducted in Libya with migrants and key informants, as well as in countries of origin and transit (Sudan, Niger, Ethiopia, and Somalia) and destination (Italy and Malta).

### III. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the turn of the century, migration flows into Libya, thanks to its geographic location amongst six bordering countries, and through the country, due to its strategic positioning between Africa and Europe, have steadily increased. As it is a mixed migration flow, the countries of origin and the motivations vary, but the migrants follow the same routes and most of them claim to be drawn to Libya for the opportunities that exist in the arena of income generation.

Between January and May 2013, Altai Consulting conducted a research study to better understand the routes that these migrants are taking in order to reach Libya, to better understand the drivers of their migration, to look at how the situation has changed since the Libyan revolution of 2011, and to pinpoint protection needs.

#### METHODOLOGY

The Methodology involved a number of qualitative research modules that spanned two continents and seven countries and resulted in 92 in-depth interviews with migrants and 86 key informant interviews. The research modules are as follows:

1. **Secondary research** involving a literature review and high-level key informant interviews at the national level in Libya;
2. **Fieldwork in 10 Libyan "hotspots"** involving in-depth qualitative interviews with migrants and key informants in ten locations that were deemed to be hotspots on the migration route in Libya;
3. **Fieldwork in countries of origin and transit** (Ethiopia, Niger, Somaliland, Sudan) involving in-depth qualitative interviews with migrants and key informant interviews with practitioners, actors, and government authorities;
4. **Fieldwork in countries of destination** (Malta, Italy) involving in-depth qualitative interviews with migrants and key informants in the form of practitioners, actors, and government authorities.

An overview was also made of existing data on migration flows and the number of migrants in Libya in order to make estimates of these figures today and to propose a methodology for the rigorous obtainment of these figures in the future.

#### MAIN ROUTES OF TRAVEL AND THE JOURNEY TO LIBYA

##### The East Africa Route

- The East Africa route is followed by Sudanese, Ethiopian, Eritrean and Somali migrants and asylum seekers. Somalis and Somalilanders make their way to Addis Ababa where they join Ethiopian migrants and also Eritrean migrants who come via Asmara or Massawa. From Addis, the migrants move to Khartoum where they change smugglers and make the final leg of the journey to Kufra, Libya. This final leg requires 4-10 days in the Sahara and is consequently quite risky and also expensive. Most stages of this journey require a smuggler.
- Since the revolution, clashes between the Tebu and Zway in Kufra have decreased flows into this region and most smugglers now take groups via Tazerbo in order to avoid the region.
- Some asylum seekers spend time in the refugee camps in Sudan but Ethiopians and Eritreans are concerned that spies from their governments monitor the camps and so do not stay for long. Other asylum seekers are pushed out by the encampment policy in Sudan, which prevents them from building a life. Often smugglers are also used to move from the camps to Khartoum.



Many spend some time working in Khartoum in order to make money for the next leg of the journey.

- There is a new route emerging through Egypt, where Sudanese migrants make their way to Cairo (usually by plane) and then connect with smugglers that take them to the Libyan border at Salloum-Um Saad.

### Routes through Niger

- Routes through Niger are common for West and Central African migrants. Depending on where they start their journey, migrants take different routes that end in either Mali or Niger, from where they continue to Libya, either directly or through Algeria.
- From Mali, they have the choice of either going southeast through Niger or directly north through Algeria. Bamako to Tamanrasset involves crossing the desert, which makes it a difficult journey; but crossing the border into Algeria is easy for Malian passport holders and many buy false Malian passports on the market to facilitate their travel.
- For those that move through Niger, they travel by bus to Agadez (facilitated by the ease of movement within the ECOWAS region), which has become a major smuggling hub, and from there connect with smugglers that take them to Libya. The journey is conducted in stages and migrants typically pass through Dirkou, Madama, Al Wigh, Ghatrun, and Murzuk, often changing smugglers for each leg.
- Some travel through Algeria to get to Libya, instead of entering directly from Niger. Many spend time in Tamanrasset to make money for the next leg of the journey. This route is quite risky, given the presence of terrorist groups attacking convoys and affecting kidnappings and given the harsh terrain (it involves crossing the desert). Consequently, it is quite expensive.
- There is a relatively minor route from **Chad to Libya**, which takes Chadians, Western Sudanese, and Cameroonians from Ndjamena to Sabha.

### Routes within Libya and onto Europe

- Once **within Libya**, most migrants head north to cities with good employment opportunities (Tripoli, Benghazi) or to the coastline where they board boats to Europe.
- The journey from Sabha to Tripoli involves a number of checkpoints, which is why it is usually undertaken with a smuggler. Despite this, however, there are very few reports of detention or deportation along this road.
- The journey from Kufra to Benghazi or Tripoli can be undertaken by bus for some portions, but requires a smuggler for other portions. This route passes through Ajdabiya and the road from Ajdabiya to Tripoli tends to be particularly problematic as many migrants report being detained there.
- For those wishing to move on to **Europe**, smugglers organise boats that leave from the Libyan coast, somewhere between Tripoli and the Tunisian border.

## THE CIRCULATION OF INFORMATION

**Information sources:** Some villages have produced so many migrants that information on how to make the journey to Libya is now common knowledge, particularly in Chad, Niger and Sudan. Moreover, migrants in Europe often call those in Libya, or migrants in Libya call friends and family back home, to relay information about their journey. There are also points along the route that act as information hubs, such as Agadez in Niger, Sharia-Arabin in Sabha, and Omdurman in Sudan.

**Types of Information:** Although information is available, most migrants begin their journey with little information because they are selective in what they want to know. Learning about the risks of

the journey does not deter them as they believe that nothing can be worse than what they are currently living and, despite a dangerous journey, they believe that their life will improve once they arrive in their destination. Unrealistic expectations of their migration is fuelled by migrants in destination who rarely send negative news home because of the pressure on them to succeed, which creates a distorted understanding of life abroad.

### TYPES OF MIGRANTS IN LIBYA

**Regular economic migrants** tend to be Tunisians, Westerners (Europeans, Americans, etc) or from the Indian subcontinent. However, the demarcation between regular and irregular migrants in Libya is blurry at best with many moving between the two regularly.

In any case, **irregular economic migrants** are by far the biggest group of migrants in the country and they tend to be Egyptians (the largest migrant group in the country), Sudanese, Nigerians, Chadians, and Western Africans. Some of them are **seasonal migrants**, meaning they repeat their migration on a regular basis, particularly those that come from neighbouring Sahelian states that are reliant on crops and affected by recurrent drought. However, seasonal migrants tend to be both regular and irregular.

There is also a small community of **asylum seekers**, mainly Syrians, Eritreans, Somalis, Ethiopians, Palestinians and Iraqis. While the Arab asylum seekers are well integrated and in some cases, have refugee status, which they gained under the former regime, the African asylum seekers, particularly those that arrived recently, are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation and arbitrary arrest and detention (since Libya maintains no framework for asylum). This causes them to live deeply underground in Libya and to board boats to Europe as soon as they have enough money to do so.

**Involuntary migrants**, in the form of victims of kidnapping, misinformation and trafficking, also enter the country but to a much lesser extent. Migrants are sometimes fooled by being made false promises of employment in Libya and trafficking, while less frequent, usually happens amongst Nigerian women being forced into prostitution. Kidnapping is particularly common at the border crossing between Eritrea and Sudan and is motivated by ransom money and commonly affected by members of the Rashaida tribe.

The prevalence of **unaccompanied minors** in the mixed migration flow into the country is increasing, although the average age is decreasing (traditionally, it was 16 or 17 year olds that were making the journey, now it is more commonly 14 or 15 year olds).

### DRIVERS OF MIGRATION TO LIBYA: PUSH AND PULL FACTORS

Migrants are drawn to Libya because there are **good employment prospects, relatively high wages, and relative ease of passage to Europe**, particularly in the post-revolution environment where controls are minimal.

As Libya is a resource rich country with a high GDP per capita but a small population, certain industries suffer from a lack of labour supply, which has historically increased demand for foreign labour in the form of migrants. However, the competition for low-skilled jobs is immense in Libya today, given the increasing numbers of low skilled migrants entering the country, and incidences of labour exploitation are rife, meaning that most migrants do not make as much money as they initially expected.

Migrants who manage to find stable employment and are well integrated, such as Arab migrants, are more likely to stay in Libya. Western and Eastern African migrants fall on the other side of the

spectrum and are far more likely to board boats to Europe, particularly the East African asylum seekers who are looking for protection. The presence of networks in Europe and the high levels of abuse and vulnerability in Libya are other factors that cause these migrants to move on.

## OUTFLOWS

Boats leaving the Libyan coast are aiming for Lampedusa, Italy, but some become lost at sea and are rescued by the Maltese coast guards. Malta now receives more migrants, per capita than any other industrialised nation in the world. In the ten-year period between 2002 and 2012, 16,645 migrants arrived in **Malta** by boat, almost all of which came from Libya. In 2012, the recognition rate was 78% and the main nationality of arrivals was Somali. Roughly 80-90% of arrivals were rescued at sea and UNHCR Malta estimates that in 2011, 2.5% of those making the journey died at sea. All migrants are detained on arrival and until their status is determined, at the exception of the vulnerable.

Between 2001 and 2011, 190,425 migrants have arrived by boat in Lampedusa, roughly 60% of which came from Libya. Migrants prefer **Italy** because it is on the mainland and they can move to other parts of Europe more easily from there, especially given the fact that boat arrivals in Lampedusa are transferred to the mainland for processing. Also, Italy does not have a policy of systematic detention. Actors in the field estimate that probably 5-10% of boats that were aiming for Italy were lost at sea.

Other outflows from Libya include forced deportation by the government, voluntary returns using smuggling routes and assisted voluntary returns through the IOM. Embassies are often contacted by migrants when in detention but they usually only succeed in releasing migrants on the promise that they will be sent home and they usually coordinate with IOM for voluntary returns. Few returnees interviewed in countries of origin felt that their situation had improved on return.

## MOVING FORWARD: AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

Mixed migration flows to Libya are problematic for a number of reasons and present a number of concerns, thereby requiring effective management. More specifically:

- There are a number of countries of origin and a spectrum of pre-departure situations which leads to a variety of migrant profiles;
- There are a number of obstacles and consequent vulnerabilities that migrants face in transit countries ranging from legal constraints, lack of job opportunities, racism, crime and smuggling, and challenges represented by the terrain (desert and sea) to their irregular status and their general lack of rights;
- The governments of these transit countries have their own policies for dealing with migrants, which means the situation changes from country to country and often migration organisations need to adapt their own strategies and preferences to respect the decisions of the local government;
- There is a lack of formal coordination across countries and few concrete attempts to create regional border management strategies, which contributes to the contextual inconsistencies that migrants face as they pass through various countries;
- In parallel, there are also different reception arrangements at the European ports of arrival as well as a growing concern about boat arrivals in Europe as the countries of destination struggle with the large flows they receive.

Given such a landscape, there is a need for a comprehensive approach to the management of mixed migration based on the spectrum of vulnerabilities and risks, actors, and opportunities that exist.

Given the mixed flows and the challenges in separating asylum seekers from other migrants, tight coordination between the various actors in the field is essential in order to ensure that the issues at stake are effectively targeted. Specifically:

- It would need to take into account all key countries along the route (from countries of origin to destination) and the different actors that exist across the route;
- In each country, specific obstacles and areas of vulnerability can be highlighted;
- In each country local authorities and existing initiatives, actors and assets would be assessed, together with their willingness to collaborate in a collective effort;
- Each area of vulnerability would be linked to a strategy to address it, as well as a number of actors able to coordinate their work, across countries. This should lead to a number of action plans, covering the entire matrix of issues and opportunities, with a time dimension to be integrated so that initiatives are appropriately placed at the relevant points along the route;
- This work plan would be presented to all relevant actors in a multi-year strategy to manage mixed migration between Africa and Europe (probably requiring preliminary data to be gathered in West Africa and Morocco to ensure that the plan is comprehensive);
- Once validated by all stakeholders, the work plan would need to be closely monitored on a yearly basis to ensure that lessons learned, best practices and successes are built upon accordingly, while also allowing any inconsistencies to be addressed.



## METHODOLOGY

### METHODOLOGY

MAIN ROUTES OF TRAVEL AND THE JOURNEY TO LIBYA

INFLOWS AND DYNAMICS IN LIBYA

OUTFLOWS TO EUROPE AND RETURNS HOME

CHANGES SINCE THE REVOLUTION

THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE JOURNEY

RECOMMENDATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

# IV. METHODOLOGY

## 1. OBJECTIVES

This study constitutes the third activity of a tri-layered project that was commissioned by UNHCR, carried out by Altai Consulting and entitled “Researching Refugee Dynamics, Southern Populations and Migration Dynamics in Post-revolution Libya.” The three separate activities of the project are:

1. A Social and Economic Assessment of Urban Refugees in Three Libyan Cities;
2. Assessing Genealogical Profiles, Access to Documentation and Access to Services in Southern Libya;
3. Mapping of Migration Routes and Drivers of Migration in Post-revolution Libya.

This third study, “Mapping of Migration Routes and Drivers of Migration in Post-revolution Libya” aims to build upon the information and analysis obtained through the first two in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture of migration dynamics in the country.

The overall objective of this study is for the UNHCR and its Libyan Government partners to better understand the spectrum of migrant profiles in Libya, the current drivers of mixed migration to Libya, the current migration routes into and out of Libya, and to understand how these dynamics have changed after the revolution, with the aim of adapting protection programs and policies to better support and manage the flow.

### 1.1 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- To better understand the **push and pull drivers of mixed migration** to Libya from the perspectives of the different types of migrants, taking into account their countries of origin and profile, including an analysis of the evolution of the objectives and mindsets of the migrants along the journey.
- To **map and size the main routes of migration** in and out of Libya, including transit flows and sea migration routes, with a particular focus on understanding the types of actors along the routes, the costs involved, and the hazards faced.
- To better understand the **drivers of settlement, return and onward migration**, in particular understanding what factors influence the decisions of migrants to settle in Libya, to return home voluntarily with or without assistance, or to try and continue on to Europe.
- To gain a fresh **overview of available migration data** by reviewing existing data sources and to estimate current flows, while also creating a methodology for better estimates of the total number of migrants in Libya and the flows.
- To better understand how the mixed migration drivers and routes have **changed as a result of the revolution**.
- To identify **specific needs in terms of protection** and make recommendations to UNHCR and the Libyan Government about how best to manage migration flows

## 2. APPROACH

This study involved a multi layered research approach that first builds upon the findings of the other two activities of the project and then involves a number of **cross-country research modules** that target countries of origin, countries of transit, and countries of destination. Specifically, the various research modules are:

1. **Findings from the first 2 activities of the project** were studied: activity 1<sup>1</sup> provided seminal analysis of the routes followed by refugees to reach Libya and activity 2<sup>2</sup> provided an understanding of the connections and links between members of ethnic groups spread over a number of borders in order to understand influences on migration flows and involvement in the smuggling business;
2. **Secondary research** involving a literature review and high-level key informant interviews at the national level in Libya;
3. **Fieldwork in 10 Libyan “hotspots”** involving in-depth qualitative interviews with migrants and key informants in ten locations that were deemed to be hotspots on the migration route in Libya;
4. **Fieldwork in countries of origin and transit** (Ethiopia, Niger, Somaliland, Sudan) involving in-depth qualitative interviews with migrants and key informant interviews with practitioners, local and international actors, and government authorities;
5. **Fieldwork in countries of destination** (Malta, Italy) involving in-depth qualitative interviews with migrants and key informants in the form of practitioners, local and international actors, and government authorities.

The research approach is delineated below in Figure 1.

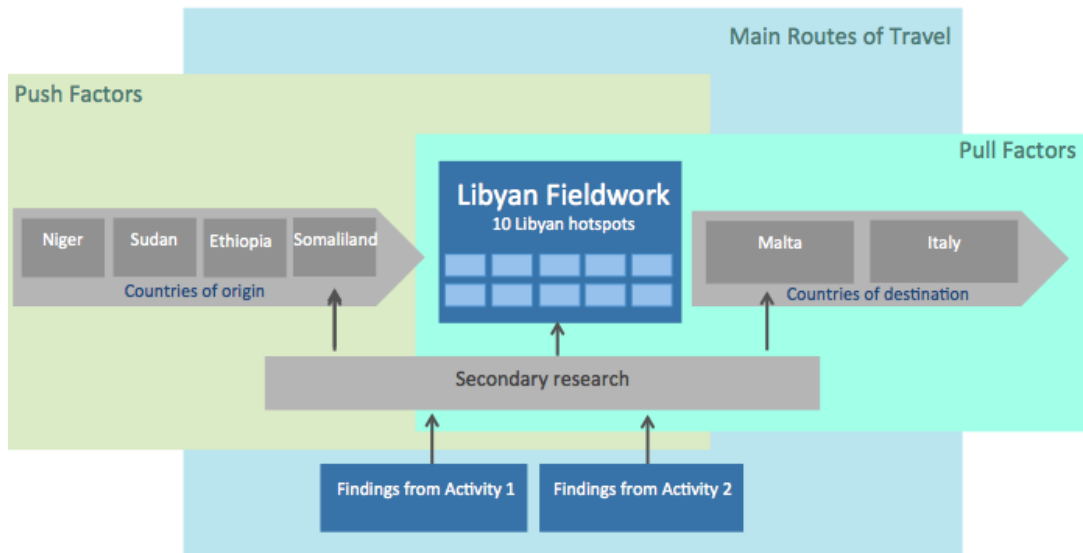


Figure 1: Research approach

<sup>1</sup> “A Social and Economic Assessment of Urban Refugees in Three Libyan Cities,” by Altai Consulting

<sup>2</sup> “Assessing Genealogical Profiles, Access to Documentation and Access to Services in Southern Libya,” by Altai Consulting

### 3. SECONDARY RESEARCH

#### 3.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

A desk review of available literature was conducted on mixed migration in general, and mixed migration flows into Libya specifically, in order to ensure a better comprehension of the historical context as well as current migration dynamics. The purpose of this exercise was also to review existing literature in order to ensure that the study was complementary and did not delve into subjects that had been comprehensively analysed previously. A full list of literature reviewed appears in Table 1 below.

	Title	Author(s)	Year	Content Description
1	<i>A Comprehensive Survey of Migration Flows and Institutional Capabilities in Libya</i>	International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)	2010	A complete report on the different factors shaping migration flows into Libya and the impacts and risks that these flows represent for Libya and migrants themselves. The analysis also looks at the effects migrants have on the Libyan economy as well as the attempts of authorities to deal with the flows through legal and policy decisions.
2	<i>Desperate Choices, Conditions, Risks and Protection Failures Affecting Ethiopian Migrants in Yemen</i>	Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMMS)	2012	This report deals with the situation of irregular immigrants from the Horn of Africa, especially Ethiopians, and the risks they face during the immigration process.
3	<i>Global Migration Futures</i>	Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMMS) and The International Migration Institute (IMI)	2012	This report addresses the possible longer-term developments based on scenarios for future international migration to, from and within the Horn of Africa and Yemen.
4	<i>Libya: The Hounding of Migrants Must Stop</i>	The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)	2012	This report gives an overview of the vulnerability of migrants in post-revolution Libya and focuses on the use of detention centres as central to Libya's new migration policy.
5	<i>African Transit Migration Through Libya to Europe: The Human Cost</i>	Sara Hamood/American University in Cairo	2006	This report looks at the experiences of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants temporarily residing in, and passing through, Libya en route to the EU. It maps their routes, analyses protections issues, and explores cooperation between the EU and Libya.
6	<i>CARIM Migration Profile: Libya</i>	DI Bartolomeo, Perrin and Jaulin/The Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies/The Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration	2011	This report addresses different profiles of migrants in Libya, attempts to size the migrant communities in the country, as well as the flows into the country. It also looks at the legal framework and its consequences for migration.
7	<i>The Dublin II Regulation, A UNHCR Discussion Paper</i>	UNHCR	2006	This study outlines the Dublin II Regulation for determining responsibility for the processing of asylum claims. It also assesses the impact of the regulation and gives recommendations for its better functioning.
8	<i>EASO 2011 Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the European Union and on the Activities of the European Asylum Support Office</i>	The European Asylum Support Office	2011	This report provides a comprehensive description of the Asylum Situation in the European Union in 2011, with a focus on areas in which the European Asylum Support Office was involved.



	Title	Author(s)	Year	Content Description
9	<i>EASO Fact Finding Report on Intra-EU Relocation Activities from Malta</i>	The European Asylum Support Office	2012	This report gives an evaluation of the program of intra-EU relocation from Malta (EUREMA) including the role of IOM and UNHCR in these activities.
10	<i>Report of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe following his visit to Italy from 3 to 6 July 2012</i>	Nils Muiznieks, Commissioner for Human Rights, Council of Europe	2012	This report presents the human rights issues highlighted by the EU commissioner during a fact finding mission to Italy, such as reception, protection and detention of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.
11	<i>Humanitarian Response to the Libyan Crisis, February-December 2011 Report</i>	IOM	2011	This report details IOM's response to the humanitarian emergency in Libya during the 2011 crisis, providing data on assisted returns, repatriation and third-country resettlement.
12	<i>In Pursuit of the Southern Dream: Victims of Necessity: Assessment of the Irregular Movement of Men from East Africa and the Horn to South Africa</i>	Christopher Horwood/IOM	2009	This reports assesses irregular movements of people from the Horn of Africa to South Africa, looking particularly at profiles and push factors.
13	<i>Boat Ride to Detention: Adult and Child Migrants in Malta</i>	Human Rights Watch	2012	The report addresses the journey of migrants and asylum seekers from Libya to Malta, with a focus on conditions of detention in Malta and on treatment of unaccompanied minors
14	<i>Ethnic Conflict in Libya: Toubou</i>	Philip Martin and Christina Weber/The Norman Patterson School of International Affairs, Carlton University	2012	This report assesses the origins, causes, consequences and trajectory of the tribal tension in Sabha and Kufra between the Tebu tribe and Arab tribes, in particular the Zway.
15	<i>Refugees and the Rashaida: Human Smuggling and Trafficking from Eritrea to Sudan and Egypt</i>	Rachel Humphries/UNHCR Sudan	2013	A report on the smuggling and trafficking activities at the border between Eritrea and Sudan and the influence of a specific Arab Tribe, the Rashaida. The report also addresses drivers of migration for Eritreans, the influence of the diaspora and the transit of this community in Eastern Sudan.
16	<i>Au Cœur de la Libye de Kadhafi</i>	Patrick Haimzadeh/JC Lattès	2011	A book (French language) explaining Libya's power dynamics under Gaddafi, with particular analysis of the tribes in Libya and their background and the influence they had on some Libyan territories. Smuggling and trafficking in the South of Libya are also addressed by the author, a former French Diplomat in Libya.
17	<i>Résultat de l'Analyse des Enregistrements et Profils Socio-économiques des Migrants Nigériens Retournés Suite à la Crise Libyenne</i>	IOM	2011	IOM study on Nigerien returnees from Libya who were pushed out by the 2011 crisis. The study focuses on the profiles of these Nigerien migrants, in particular their region of origin, activity while in Libya, time spent in Libya, education levels and how these factors impacted their migration and return.
18	<i>Migration in Sudan, A country profile 2011</i>	IOM	2011	IOM report on migration in Sudan, assessing pull factors, profiles, trends and the legal framework for migration. It also provides figures for the number of Sudanese asylum seekers abroad (as of 2009) and Sudanese migrating abroad, including to Libya.

	Title	Author(s)	Year	Content Description
19	<i>Le Niger, Espace d'Emigration et de Transit vers le Sud et le Nord du Sahara. Rôle et Comportements des Acteurs, Recompositions Spatiales et Transformations Socio-économiques</i>	Boyer F., Amadou B., Mounkaila H./International Relief and Development	2009	This report explains the role of Niger as a country of origin and transit for migrants, explores the impact of migration on main transit cities such as Agadez and Dirkou and addresses circular migration patterns.
20	<i>Migration au Niger: Profil National 2009</i>	Maga Hamidou I./IOM	2009	IOM report on migration to Niger, exploring the socio-economic backgrounds of migrants, push and pull factors, number of migrants in the country, and the efficiency of the migratory policies in the country.
21	<i>La Gestion des Frontières en Libye</i>	Delphine Perrin/CARIM	2009	This report focuses on the legal framework for border management in Libya with a historical overview of legislation and the current status of migration policies.
22	<i>10 steps Lampedusa: Guideline and Tools in an Emergency Context Caused by International Migratory Flows in the Mediterranean</i>	Croce Rossa Italiana		Booklet created by the Italian Red Cross to present guidelines for services provided to migrants arriving by boat to the Italian coast.
23	<i>International Migration to Libya</i>	Sofrani O.A., Jwan H.S./IOM	2008	Book prepared by IOM detailing trends, patterns and the nature of migration in Libya, with a focus on the legal and institutional framework under Gaddafi's regime.
24	<i>Egyptian Migration in Libya</i>	IOM Cairo	2011	Report focusing on Egyptian migrants in Libya, providing data on the numbers in the country as well as the size of the flows, remittances, levels of education, main regions of origin and legal situations when entering Libya.
25	<i>Migration of Tunisians to Libya - Dynamics, Challenges and Prospects</i>	IOM/ADB	2012	Study addressing the characteristics of Tunisian migration to Libya, giving insight on the legal framework and proposing recommendations for better migration policies and cooperation between Tunisia and Libya.

Table 1: List of literature reviewed

### 3.2 HIGH-LEVEL KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

A series of high-level key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted in Tripoli in order to understand the main actors, programs and issues at stake. This supplemented research conducted in the field in order to affect a more comprehensive picture of migration dynamics in the country and region. It also allowed research teams to identify the areas that required further probing in the field research phase.

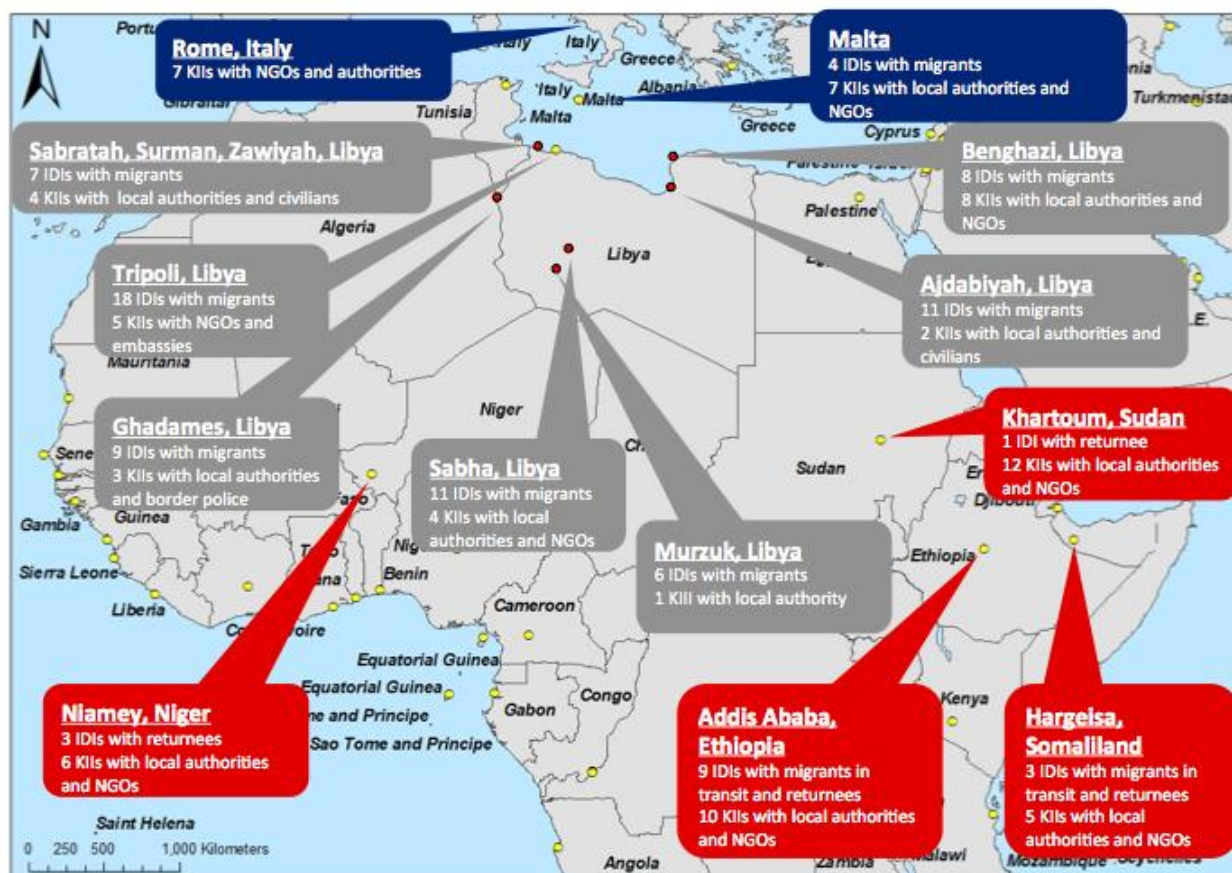
**A total of 11 high-level KIIs were conducted in Tripoli and are listed in Table 2 below.**

	Name	Position/Organisation	Content of Discussion
1	Emmanuel Gignac	UNHCR, Chief of Mission	Migration dynamics, legal framework for asylum, profiles of asylum seekers and refugees in Libya
	Mohamed Akelah	UNHCR, Associate Protection Officer	
2	Maurizio Santicola	IOM, Acting Chief of Mission	Migration dynamics, migration flows, returns programs, trafficking and unaccompanied minors in Libya
3	Besim Ajeti	IOM, Head of Operations	
4	Mariam Khokhar	IOM, Project Development and Coordination Officer	
5	Abdulghani M. Waeis	Somali Ambassador, Tripoli	Push and pull factors for Somalis migrating to Libya, propensity to stay or move on to Europe, routes, flows and assistance provided by the Embassy
6	Tingo Sidi Ki, Mamadou Zouon	Burkinabe Consul, Tripoli	Situation of Burkinabe migrants in Libya, main routes of travel, destinations, propensity to move on to Europe, return programs.
7	Abdullah Mussa Hussein	Eritrean Ambassador, Tripoli	Push and pull factors for Eritrean migrants, deaths at sea, services provided by the Embassy
8	Souel Saleh	Sudanese Vice Consul, Tripoli	Return programs, cooperation with IOM, flows into Libya, main destinations, locations of Sudanese migrant communities in Libya
9	Ahmed Faranjani	Former Director, Al Wafa (NGO)	Services provided to refugees and migrants, the locations of refugee communities in Libya, the work of the Community Development Centre.
10	Natya Mosashvili	Protection Manager, DRC	The work of the DRC in supporting refugees, the collaboration between various partners for comprehensive refugee support, locating migrant communities in Libya.
11	Ghamera Al-Karghaly	Program Manager, Islamic Relief (NGO)	Locating migrant communities, services provided to migrants, main challenges and aspirations.

Table 2: List of KIIs conducted at the national level in Libya

#### 4. FIELDWORK

Map 1 plots the total number of interviews conducted during the fieldwork according to location. It demonstrates diagrammatically the spread of interviews across seven countries and two continents.



Map 1: Total number of interviews conducted according to location

In addition to the in-depth interviews with migrants and key informant interviews that were conducted in Libya, fact-finding missions were undertaken to several African countries in the region that acted as either countries of transit or origin (and in some cases, both) in order to complete the mixed migration map. The purpose of these visits was to further understand migration routes; the perception of Libya in countries of origin and transit; drivers of settlement, return and onward journey; specific migrant profiles; the perceptions of migration to Libya amongst officials and the role of authorities in the mixed migration issue.

These missions were conducted in:

1. Hargeisa, Somaliland
2. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
3. Khartoum, Sudan
4. Niamey, Niger

As a good proportion of migrants that arrive in Libya do not end up staying but instead, intend to reach Europe, fact finding missions were also conducted in the two European countries that act as the main ports of arrival for boats leaving the Libyan coast: Malta and Italy.

In countries of destination, a number of key informant interviews were conducted with key actors and government authorities in order to understand:

- Trends related to boat arrivals;
- Rescue at sea operations, obligations, and trends;
- The reception process;
- Forms of international protection granted;
- Reception solutions and accommodation of migrants;
- Profiles of migrants arriving and changes in trends post-revolution.

The overall intention was to further understand push and pull factors for migrants traveling to Libya and to further explore drivers for settlement, return, and onward journey in Libya.

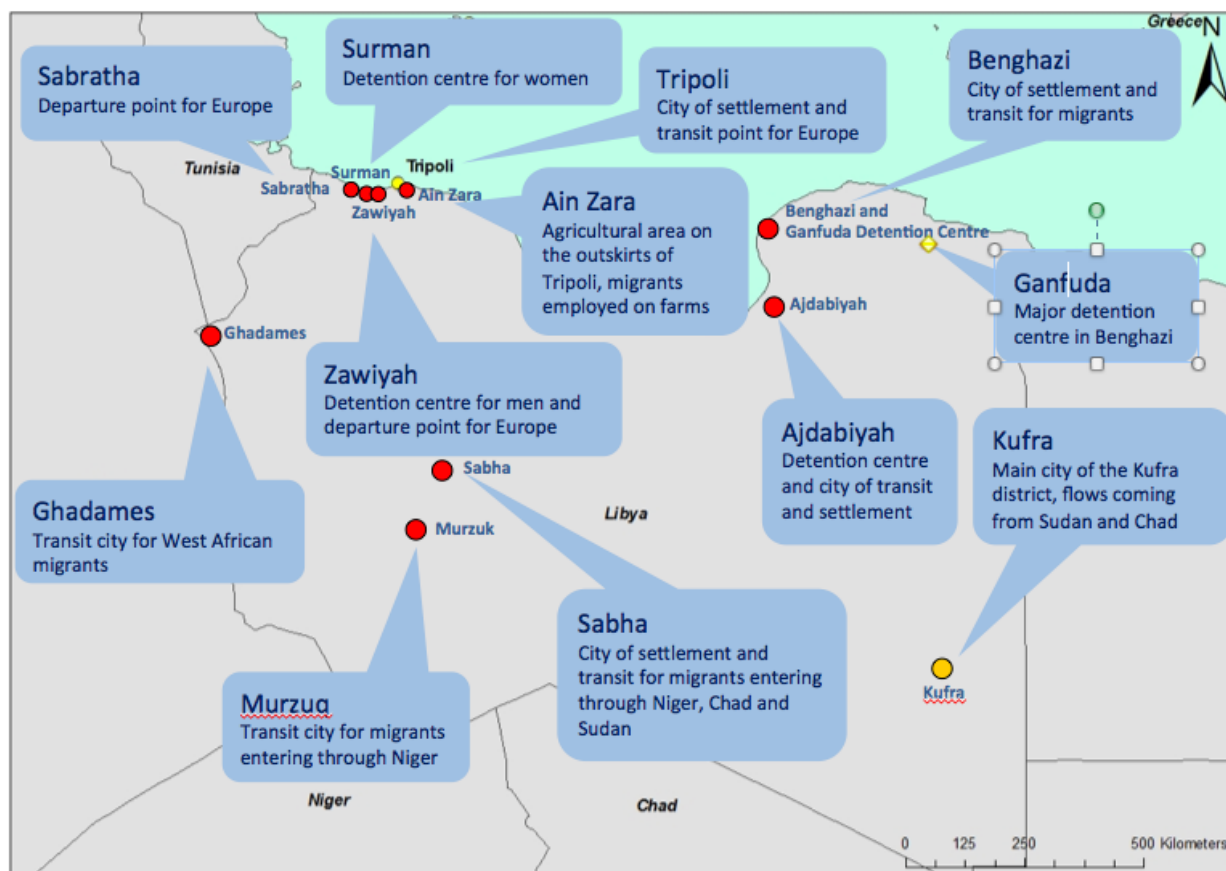
#### 4.1 LIBYA

Fieldwork in Libya involved both in-depth interviews with migrants and key informant interviews in a number of “hotspots,” or key locations, along the migration route. These hotspots were identified through findings from the first two activities, key informant interviews in Tripoli and through the secondary research conducted at the commencement of the project. They included places where migrants gather for departure, transit locations, settlement locations, employment hubs, and detention centres. A full list of these hotspots and their reason for selection appears in Table 3 below.

	Location	Justification
1	Tripoli	Sahria Showk (migrant neighbourhood on the outskirts of Tripoli); Fachloum, Ghot Chaal, Madina Qadima (places of employment for migrants).
2	Sabratha / Zawiya	Boat departure points for Europe.
3	Surman Detention Centre	Detention facility exclusively for women, mainly sub-Saharan Africans, close to Sabratha.
4	Benghazi urban area	Important community of migrants gathered both in camps and in the city; settlement location.
5	Ganfuda Detention Centre	Detention facility exclusively for men, close to Benghazi.
6	Ajdabiyah	Transit city for migrants coming from the south
7	Sabha	Entry point for migrants
8	Murzuk	Transit point
9	Ghadames	Entry point for migrants / Deb Deb border crossing
10	Ain Zara	Agricultural area, place of employment for migrants

Table 3: List of hotspots for Libyan fieldwork

Map 2 below plots the hotspots on a map.



Map 2: Map of fieldwork hotspots in Libya

#### 4.1.1 In-depth Interviews with Migrants

A total of 72 in-depth interviews were conducted with migrants across the 10 above-mentioned hotspots in Libya. Migrants were interviewed on the situation in their country of origin, the means and manner through which they organised their journey, their access to information, the route they took to travel to Libya, the conditions of their journey, their experience in Libya, and their intentions to stay or move on. The breakdown, per location, of interviews with migrants in Libya appears in Table 4 below.

	Location	# of IDIs
1	Tripoli	14
2	Sabrata/Zawiya	2
3	Surman Detention Centre	5
4	Benghazi Urban Centre	6
5	Ganfuda Detention Centre	2
6	Ajdabiyah	13
7	Sabha	11
8	Murzuk	6
9	Ghadames	9
10	Ain Zara	4
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>72</b>

Table 4: Number of IDIs with migrants in Libya per location

4.1.2 Key Informant Interviews

A total of 28 interviews were conducted with key informants across the 10 above-mentioned hotspots in Libya. The purpose of these interviews was to speak to individuals who had a strong sense of migrant flows and migrant communities in their area, or who had a good understanding of migration routes through the country, in order to supplement information gained from migrants themselves. In some cases, KIIs were conducted with local level authorities that had a good sense of migration dynamics.

The full list of key informants consulted throughout the Libyan fieldwork appears in Table 5 below.

	Location	Description of key informants	# of KIIs
1	Tripoli	Interviewed the ambassadors of Somalia, Sudan, Burkina Faso and Eritrea, IOM and UNHCR representatives and a Libyan shopkeeper who employs migrants in Abu Salim	7
2	Sabrata/Zawiya	Interviewed a group of fishermen in Sabratah, a DCIM representative in Sabratah and managing staff of the Zawiya detention centre	3
3	Surman Detention Centre	Interviewed the manager of the Surman Detention Centre	1
4	Benghazi Urban Centre	Interviewed two DCIM representatives in Benghazi, the manager of the former Red Crescent open camp, a UNHCR representative and two NGO workers (from Libaid and Cesvi respectively)	6
5	Ganfuda Detention Centre	Interviewed the manager of the Ganfuda detention centre	1
6	Ajdabiyah	Interviewed a journalist and the manager of the Ajdabiyah detention centre	2
7	Sabha	Interviewed a representative of the Nigerien Consulate, a smuggler and a representative from Libaid NGO	3
8	Murzuk	Interviewed the manager of the Local Council of Morzouk District	1
9	Ghadames	Interviewed the head of the Military Council, the head of the Local Council and the person in charge of the Border crossing point with Algeria	3
10	Kufra	Remotely interviewed a local representative of the DCIM in Kufra	1
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>28</b>

Table 5: List of KIIs conducted in Libya

4.2 SUDAN

Research teams visited Khartoum, Sudan for the fact that it is both a country of origin and a main transit point for migrants coming from the Horn of Africa. The teams interviewed **12 key informants and conducted one in-depth interview with a returning migrant in Sudan**. The respondent was a Sudanese migrant who decided to voluntarily return home, with the assistance of IOM, while detained in Libya.

Key informants are listed in Table 6 below.

Organisation	#	Position	Name
IOM	1	Project Coordinator	Darlene Trnka
	2	Project Officer	Renata Bernardo
	3	Project Officer	Salah Osman
	4	Senior Liaison-Operation Officer	Ester Teodora Gigir
	5	Migration Movement Management Unit	Burhan Adem
UNHCR	6	Senior Protection Officer	Tomoko Fukumura
	7	Consultant	Catherine Philippe
Ministry of Interior	8	Consultant	Laurie Lijnders
Eritran Embassy	9	General	General Abu Bakar
Ethiopian Embassy	10	Ambassador	Mohamed Said Mantay
Ethiopian Embassy	11	Consul	Arega Kassa
Commission on Refugees (CoR)	12	Protection and RCS Manager	Dr Addil Daffala Abdelhaie

Table 6: KIIs conducted in Sudan

### 4.3 ETHIOPIA

Research teams visited Addis Ababa in Ethiopia for the fact that it is both a country of origin and a main hub for migrants from the Horn of Africa on their way to North Africa and Europe. **In Ethiopia, nine in-depth interviews were conducted with migrants and 10 key informant interviews.**

In-depth interviews with migrants included:

1. An Ethiopian migrant en-route to Libya;
2. An Ethiopian migrant en-route to Libya;
3. An Eritrean migrant en-route to Libya and transiting through Ethiopia;
4. A Somali migrant en route to Libya and transiting through Ethiopia;
5. A Somalilander migrant en-route to Libya and transiting through Ethiopia;
6. An unsuccessful Ethiopian migrant;
7. An unsuccessful Ethiopian migrant;
8. An Ethiopian returnee from Libya;
9. An Ethiopian returnee from Libya.

Key informants are listed in Table 7 below.

Organisation	#	Position	Name
Agar Ethiopia	1	Program Manager	Rebecca Demissie
	2	Head of Admin and Finance	Martha Zewdie
IOM	3	Irregular Migration Programs Coordinator	Tagel Solomon
	4	Project Officer	Sharon Dimanche
	5	Project Development and Donor Liasion Officer	Yuko Tomita
UNHCR	6	Assistant Representative (Protection)	Magda Medina
	7	Protection Officer	Sardhanand Panchoe
Jesuit Refugee Services	8	Director	Enbshaw Bebrework
NRC	9	Country Director	Kennedy Wafa
Save the Children (US)	10	Humanitarian Director	Shewangezaw Lulie

Table 7: KIIs conducted in Ethiopia

### 4.4 SOMALILAND

Research teams visited Hargeisa in Somaliland for the fact that it is both a country of origin (for Somalilanders moving to Ethiopia) and a transit point for Somali refugees moving on to Ethiopia on their way to Libya. **In Somaliland, three in-depth interviews were conducted with migrants and five key informant interviews.**



In-depth interviews with migrants included:

1. An unsuccessful migrant from Somaliland;
2. An unsuccessful migrant from Somaliland;
3. A Somalilander returning from Libya.

Key informants are listed in Table 8 below.

Organisation	#	Position	Name
IOM	1	Project Officer	Dayib Daskar
UNHCR	2	Protection Officer	Ayanle
	3	Programme Officer	Marco Conte
DRC	4	Program Director	Mounir Hussein
Migration Action Centre	5	Head of Centre	Mustafa yusuf Farah

Table 8: KIIs conducted in Somaliland

#### 4.5 NIGER

Research teams visited Niamey in Niger for the fact that it is both a country of origin and main transit point for West and Central Africans traveling to Libya. **In Niger, three in-depth interviews were conducted with migrants and six key informant interviews.**

In-depth interviews with migrants included:

1. A Liberian migrant trying to return home from Libya but stranded in Niger;
2. A Cameroonian migrant returning from Algeria and stranded in Niger;
3. A Cameroonian migrant who had attempted to travel to Europe but was now stranded in Niger.

Key informants are listed in Table 9 below.

Organisation	#	Position	Name
IOM	1	Project Officer	Abibaou Wane
	2	Project Officer	Mamoudou Daouda
UNHCR	3	Deputy Representative	Koffi Dodzi Adossi
Church of Niamey	4	Christian Father	Mauro Armanino
Independent Researcher	5		Harouna Mounkaila
National Refugee Commission	6	Director	M. Deouda

Table 9: KIIs conducted in Niger

#### 4.6 MALTA

In Malta, **four in-depth interviews were conducted with migrants** in the Marsa Open Centre for Migrants and the Hal Far Tent Village. All of them had arrived on boats from Libya. In addition, **seven interviews were conducted with key informants** from amongst local authorities and international and local agencies.

In-depth interviews with migrants included:

1. A Somali migrant who had been granted refugee status;
2. A female Ethiopian migrant who had been granted refugee status;
3. A Nigerian man who had been refused protection and was awaiting deportation;
4. A Beninese migrant who had been refused protection but was appealing the decision.

Key informants are listed in Table 10 below.

Organisation	#	Position	Name
UNHCR	1	Representative	Jon Hoisaeter
	2	EASO Liaison Officer	Wilfred Buchhorn
IOM	3	Projects Coordinator	Tarek Ben Ali
Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security	4	Director General (Operations)	Mario Caruana
Office of the Refugee Commissioner	5	Refugee Commissioner	Mario Guido Friggieri
Malta Police (Special Branch)	6	Assistant Police Commissioner	Andrew Seychell
Foundation for Shelter and Support to Migrants	7	Services Manager (Marsa Open Centre)	Sandra Schembri Wismayer

Table 10: KIIs conducted in Malta

#### 4.7 ITALY

In Italy, nine interviews were conducted with key informants from both the government and international agencies.

The full list of key informants appears in Table 11 below.

Organisation	#	Position	Name
UNHCR	1	Regional Senior Protection Officer	Beat Schuler
	2	Regional Senior Protection Associate	Helena Behr
	3	Protection Associate	Riccardo Clerici
IOM	4	Head of Migration Management Unit	Giulia Falzoi
	5	Reintegration Focal Point	Cedric Dekeyser
	6	Project Manager, Family Reunification Project/Legal Expert	Simona Moscarelli
Italian Red Cross	7	Head, Office of Tracing Services, RFL and Social Protection and Migration	Andrea Pettini
National Refugee Commission	8	President	Prefect Angelo Trovato
Save the Children	9	Program Manager for Migrant Minors	Viviana Valastro

Table 11: KIIs conducted in Italy

## 5. SAMPLE ANALYSIS

The fieldwork resulted in a total of **178 in-depth qualitative interviews across seven countries** that included 92 in-depth interviews with migrants and 86 in-depth interviews with key informants that had a good understanding of migrants and migration dynamics.

Table 12 outlines the number of interviews completed according to type of research and research location.

Research Module	IDI with migrants	Key informants
<b>Secondary research</b> involving a literature review and high-level key informant interviews at the national level in Libya.		11
<b>Fieldwork in 10 Libyan “hotspots”</b> involving in-depth qualitative interviews with migrants and key informants in the field.	72	28
<b>Fieldwork in countries of origin and transit</b> involving in-depth qualitative interviews with migrants and key informant interviews with practitioners, actors, and government authorities.	Niger	6
	Sudan	12
	Ethiopia	10
	Somaliland	5
<b>Fieldwork in countries of destination</b> involving in-depth qualitative interviews with migrants and key informants in the form of practitioners, actors, and government authorities.	Malta	7
	Italy	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>86</b>

Table 12: Total number of interviews completed

This study also builds upon the findings from the two other studies conducted for this tri-layered project (A Social and Economic Assessment of Urban Refugees in Three Libyan Cities and Assessing Genealogical Profiles, Access to Documentation and Access to Services in Southern Libya), which included 400 interviews with asylum seekers in Libya and 600 interviews with tribal groups (who represent another form of cross border movement and are prominent in the smuggling business). This means that the findings for this study were informed by 1000 quantitative interviews, as well as 178 qualitative interviews.

Interviews conducted with migrants across the seven countries led to a diversified sample across gender, age and type of migrant, as represented in the figures below.

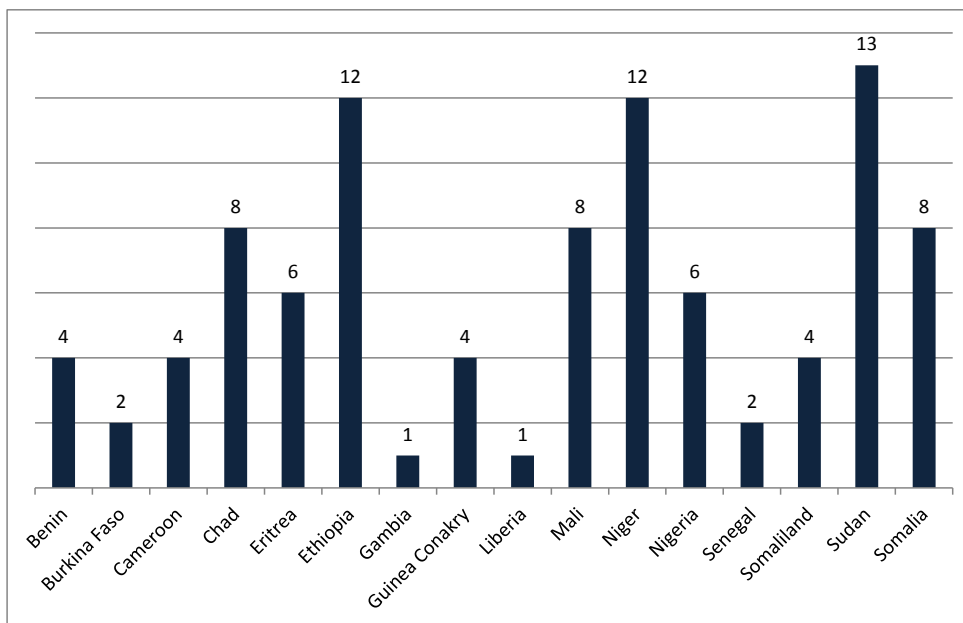


Figure 2: Country of origin of migrants interviewed, across the sample

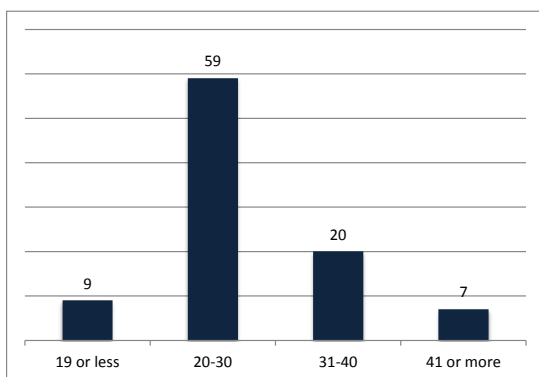


Figure 3: Distribution of age of migrants, across the sample

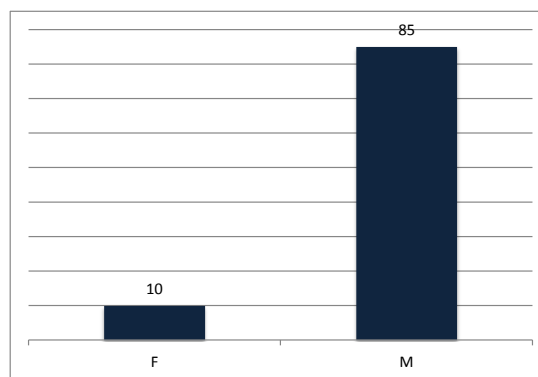


Figure 4: Distribution of gender of migrants, across the sample



## MAIN ROUTES OF TRAVEL AND THE JOURNEY TO LIBYA

METHODOLOGY

**MAIN ROUTES OF TRAVEL AND THE JOURNEY TO LIBYA**

INFLOWS AND DYNAMICS IN LIBYA

OUTFLOWS TO EUROPE AND RETURNS HOME

CHANGES SINCE THE REVOLUTION

THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE JOURNEY

RECOMMENDATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

# V. MAIN ROUTES OF TRAVEL AND THE JOURNEY TO LIBYA

## 1. COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

The main communities of migrants in Libya are represented in Table 13 below, according to region of origin. While such a categorisation cannot claim to be entirely exhaustive, it represents the main communities in terms of the size of the flows and is gleaned from interviews with migrants and key informants (mainly authorities and international and local actors) in Libya, other countries in the region, and through a review of available literature.

Main Communities of Arab Migrants	Main Communities of Western and Central African Migrants		Main Communities from Horn of Africa	Main Asian communities
Egypt	Niger	Senegal	Somalia	Pakistan
Sudan	Chad	Gambia	Eritrea	Bangladesh
Palestine	Mali	Guinea	Ethiopia	Philippines
Syria	Nigeria	Benin		
Morocco	Ghana	Togo		
	Cameroon	Burkina Faso		

Table 13: Main communities of migrants in Libya

For the purposes of mapping mixed migration flows into Libya, this study focuses on migrants from the following countries of origin:

Neighbouring Countries	Horn of Africa	Western Africa	
Sudan	Somalia	Mali	Nigeria
Niger	Eritrea	Senegal	Cameroon
Chad	Ethiopia	Burkina	Guinea
		Benin	Gambia

Table 14: Communities of migrants in Libya interviewed for this study

Not all migrant communities were included in the study as some migrants (predominately Asian migrants) make the journey to Libya by air. There are also some communities that follow the same routes, thereby not necessitating separate investigations for each of them (for example, some western and central African migrant communities follow the same routes to Libya).

### Focus box 1: Definition of mixed migration

Refugees and asylum seekers often move from one country to another alongside other people whose reasons for moving are different and not necessarily protection-related.

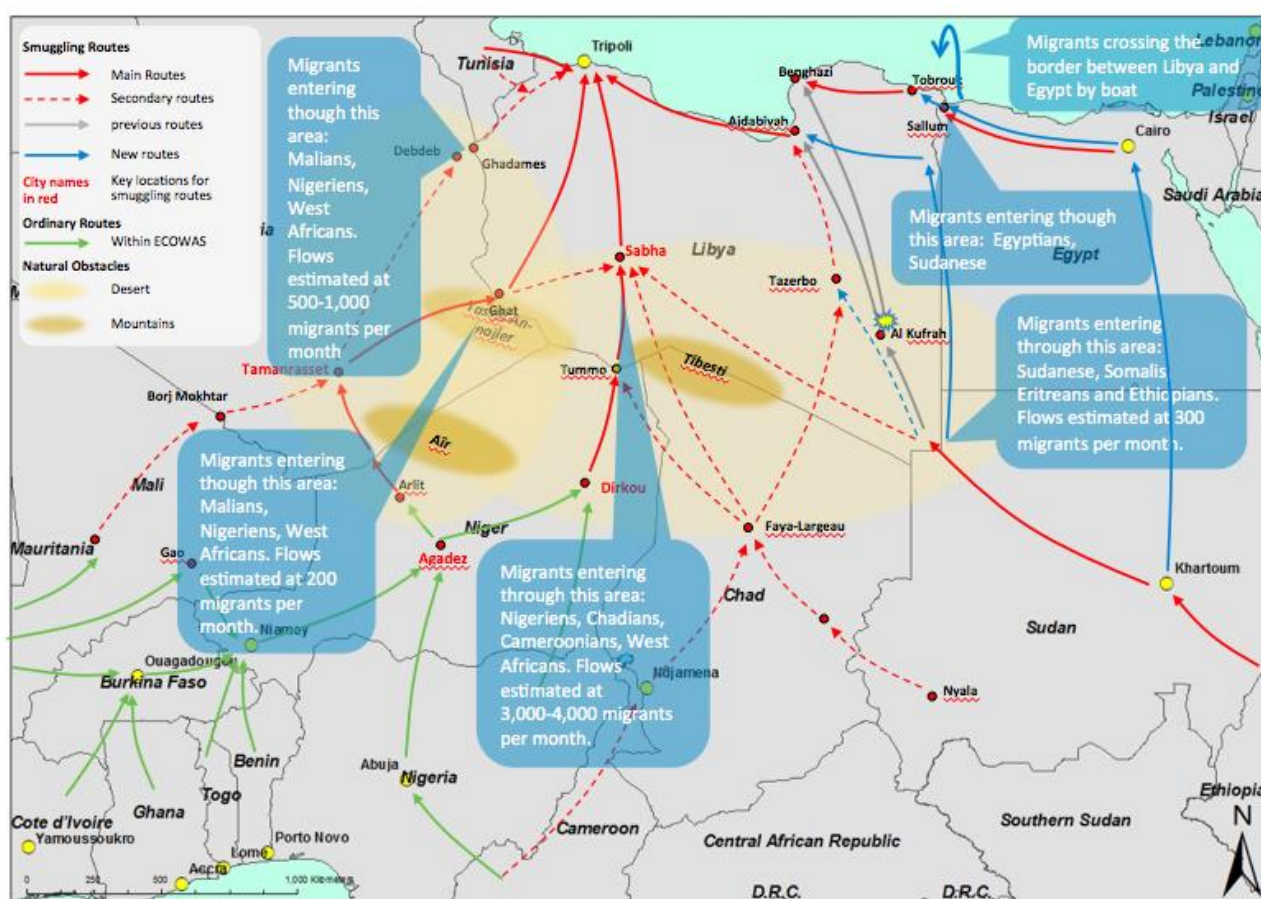
According to the Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat, there are 2 main definitions of mixed migration flows:

1. Mixed complex population movements including refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants and other migrants (IOM)
2. People travelling in an irregular manner along similar routes, using similar means of travel, but for different reasons (UNHCR)

## 2. ROUTES OF TRAVEL

This section outlines the main routes of travel to Libya, with specific routes outlined individually. The following maps were developed by Altai Consulting during the period of fieldwork which ran from February till April 2013. They were developed as a result of information gathered from migrants in a number of countries, who were asked about their routes of travel; and interviews with key informants (including military councils, border officials, smugglers, fisherman, detention centre staff, community representatives of local tribes, employers of migrants, and so forth), also in a number of countries. These maps differentiate the main routes of travel (that is, the ones that represent the largest flows) from secondary routes (those with less traffic) while also outlining older routes that are no longer utilised and new and emerging routes.

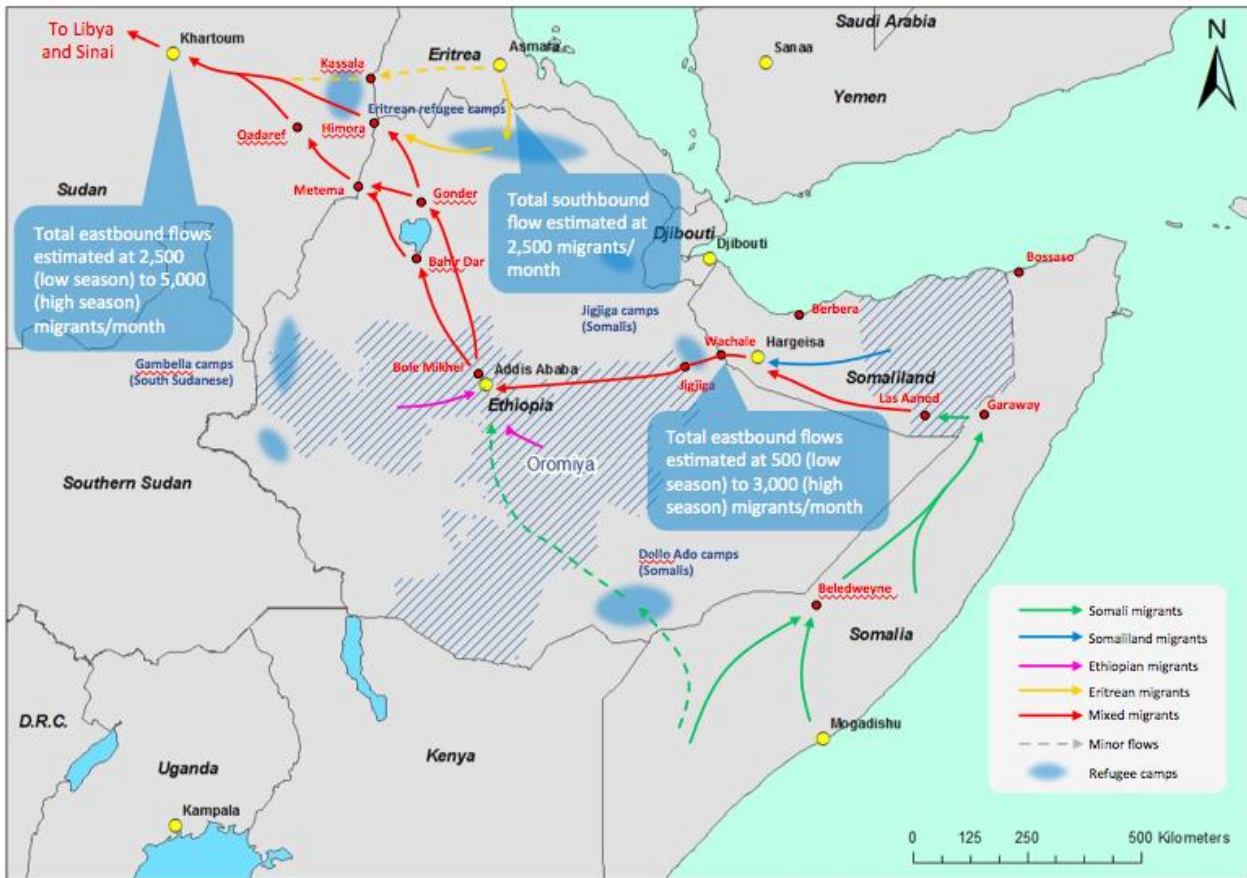
Map 3 gives an overview of all routes leading to Libya, while proceeding maps will narrow in on specific routes.



Map 3: All migration routes into Libya

### 2.1 EAST AFRICAN ROUTES

This section includes routes from Somaliland to Ethiopia, Ethiopia to Sudan, Eritrea to Sudan and Sudan to Libya. These routes are delineated in Map 4, with each route being explained in the proceeding subsections.



Map 4: Routes from East Africa into Libya

2.1.1 Sudan to Libya

**Khartoum to Kufra District:** This route is the longest of all the routes studied for this report, however, it is the most direct for migrants coming through Sudan. It is also the most risky as it requires 4-10 days in the Sahara for the journey between Dongola and Kufra. The length and dangers encompassed also mean that it is relatively expensive.

- **Migrants taking this route:** Sudanese, Ethiopians, Eritreans, Somalis.
- **Cost:** Between USD\$600 - USD\$1,600 depending on the time of year, the security situation, and the smuggler.
- **Length of journey:** approximately 10 days.
- **Journey:** migrants usually meet Sudanese smugglers in Khartoum or Omdurman who transport them in pick-up trucks to Dongola or to the border with North Darfur.
- From there they often change smugglers and travel in another car to the Libyan border.
- At this point the smuggler and car are usually changed again and migrants enter Libya and spend 4-5 days travelling in the desert to get to Uweynat.
- Most migrants just pass through Uweynat and from there the trip through the Sahara is continued until the city of Kufra.
- Since February 2012, migrants and smugglers have been avoiding the city of Kufra due to clashes in the area between an Arab tribe, the Zway, and the Tebu tribe.
- Due to these clashes, smugglers have been rerouting their journey through the Abdul Malek Mountains to Rebiana, Tazerbo, or sometimes to Sabha.



- The other way to by-pass the conflict is to enter Libya later in the journey by crossing into Egypt after Dongola, traveling North, and then entering Libya from Egypt at the border crossing point near Jaghub. From there they usually travel on to Tobrouk.
- **Traffic:** This route was known to have the biggest flow of migrants because of the different communities that pass through Sudan to get to Libya, however the Libyan crisis and the recent tribal tensions in Kura district have substantially decreased the number of migrants taking this route.
- The governor of Kufra estimated the flows at 10,000-12,000 migrants per month before the crisis.
- While we know that numbers have decreased now, there are no figures to indicate the actual size today.
- Altai estimates current flows at 300-1,000 migrants per month, through interviews with informants in the Kufra region.
- **Controls:** There are few controls at this border crossing and in any case, the border on the Libyan side has been closed since December 2012.
- Sudanese authorities interviewed in Sudan confirmed that they find it challenging to control the border due to fact that it lies in the desert.

### 2.1.2 Eritrea to Sudan

**Asmara/Massawa to Khartoum:** This route is particularly dangerous because there are reportedly kidnappings happening close to the border, on the road between the border and the camps, and sometimes in the camps themselves. It is alleged that members of the Rashaida tribe are responsible for these kidnappings and are motivated by the payment of ransom. According to the UNHCR in Sudan, there are between 30-50 kidnappings taking place each month.

- **Migrants taking this route:** Eritreans
- **Cost:** USD\$100 - USD\$150
- **Length of journey:** 3-6 days
- **Journey:** From Asmara or Massawa, migrants travel to the bordering cities of Tasseney or Gulu by bus.
- Most migrants then enter Sudan through one of the three eastern Sudanese states of Gedaref, Kassala or the Red Sea state.
- They typically cross the border clandestinely by foot, which takes about 2-5 days. Otherwise, they travel in a pick-up organised by a smuggler.
- Once they cross the border, they are transported by another smuggler, a Sudanese one, to one of the UNHCR camps<sup>3</sup>
- From the camps, they coordinate with another smuggler who will take them to Khartoum or Omdurman.
- **Traffic:** The flows over this border were sized at 2,000 migrants per month. However, these flows dropped dramatically to 200-500 per month in January 2013. The reasons for this drop are yet to be determined, however there is speculation that it may be linked to the new monitoring system that was put in place at the border by UNHCR and the Sudanese government.
- Migration flows tend to increase around June and it is believed that this coincides with the time when the school year finishes and there is an increase in young people contemplating their future.

<sup>3</sup> Shagarab I, II and III, Wad Sharife and Abuda camps in Kassala State and Um Gargour and Kilo 26 camps in Gedaref State.

- **Controls:** The border between Eritrea and Sudan is 660km long and there are only 3 entry points: Awad, Lafa, and Gergif.
- On the Eritrean side of the border there is a high military presence and there are military training camps located very close to the border. The Sudanese side is also heavily monitored.

---

#### Case Study 1: Ethiopian Migrant Detained in Libya

Zakaria is a 32-year-old Ethiopian man who belongs to the Oromo community. He is university educated and previously worked for the Ethiopian government. As he was working quite actively with the Oromo Liberation Front, the federal police started to chase him and he feared arrest and detention like one of his brothers who is now in prison. He fled Ethiopia without knowing exactly where he was going and eventually made his way to Sudan. He stayed in Sudan for two months where he was sheltered by one of his friends. He did not stay in the camps in Sudan because he had heard that some Ethiopians had been deported from the camps to prisons back in Ethiopia, allegedly as a result of agreements between the two governments. For that reason he decided to move to Libya, undertaking a journey through the Sahara that took him 10 days. He did not have enough money to make the trip so he borrowed some from his friends and relatives. One of his companions on the journey did not survive the trip and was buried in the desert. He finally made it to Libya but was detained in Benghazi, where he remains now. He wants to leave Libya and go anywhere where he can be given refugee status and a chance to build a new life, but he does not know how to do so. He says he will only return to Ethiopia if the political situation changes.

---

#### 2.1.3 Ethiopia to Sudan

**Addis-Ababa to Khartoum:** Ethiopians that intend to travel on to Libya/Europe or to other locations (such as the Gulf or Israel) tend to take routes that pass through UNHCR camps in Sudan where they will stay until they find a way to affect the next stage of their journey. It is allegedly easier to cross the Ethiopian border with Sudan, when compared to the Eritrean one, due to fewer controls.

- **Migrants taking this route:** Ethiopians, Somalis
- **Cost:** USD\$500-USD\$800
- **Length of journey:** 3-6 days
- **Journey:** There are three routes to Sudan from Ethiopia
- The first route goes through Addis to Metema, the town at the border with the Sudanese state of Gedaref. The trip is usually undertaken by bus or truck (covered, so the migrants cannot be seen) and once they arrive at the border they cross on foot, usually during the night. On the other side of the border, migrants find a Sudanese smuggler to take them through Gellabat to one of the several camps in Gedaref state where they stay long enough to organize their trip to Khartoum. Few settle in the camps on the long term.
- The second route goes through Addis, and the agricultural region near the Sudanese border, to Humera, the town at the border between Gedaref State (Sudan) and Eritrea. This part of the journey is usually undertaken by truck or bus. Migrants typically cross the border by foot, usually at night. Once in Sudan, a smuggler will transport migrants to a camp in the state of Gedaref where they will organize their trip to Khartoum, which usually happens by car.
- The third route is the safest but reserved for Ethiopian nationals that carry passports. It goes directly from Addis Bole Airport to Khartoum by plane. Ethiopian nationals are granted two months touristic visas on arrival for Sudan, which they use to enter the country and then usually overstay.
- **Traffic:** Flows from Ethiopia to Sudan are difficult to estimate, but thought to be around 50-100 Ethiopian migrants per day into Sudan (excl. Somalis)

- The more prominent smugglers in Ethiopia can send two to three trucks per week, filled with 20-45 people, during the high season. This drops to about one truck per week during the low season.
- The high season generally begins when the school year ends in June as graduates start to contemplate their future and make decisions to leave.
- **Controls:** there are very few controls on the Ethiopian side. The Sudanese side is more heavily manned.

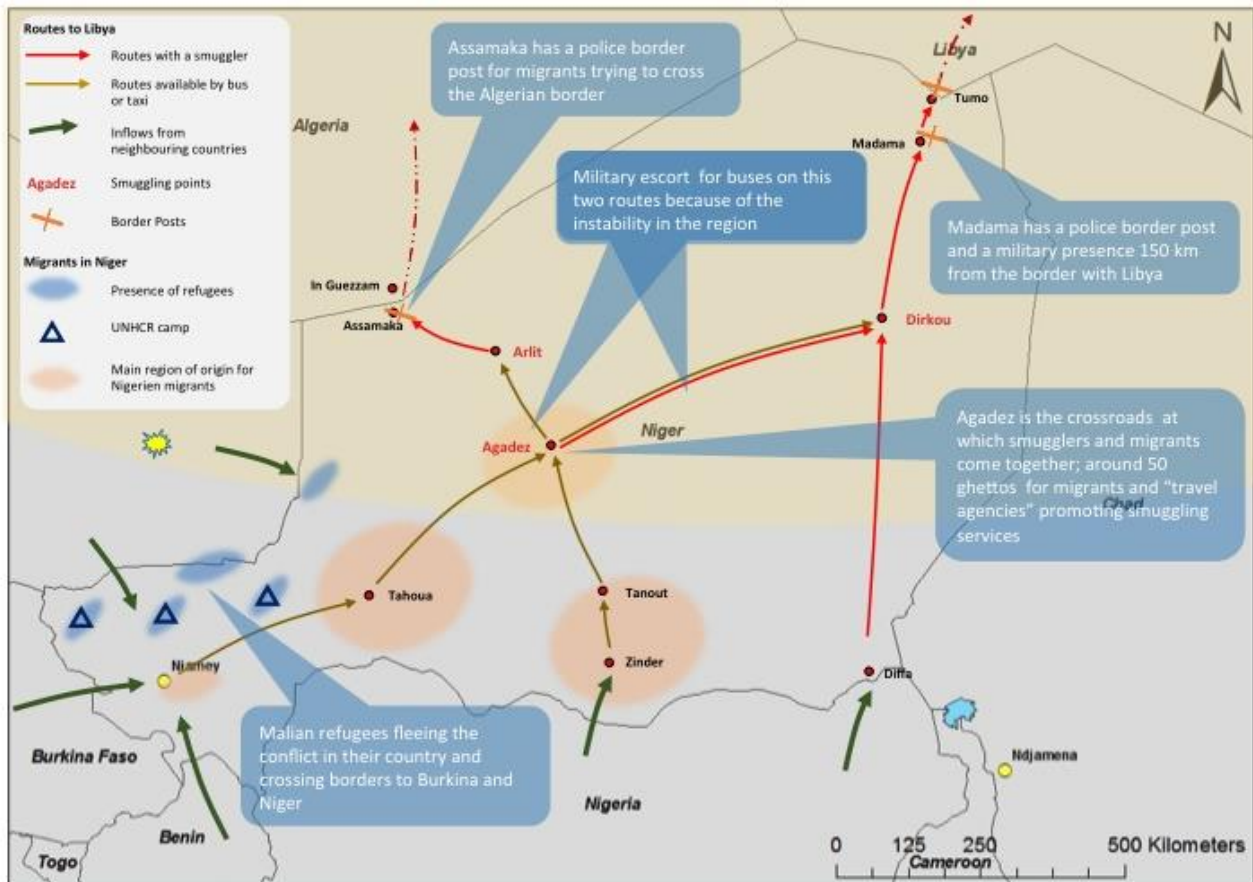
#### 2.1.4 Somaliland to Ethiopia

**Hargeisa to Addis Ababa:** There are flows moving in both directions over this route, both Somalilanders traveling into Ethiopia and Ethiopians into Somaliland. Ethiopians are usually on their way to Yemen or to Gulf countries via Djibouti or Puntland, mainly for economic reasons.

- **Migrants taking this route:** Somalilanders
- **Cost:** USD\$250 - USD\$500
- **Journey:** Migrants travel from Hargeisa, or other cities in Somaliland, to Wachalah, at the border with Ethiopia, usually by car or truck with the assistance of a smuggler.
- From Wachalah they cross the border by foot or by car into Jijiga in the region of Ogaden in Ethiopia, where the dominant ethnic group is Ethiopians of Somali descent.
- Some Somalilanders claim to be Ethiopians of Somali descent here so that they can apply for an Ethiopia passport. This is usually because they cannot travel with their own passports, given the fact that Somaliland is not yet recognised as a sovereign state by the international community.
- **Traffic:** Flows over the border between Somaliland and Ethiopia are estimated at 500-3,000 migrants per month.
- The high season also begins when the school year ends in June as graduates start to contemplate their future and make decisions to leave.
- **Control:** There are few controls and flows move in both directions over the border. Bribing of border officials is reportedly common in order to facilitate passage.

## 2.2 ROUTES THROUGH NIGER

This section includes routes to Libya that pass through Niger. These routes are delineated in Map 5 with each route being explained specifically in the proceeding subsections.



Map 5: Routes through Niger

### 2.2.1 Niger to Libya

**Agadez to Sabha:** This route is one of the main routes for Western and Central African migrants that travel through Niger to reach Libya. It is also one of the most dangerous portions of their trip as it involves crossing the desert.

- **Migrants taking this route:** Nigeriens, Malians, Chadians, Nigerians, Ghanaians, Cameroonians, Beninese, Ivoirians, Guineans, Burkinabe, Senegalese, Gambians etc.
- **Cost:** USD\$100 - USD\$300
- **Journey:** To begin the journey, migrants must make their way to the Nigerien city of Agadez, which is a main hub for migrants wishing to locate smugglers for travel to Libya. They usually make the journey to Agadez by bus from other Nigerien cities, such as Niamey, Tahoua, Tanout and Zinder.
- From Agadez, migrants make their way to Dirkou, sometimes by buses that are escorted by the Nigerien military forces (because of the poor security in the area) or, more often, by pick-ups organised by smugglers.
- In Dirkou, they often wait a few days until they locate a new smuggler that can take them to Madama.
- In Madama, they have to by-pass the military and police control posts in order to continue their trip to the Tumo border post between Niger and Libya.
- Some migrants cross the border officially and have their passports stamped, others let the smuggler deal with the police officers on duty, particularly when the officer on duty is a part of

- the smuggler's network. However, the majority of them just by-pass the border post by travelling through the desert directly to Al Wigh and then to Ghatrun.
- In Ghatrun, migrants normally pause for a period of time and locate a new smuggler for the next phase of the journey.
  - From Ghatrun, migrants continue their trip to Morzouk or Um Al-Aranib, but the majority try to reach Sabha as soon as possible as they know that it is easier to find work there and to locate smugglers that can facilitate their journey to Tripoli.
  - During this part of the trip, migrants often have to sleep in the Sahara and subsist on very little food or water, making it a very perilous part of the journey.
  - **Traffic:** Flows are estimated at 2,000-8,000 migrants per month on this route, according to interviews conducted with key informants in Niger.
  - **Control:** There are some controls and deportations by both Nigerien and Libyan authorities at this border, but very little in proportion to the flow of migrants passing through. This is partly because authorities are (allegedly) on the payroll of smugglers and also because the Sahara is too vast to be controlled by authorities and allows for the clandestine passage of migrants.

---

#### Case Study 2: Cameroonian Migrant Stranded in Niger

Kevin is a 27-year-old Cameroonian who is the eldest of six children. After his father lost his sight and was unable to work, Kevin decided that as the eldest son, it was his responsibility to provide for the family. He decided to follow one of his friends to Spain (via Morocco) to look for work and his mother helped him finance the trip through Niger and Algeria. While crossing the Algerian desert, he did not have enough food and ate toothpaste to alleviate hunger. After paying several bribes, he got to Morocco where he slept in a Mosque, pretending that he was Muslim. Eventually, he reached Nador, not far from the Spanish city of Melilla, but he was chased by the police and had to hide in the forest. He was assaulted and beaten up several times and received assistance from *Médécins Sans Frontières*. After all these difficulties, he realised that the risks had become too great and he decided to return home. A Moroccan shepherd helped him to leave and he found his way back to Algeria and eventually to Agadez, through the financial aid of another migrant. He is now in Niamey but doesn't have enough money to return home. He feels like he is stranded in Niger with no way out as job opportunities are minimal. He wants to go back to Cameroon as soon as possible but has been in Niamey for a few months.

---

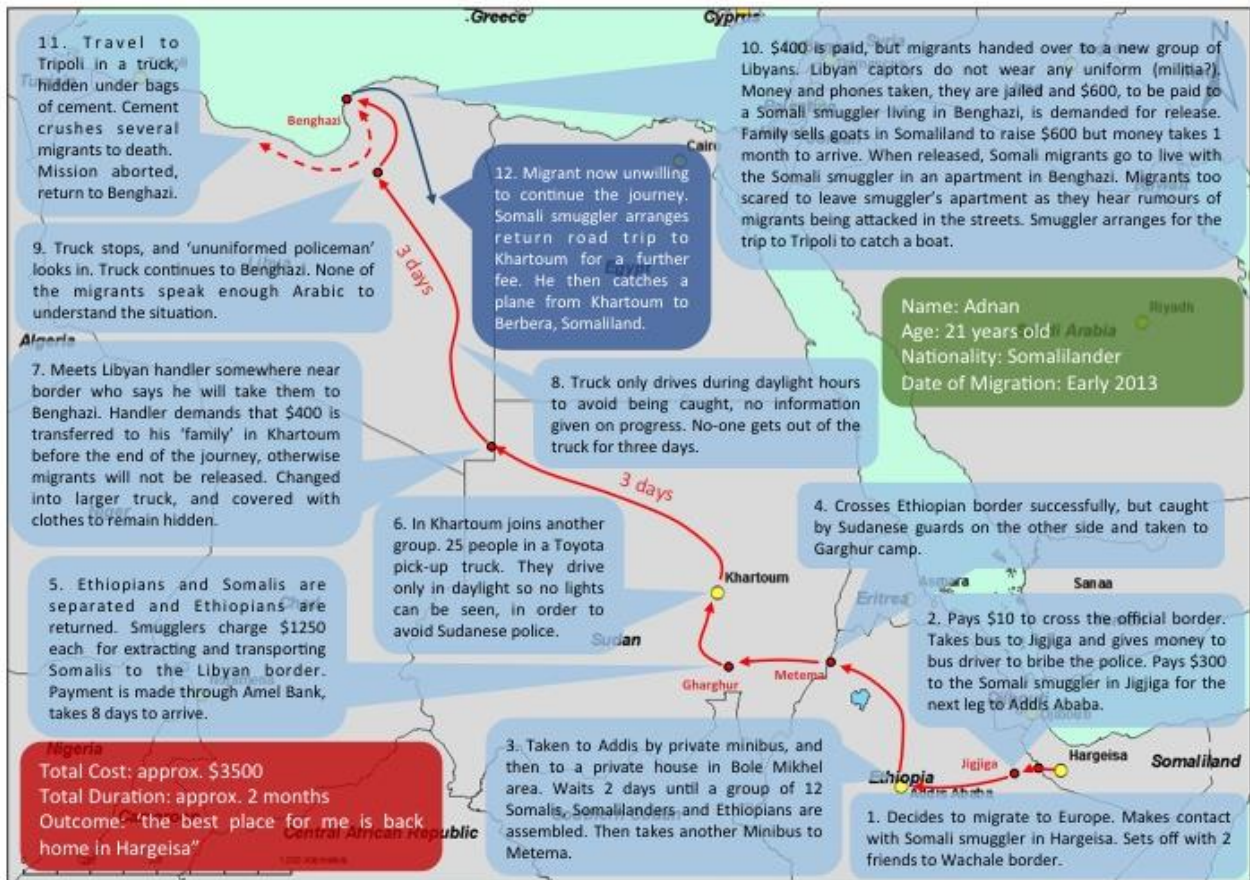
#### 2.2.2 Routes within the ECOWAS region

Founded in 1975, the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS) is a regional group of 15 countries,<sup>4</sup> whose mission is to promote economic integration in all fields of economic activity.<sup>5</sup> Persons from member countries are given free passage amongst the 15 countries of the community with presentation of any type of identity papers. Thus, routes in this region are quite cheap and safe for migrants that originate from member countries.

---

<sup>4</sup> Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.comm.ecowas.int/>



Case study 3: The route of a Somalilander (visual)

- **Migrants taking this route:** Malians, Nigerians, Ghanaians, Beninese, Ivoirians, Guineans, Burkinabe, Senegalese, Gambians etc.
- The use of common languages in the area; such as French, English, Bambara (Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Ivory Coast), Peul (Senegal, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon) and Haoussa (Nigeria, Niger, Ghana) allows migrants to share information and facilitates easier travel.
- **Cost:** USD\$20 - USD\$50 to get from one capitol city to another within the ECOWAS region.
- **Journey:** Depending on where the migrants start their journey, they take different routes, all ending in Mali or Niger, from where they begin their journey to Libya (either directly or through Algeria).
- Migrants from Benin, Togo, Ivory Coast and Ghana travel from their countries to Burkina-Faso by bus (or several buses) for very little amounts of money (FCFA 10,000 or even less, which transfers into approximately \$20)
- Migrants from Senegal and Gambia usually cross through Mali by bus, from where they usually have the choice of either going southeast through Niger, or directly North through Algeria. From Bamako, they can directly go to Niamey, or more frequently, cross through Ouagadougou in Burkina-Faso.
- Guineans reported travelling either through Mali or Burkina.
- Migrants from Nigeria and Cameroon cross the southern Nigerien border from where they either travel to Niamey or Zinder to get to Agadez. Alternatively, they can travel to Dirkou

directly from the Chadian border (where they need cars). From Burkina-Faso, migrants join Nigerien migrants that take another bus to Niamey and then to Agadez.

- **Control:** As they are often travelling legally in this area, migrants go through border posts and present their ID cards or passports.
- Although they pass borders regularly, they often still report paying bribes to get through.

### 2.2.3 Niger to Algeria

**Agadez to Tamanrasset:** This route is also quite dangerous for migrants as it involves crossing the desert. There are also a number of terrorist groups that are active in this area and they are known to have attacked the cars of smugglers, mainly with the intention of kidnapping migrants for ransom money. The route is also quite expensive, as a reflection of the risks involved.

- **Migrants taking this route:** Nigeriens, Malians, Nigerians, Ghanaians, Cameroonians, Beninese, Ivoirians, Guineans, Burkinabe, Senegalese, Gambians etc.
- **Cost:** USD\$50 - USD\$300
- **Journey:** From Agadez to Arlit migrants travel in pick-up trucks, cars or buses and under military protection due to the security situation in the North of Niger. This section is mainly desert and can be rather difficult to cross.
- From Arlit they travel on to Assamaka in pick-ups, crossing the desert and the Air Mountains, in order to get closer to the Algerian border.
- In Assamaka, most migrants usually by-pass the border post in order to cross the border clandestinely and reach in-Guezzam or its surrounds. Some cross the border at the official crossing by bribing the officers on duty on the Algerian side.
- From this border, some change smuggler and go to Tamanrasset, where they tend to stop and work to earn a bit of money for the continuation of their journey to the North of Libya.
- **Control:** There are controls at the border post, but it seems to be quite easy to go through by offering guards a few dinars. Also, some Algerian officers at the border are connected to smugglers and allow migrants who wish to move on to Libya to pass through.

## 2.3 OTHER ROUTES

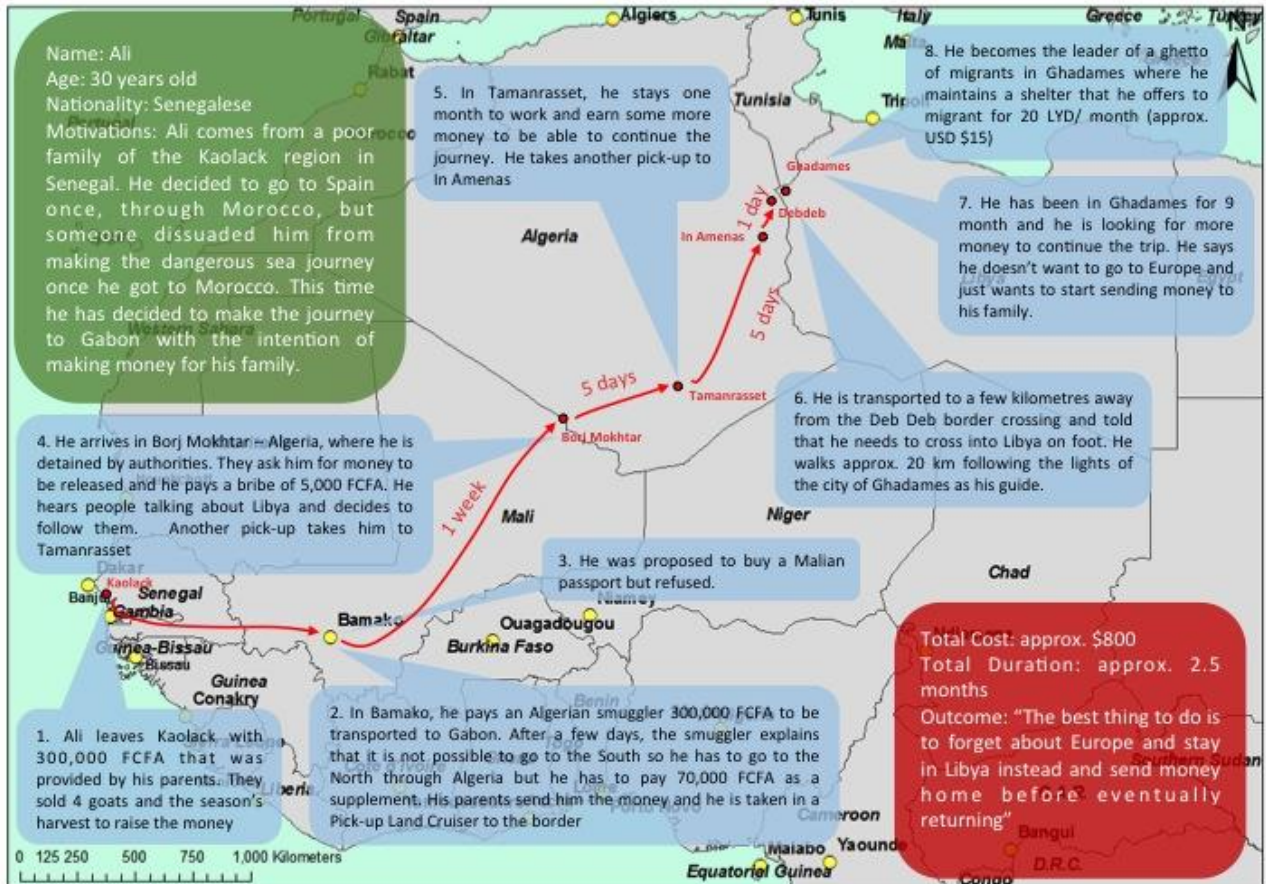
These routes are delineated in Map 3, which appears on page 31.

### 2.3.1 Mali to Algeria

**Bamako to Tamanrasset:** This route also involves a perilous journey crossing the desert but Malians do tend to cross over the border quite easily as they do not need visas in Algeria. However, it is reportedly difficult to cross without bribes even with the right documentation. Many migrants from other origins also cross with false Malian documents, which they buy on the market.

- **Migrants taking this route:** Malians, Guineans, Senegalese, Gambians
- **Cost:** USD \$50- USD \$100
- **Journey:** Migrants usually get to Gao where they take buses or travel with smugglers (Malian or Algerian) to move to Borj Mokhtar at the Algerian border. Some of them buy false Malian documents as it will facilitate their passage at the border.
- Many migrants reported that they had to bribe officials to be able to cross the border at this point. Apparently, smugglers often have connections with police officers at Borj Mokhtar border post that allows migrants to pass with bribes.
- From Borj Mokhtar, migrants usually go directly to Tamanrasset by crossing the desert, which takes some days.

- **Control:** The Algerian-Malian border is huge but some migrants reported being able to pass with the payment of bribes. Some did, however, also report being detained at this crossing.
- The Southern Area of Algeria and the Northern area of Mali are Tuareg territories and this group tends to be in control of the region, often ignoring the legal boundaries and borders. It is quite easy to by pass border posts and cross the border clandestinely; given its large size and the fact that most of it is in the desert. However, most migrants are still led through Borj Mokhtar by smugglers, assumedly to feed the smuggling business.



Case study 4: The route of a Senegalese (visual)

2.3.2 Algeria to Libya

**Tamanrasset – Ghat:** This route involves a long journey through the Algerian desert, which makes it quite dangerous, and leads migrants to the Libyan border where they cross on foot.

- **Migrants taking this route:** Nigeriens, Malians, Nigerians, Ghanaians, Cameroonians, Beninese, Ivoirians, Guineans, Burkinabe, Senegalese, Gambians etc.
- **Journey:** In Tamanrasset migrants meet with smugglers that take them to Djanet through the Algerian desert.
- In Djanet they usually take another smuggler that transports them to the Libyan border, somewhere near Ghat.
- Smugglers usually don't cross the border by car because of the Tassili N'Ajjer Mountains and because there is only one border post here and thus it is easy to control. Therefore, migrants are abandoned on the Algerian side of the border and have to cross the border on foot through the mountains in the Wadi Tinakare until Barket in Libya.
- **Traffic:** Migrants taking this route are estimated at 500-1,000 per month



- **Control:** There is a border post not far from the border, on the Libyan side, at Tin Alkoun, 59km South of Ghat.
- Controls are lax as smuggling brings in a lot of revenue for the area. Also smugglers have their own networks among the Tuareg and the Arab communities living near Ghat.

---

#### Case Study 5: Nigerian Migrant in Libya

Peter is a 28-year-old migrant from the Kuleri tribe in the North of Nigeria. He comes from a poor family from a little village where he says migration to Italy (via Libya) is common. Information about migration to Libya circulates fluidly throughout his village, which made it easy for him to commence his journey. He wanted to make the journey because he felt that his life would improve if he left Nigeria and his family also encouraged him to do so. Initially, he was aiming for Europe, but he has found a good situation in Morzouk (South of Libya), and is likely to stay. Although he entered the country irregularly with a smuggler that took him from Agadez to Sabha, he has now been recruited by the local football team in Morzouk and they have regularised his stay. His dream is to play for a football club in Europe or in the Gulf.

---

**Tamanrasset – Ghadames:** This route also involves a long journey through the Algerian desert, which passes through a number of dangerous areas where migrants are at risk of being threatened by armed gangs. For example, there are unconfirmed reports of terrorist groups being active in the Amenas region. This route also ends with migrants crossing the Libyan border on foot.

- **Migrants taking this route:** Nigeriens, Malians, Nigerians, Ghanaians, Cameroonians, Beninese, Ivoirians, Guineans, Burkinabe, Senegalese, Gambians etc.
- **Journey:** In Tamanrasset migrants meet with smugglers that take them to Debdeb in pick-up cars by crossing the Algerian desert.
- From Debdeb they take them close to the Libyan border where they are abandoned a few kilometres away from Libya.
- Smugglers tell migrants that they have to cross the border on foot at night and advise them to follow the lights of the city of Ghadames. Ali, a Senegalese migrant reported; *“the smuggler told me to follow the yellow lights, as they were the lights of Ghadames, and not the white ones, as they were the lights of Tunisia. But after a few hours of walking we were lost and could not differentiate the lights anymore”*
- Migrants either find their way to Ghadames or find another smuggler that takes them directly to Dirj.
- **Traffic:** Migrants taking this route are estimated at 100-200 per month
- **Control:** There is a border post at the Libyan-Algerian border, but it was officially closed by Libyan authorities in December 2012 and according to military police in charge of this border crossing, no one is currently given passage.
- Migrants are all bypassing the border post but sometimes they get caught and pushed back into Algeria.
- It seems that Algeria and Libya do not have a cooperative force to tackle irregular migration, in particular for migrants crossing from Libya into Algeria. Libyan police officers interviewed reported that a lot of migrants entering near this border were carrying Algerian stamps in obviously fake Malian passports.

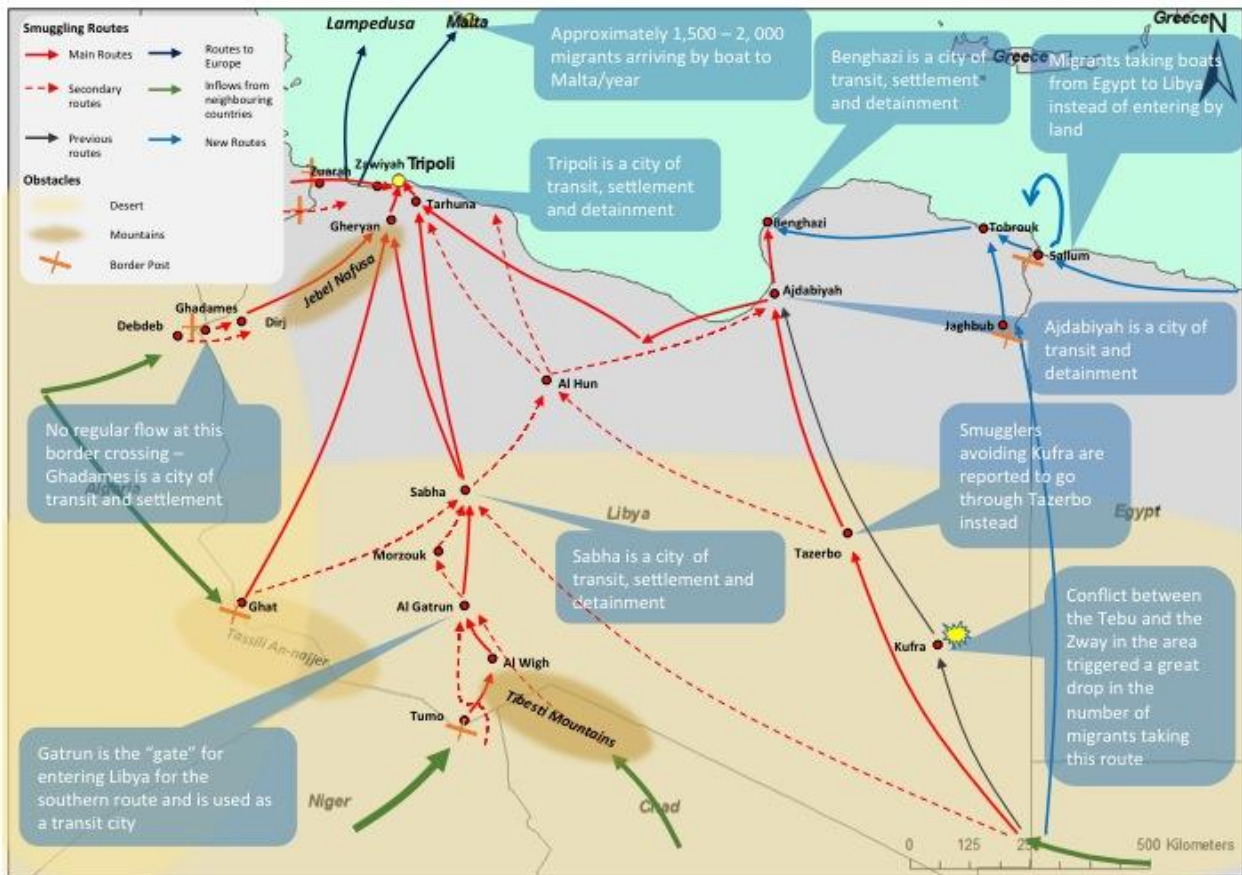
2.3.3 Chad to Libya

**Ndjamena to Sabha:** While this route carries relatively minor flows, it is still an important passage for Chadians and Western Sudanese. It takes migrants through the Fezzan and the south of the Cyrenaic via the Tibesti Mountains, a hard obstacle to cross.

- **Migrants taking this route:** Chadians, Sudanese, Cameroonians
- **Cost:** USD \$200 - \$800
- **Journey:** Migrants usually go from N’Djamena to Moussoro by bus or by car, which are usually small cars or taxis.
- From Moussoro they then go to Faya usually by bus or car.
- In Faya they connect with a smuggler who uses pick-ups or trucks to take them to the West side of the Tibesti Mountains where they pass through Zouar or Bardai in the desert, then Ghatrun, eventually reaching Sabha.
- **Traffic:** Migrants taking this route are estimated at 100-200 per month
- **Control:** There are no controls on this route, as there is no border post at the Chadian border with Libya.

2.4 ROUTES WITHIN LIBYA

These routes are delineated in Map 6, with each route being explained specifically in the proceeding subsections.



Map 6: Routes within Libya

#### 2.4.1 Sabha to Tripoli

There are a number of checkpoints on this route, which is why migrants tend to make this part of their journey with a smuggler they find in Sabha. Despite this, however, there are very few reports of detention or deportation along this road.

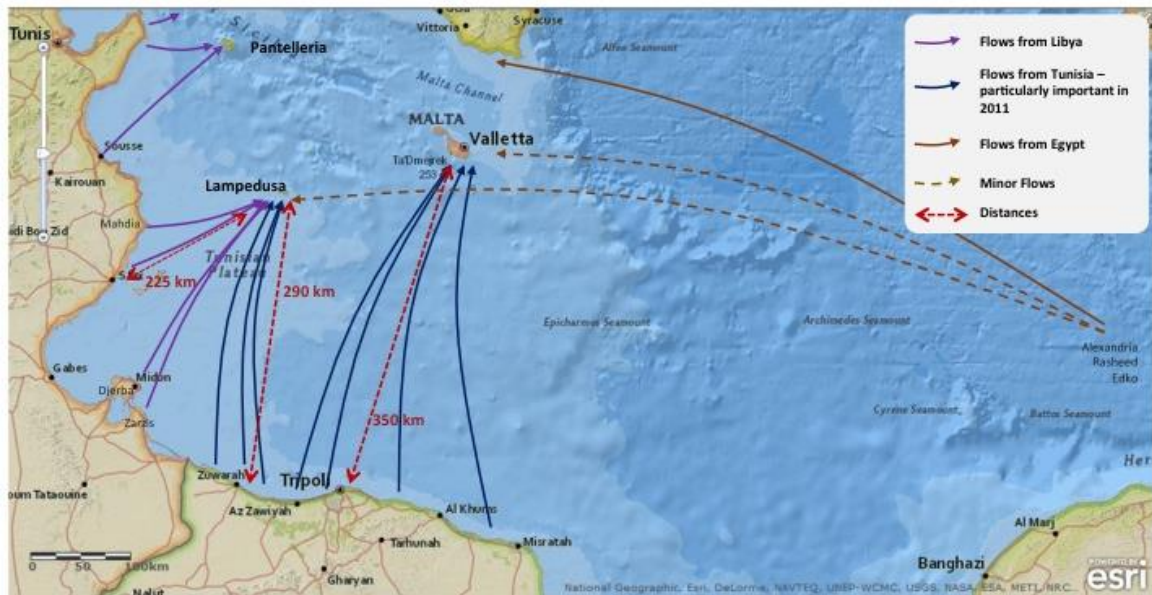
- **Migrants taking this route:** Nigeriens, Malians, Chadians, Nigerians, Ghanaians, Cameroonians, Beninese, Ivoirians, Guineans, Burkinabe, Senegalese, Gambians etc.
- **Cost:** USD\$300 - \$500
- **Journey:** The majority of migrants find smugglers in Sabha to take them to Tripoli.
- They use pick-ups or smaller cars for travel to Tripoli, moving through Gharyan or Tarhouna, taking about 1-2 days in total.
- It is possible to travel to Tripoli by bus or taxi, but irregular migrants are generally afraid of being apprehended by authorities or militia so they prefer to travel with a smuggler.
- **Control:** There are a lot of checkpoints on the road and this is why smugglers prefer to use smaller cars and travel by night. However, very few migrants reported being detained or apprehended on this section of the trip, unlike other routes within Libya.

#### 2.4.2 Kufra District to Benghazi or Tripoli

Part of this journey is undertaken with a smuggler and part of it can be done by bus. The road from Ajdabiya to Tripoli tends to be particularly problematic as many migrants report being detained here.

- **Migrants taking this route:** Sudanese, Ethiopians, Eritreans, Somalis
- **Cost:** USD \$150
- **Journey:** Migrants start in Kufra city or its surrounds and travel to Rebiana or Tazerbo directly, using smugglers who transport them by pick-up through the desert.
- From Rebiana and Tazerbo, smugglers take them to Ajdabiya where they usually stop and stay overnight.
- From Ajdabiya, migrants have the choice of taking a bus to either Tripoli or Benghazi.
- **Control:** There are some checkpoints when entering Ajdabiya and Benghazi, but very few on the road from Kufra District to Ajdabiya District. Many migrants reported being detained on the route from Ajdabiya to Tripoli though.

## 2.5 ROUTES FROM LIBYA TO EUROPE



Map 7: Routes from Libya to Europe

**From the Libyan coast to Malta or Lampedusa:** While boats are arriving in Malta and Lampedusa, it seems that few are aiming for Malta and if they arrive there it is by accident. That is, they were lost at sea and ended up in Malta or they were spotted by the Maltese coastguard and rescued off the Maltese coast. These routes are delineated in Map 7.

- **Migrants taking this route:** All nationalities
- **Cost:** USD \$300 - \$2,000 depending on the smuggler and the season (cheaper during the winter months, mainly because the sea is rougher and the trip is consequently more dangerous).
- **Journey:** Migrants are usually taken or directed to a port location somewhere between Tripoli and the Tunisian border (Western coast). Smugglers usually find a place for migrants to wait, usually an abandoned building. They can wait for a few days, and sometimes up to a few months, for the smuggler to tell them that the conditions are right for travel.
- They travel in dinghies, with sometimes up to 100 migrants in the one dinghy, including women and newborn babies.
- They leave the coast at night in order to avoid being spotted by Libyan authorities or coast guards.
- This journey is quite dangerous as the device they travel in is not sound enough for the journey or for the number of people in it. They also lack appropriate navigational equipment, which means many of them become lost at sea.
- It is very common for migrants to lack drinking water and food on board, as this is provided by the smuggler and usually he does not provide enough – they have to drink sea water and eat very poorly which often leads to illness.
- **Length of the journey:** the journey usually lasts 2 to 6 days, but some boats are known to drift at sea for up to 10 days or longer.
- **Traffic:** 3,000 – 4,000 migrants per month
- **Control:** The Maltese and Italian coastguards actively monitor their territorial waters. The majority of boats that arrive on these islands have been rescued and thus, they fall into the hands of authorities. In Malta, all migrants are detained on arrival, until their status is determined. At Lampedusa they are transferred to the Italian mainland for processing.

---

### Case Study 6: Somali Refugee in Malta

Abdul Kareem is a 19-year-old Somali refugee. He left Somalia after several threats from the Al Shabaab, the Somali Islamist group linked to Al Qaeda. After his brother was killed by the Al-Shabaab, his mother told him that he had to leave or that they would take him by force to join the fighting. He fled to Kenya at first without a plan, but he soon realised that there were not enough work opportunities there. He heard from other migrants that Libya was a better place, so he decided to go there through Sudan. He moved through South Sudan to get to Khartoum and then on to Libya. When he got to Sabha – in the south of Libya – he took a taxi with nine other Somalis to get to Tripoli, but he got caught and taken to the Ganfuda Detention Centre in Benghazi where he stayed for two months. One day, some Libyans entered the detention centre asking for workers and he got taken and worked for them for one month before escaping. He stayed in Tripoli for six months in a ghetto where he lived with other asylum seekers like himself. He had a very bad experience in Libya that he summarises by saying, “Libyans: sometimes they help you, sometimes they don’t, sometimes they want to kill you.” He realised that he had to move on and as “everybody was talking about Europe,” he made a plan to do so as well. He did all kinds of jobs to save money for the trip to Europe: car washer, cleaner, plasterer etc. Smugglers often entered his ghetto to propose their services, so when he had enough money, he organized his trip by boat. After three days at sea, with 52 other people on board, and no water and little food, he arrived in Malta and was eventually granted refugee status. He says he doesn’t advise family and friends to undertake the same journey, “I tell them its 95% sure that you will die.”

---

## 2.6 NEW ROUTES

### 2.6.1 Sudan to Libya via Egypt

This journey usually begins in Khartoum and ends in Tobrouk. The journey is quite straightforward and lacks the perils of some of the other routes, however, controls are tight at the Egyptian border.

These routes are delineated in Map 3, which appears on page 31.

- **Migrants taking this route:** Sudanese
- **Cost:** USD \$800
- **Journey:** Sudanese migrants deal with smugglers that arrange flights to Cairo. In Cairo they will be put in touch with another smuggler for the next stage of the journey.
- An alternative method is to travel along the Nile, from Khartoum to Assouan, and then continue to Cairo by car. It takes approximately 20 days to complete the journey on the Nile.
- The smuggler in Cairo will use a pick-up to drive migrants to the Libyan border at the Salloum-Um Saad border post.
- From Salloum they go to Tobrouk with a different smuggler that they will meet at the border or they take boats from the Egyptian port that is closest to the Libyan border to Bardiyah or other Libyan coastal towns.
- **Control:** Controls are quite rigorous at the Salloum-Um Saad border post crossing into Egypt and migrants reported that some smugglers voluntarily abandoned them to the police at the border.

## 2.7 PREVIOUS ROUTES

These routes are delineated in Map 3, which appears on page 31.

### 2.7.1 Routes inside Libya

**From Al Uweynat to Kufra:** A route now avoided because of the clashes in Kufra between the Tebu and the Zway.

- Before the conflict between the Zway and the Tebu in Kufra, smugglers (mainly of Zway ethnicity) would stop in Kufra as their first transit location in Libya as it is the first major city after crossing the Sudanese border and the South eastern district of Libya.
- Apparently, at this time, Kufra was playing a similar role to what Sabha plays in the West: an important hub on the migration route with a high concentration of smugglers and migrants.
- Smugglers are highly unlikely to go through Kufra now, given the clashes between the Zway and the Tebu.
- These clashes have led to a higher militia presence and a greater number of checkpoints in the city, thus entering Kufra can be rather dangerous.
- As control of smuggling routes in the area is allegedly one of the reasons for the conflict, smugglers prefer to avoid the city of Kufra and by-pass through other locations.

### 2.7.2 Route from Sudan to Libya

- Previously, migrants would cross Darfur from the south or the Northern Darfur State to move to Nyala and Geneina in Chad, where they would travel up to the Tibesti Mountains.
- Due to the war in the region, which began in 2003 and is currently on going, smugglers have re routed.
- It seems that today all migrants transiting through Sudan are taking the Dongola route, which travels through the Northern Darfur state to reach Libya.

## 3. CONDITIONS OF JOURNEY

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Migrants eat very few meals on the journey and often do not have enough water.
- They often become sick as a result and it spreads easily amongst the group.
- Some die from basic illnesses due to lack of treatment. Injury is also common, given the small spaces that migrants are packed into.
- Migrants who become sick on the journey are often abandoned by smugglers in the middle of the desert, as they are seen as a burden on the group.
- Migrants are vulnerable and susceptible to kidnapping, abduction, detention, or deceit during the journey, with border crossings being particularly risky locations for this.

**Food:** Most migrants report eating very few meals during the journey and it is usually in the form of dates, biscuits or bread. Most of them bought these supplies themselves just before they commenced their journey in the desert and select these types of food because they have nutritional value but are easy to transport. Some migrants manage to also cook couscous or rice in the desert. A Malian woman who crossed the desert with a 6-month-old baby explained, *"When we had time to cook, we ate two meals a day. If not, we ate only one. I would feed my baby yoghurt."* An Ethiopian man explained that he had 10 or so biscuits and a cup of water every 24 hours. A Cameroonian man who crossed the Algerian desert to reach Libya explained, *"we didn't have any food for the last two days, we were just eating toothpaste."*

*"During the trip I became sick from the cold weather in the evenings. There were some other who were sick too, so the smuggler abandoned us in the middle of the desert. We had to keep walking to get to the next destination, to find somewhere or some people. During the sunlight hours we walked, so we didn't eat anything. We had no drugs, no treatment and it was so cold at night. I remember that there was so much dust; it used to get into my eyes. Two of the others that were with us died after a few days. We buried them in the sand."*

Malian migrant interviewed in Libya, 35 years of age.

**Thirst:** While migrants usually bring their own food, water is provided by the smuggler. This is often problematic because the smuggler often does not provide enough and many suffer from thirst. The heat of the desert and the fact that they are often packed into small spaces (such as in the back of pick-up trucks) does not help hydration. Moreover, there were numerous reports of smugglers mixing petrol with the water in order to alter the taste and to discourage migrants from drinking too much. One Malian migrant explained, *"We were 37 people traveling in the same car, eating only once per day in the evenings; one of us died from thirst and exhaustion."*

**Illness:** The poor nutrition that migrants face and the challenging conditions under which they travel can lead to disease and illness that spread easily amongst the group because of the close proximity within which they are living and traveling. A 22-year-old Eritrean woman explained that she was traveling in a group of 30 and that the poor food and water that they were eating gave her diarrhoea that then spread to the entire group. Another 24-year-old Somali woman explained that she contracted the flu during the trip and experienced a very high fever while traveling through the desert but had no access to any treatment. She was aiming for Tripoli so that she could board a boat to Europe. She told us *"I thought I was going to either die in the desert or finally arrive at my destination."*

**Injury:** Smugglers do not usually start the journey until they have a full car, in order for it to be economically worthwhile for them. This means that during the trip, and in the vehicles used for transportation, migrants are usually sharing a very small space with a large number of others, which lends itself to accidents and injuries, especially since the route is not smooth and necessitates much manoeuvring through the desert and sand. Sudden movements can lead to migrants having their limbs entrapped in parts of the car or under other migrants and many migrants reported that they had been injured along the way.

**Death:** It is not uncommon for smugglers to abandon the sick and the infirm. There were reports of migrants being dumped in the desert, if they were sick, along with other sick members of the group, in order to not become a burden on the rest. Typically, these abandoned migrants try and find their way through the desert by walking to the nearest village. While some do make it, many die as they get lost in the desert and suffer from thirst, hunger and exhaustion. Other migrants have been reported to pass away from minor illnesses such as the flu because they remain untreated and because they are already in a weakened state from the poor conditions of the journey.

### Focus box 2: Human trafficking at law

Article 3, paragraph (a) of *The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons* defines trafficking in Persons as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

**Trafficking:** The irregularity of the migrants often puts them in a very vulnerable position as they lack any means of protection and this is not helped by the fact that they put their lives in the hands of smugglers who are not necessarily focused on their best interests. They are often susceptible to kidnapping, abduction or detention with some points in the journeys having been observed as locations of particular risk. This includes:

- At the border points where they are transferred from one smuggler to another or when they cross borders on foot.
- At the Sudanese-Eritrean border crossing, or on the road between the border and the UNHCR refugee camps, where kidnappings, allegedly by members of the Rashaida tribe, are common. UNHCR Sudan also registered a number of cases where abductees were tortured for the purpose of attracting higher ransom payments.

There are also reports of smugglers taking migrants to locations different than what was agreed to and then asking migrants for more money in order to finish the journey, and restraining their movement until they are paid. Typically migrants have to ask family to send money or end up working for the smuggler in Libya for a period of time, once they arrive, to repay the debt. This is dealt with in greater detail in section VI.2.4 “Involuntary Migrants: Victims of Kidnapping, Misinformation and Trafficking.”

## 4. SMUGGLING

In this study, the use of the word ‘smuggler’ refers to someone who offers services to irregular migrants to assist them in moving themselves from one country to another without the required documentation. Migrants usually travel with smugglers because they know the routes and have the right connections on the road to be able to move the migrants over borders. As these routes are often hard to navigate without knowledge of the landscape and geography, and as they necessitate crossing inhospitable terrain such as the Sahara, migrants usually use smugglers to navigate through key locations, if not for the entire journey.



## 4.1 SERVICES PROVIDED

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Migrants are transported in pick up trucks and cattle trucks.
- False documentation provided by smugglers includes: false passports, false UNHCR refugee cards and fake NGO logos on vehicles.
- Usually smugglers will ask migrants to gather in a particular location some days before departure (usually abandoned buildings or farms) and they wait there until the smuggler is ready to begin the journey.

In general, smugglers would provide migrants with transportation, housing, passage over borders, and in some instances, documentation.

#### 4.1.1 Transportation

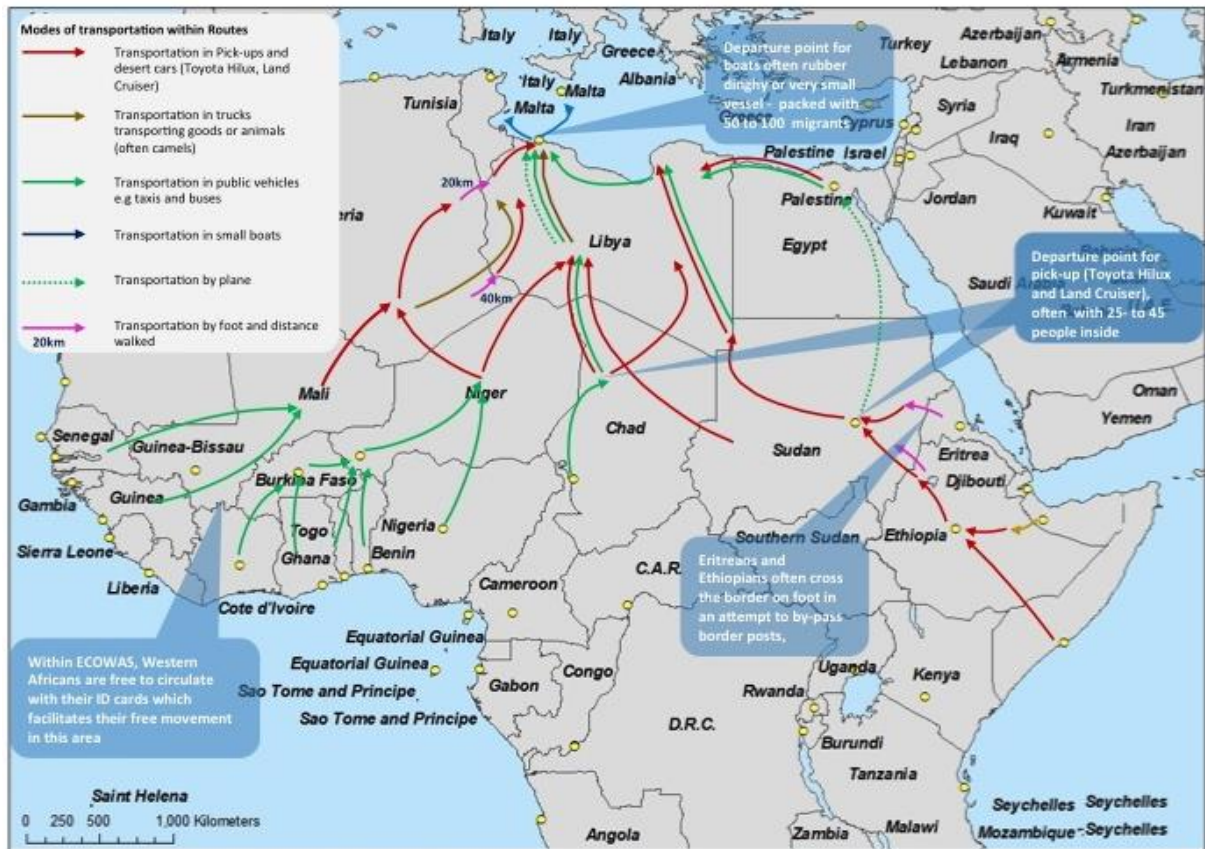
In the routes studied for this report, land transportation was commonly used for the journey to Libya and boats were used for the journey from Libya to Europe. The forms of transportation are described below.

**Pick-up trucks:** These vehicles are commonly used for their utility in crossing the desert terrain. Usually they are packed with 20-40 migrants stacked on top of each other in the back. They are usually asked to lie down on top of each other.

**Cattle trucks:** These vehicles are sometimes used to stack migrants on top of each other in the same way as the pickup trucks but they can fit a greater number of people inside due to their larger size. Sometimes, the trucks are also used to transport camels or other animals and the migrants inside are represented to authorities as cameleers or livestock sellers.

**Boats:** These are usually small rubber dinghies with a small motor that are packed with 30-100 people. In some instances rafts have also been used. It is rare for smugglers to be inside the boat with the migrants (unlike land transportation where the smuggler typically drives the vehicle) and instead one, or a few, of the migrants is trained in how to steer the boat and work the motor.

The main forms of transportation, per route, are delineated in Map 8 below.



Map 8: Main forms of transportation per route

#### 4.1.1 False Documentation

Smugglers are also known to provide false documentation to migrants to facilitate their passage over borders. While the possession of travel documents does not always negate the paying of bribes, it does allow passage and usually prevents detainment. As many of the migrants making the journey to Libya come from small towns where there is no administrative system that would allow them to initiate the process of obtaining a passport, they usually only have Identity cards or no papers at all. Hence, false documentation is a common service provided by smugglers.

According to a 2009 study conducted by the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD),<sup>6</sup> almost 95% of the migrants passing through Dirkou, Niger on their way to Libya and Algeria had some form of travel documentation, either IDs or passports, whether official or forged. Fieldwork revealed that Malian and Algerian smugglers would often propose **false Malian passports** to migrants in Mali, as passage into Algeria does not require a visa for Malian passport holders. It is also known for Ethiopian and Sudanese smugglers to provide false Ethiopian passports to Eritrean and Somali migrants traveling through Ethiopia to reach Sudan, or for those who would like to stay in Ethiopia but are afraid of being apprehended by authorities and detained if they do not have documentation.

Migrants interviewed also revealed that **Libyan documentation** is available on the market for a particular price. At the time of research, a Libyan ID card was available for LYD 150 (approx. USD

<sup>6</sup> Boyer, F. Amadou, B. and Mounkaila, H. (2009) *Le Niger, espace d'émigration et de transit vers le sud et le nord du Sahara : rôle et comportement des acteurs, recompositions spatiales et transformations socio-économiques*, L'Institut de recherche pour le développement.

\$120), a Libyan passport was available for LYD 1,000 (approx. USD \$800), and a Libyan driving licence for LYD 70 (approx. USD \$55).

*"My plan was to go to Ghadames. When I was in Mali the smuggler gave me a Malian passport to use to get into Algeria. It was stamped at the Bork Mokhtar border post, and after giving the official some money, he allowed me to cross the border. From Algeria I found another smuggler that helped me get to Ghadames."*

Senegalese migrant interviewed in Libya.

In some instances, smugglers would provide migrants with fake **UNHCR refugee camp registration cards** that would include the name of the migrant and the name of the camp that they were supposedly registered at. These cards would assist migrants in passing borders and help them in situations where they were apprehended by authorities. Some migrants also reported that the car they were travelling in would carry a fake **NGO logo** in order to not be stopped or questioned at border crossings.

#### 4.1.2 Accommodation

As smugglers do not typically begin a journey until enough migrants have joined the trip to make it economically worthwhile, there are periods of time when migrants may be waiting for departure. Usually smugglers will ask migrants to gather in a particular location some days before departure and they wait there until the smuggler is ready to begin the journey. In the case of migrants traveling from Libya to Europe, some reported waiting as long as three weeks.

During these times, the migrants are accommodated by the smuggler in very basic housing with no facilities. Sometimes they are empty abandoned buildings or farms and the migrants are told to be very discreet and to stay hidden inside. Most migrants reported being given very little to eat and, as a result, being quite fatigued by the time they actually did start the journey.

## 4.2 THE DYNAMICS OF SMUGGLING

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Smugglers work with a number of intermediaries
- There are two main information sources about smugglers: specific locations on the migration route or through smugglers who advertise in migrant communities.
- Smugglers are usually native to the host country, to transit countries, and sometimes to the countries of origin. They are usually ex military, former tourist guides, or former migrants.
- Some tribal groups were found to be active in the smuggling business because of their knowledge of the desert and their ability to move over borders (e.g. Tebu, Tuareg, and Zway in Libya and the Rashaida in Eritrea and Sudan).
- Migrants normally work in transit countries to make the money to pay smugglers for the next stage of their journey but in some cases, migrants end up working for the smuggler for a period of time when they arrive in their destination to repay him.

#### 4.2.1 Intermediaries: Marketing the Migrants

Interviews with smugglers revealed that there are generally two types of smugglers: the ones that facilitate the journey itself and others who act as intermediaries and create the market for migrants.

In Libya, the word “**muhareb**” refers to the smuggler that facilitates the journey and actually transports the migrants across borders, whereas the “**samsar**” is a type of smuggler that does not travel but instead gathers the migrants together and facilitates their contact with the muhareb. In essence, the samsar creates the market whereby a muhareb can offer his services to potential migrants.

Usually, the samsar will take the migrants to a waiting location, and once there are enough of them, a muhareb will be invited to come and offer his services to the migrants. The migrants will pay the muhareb for the journey and the muhareb will give a proportion of it to the samsar. For example, travel from the Sabha region to Tripoli is usually priced at around USD \$500 per migrant and the muhareb will give roughly USD \$100 per migrant to the samsar.

This process can be repeated at each step of the journey and in this way, the samsar not only creates the market for migrants but also provides a time and space for migrants to rest, particularly after difficult parts of the journey such as the crossing of the Sahara.

There are also other **intermediaries** who act more like brokers who advise migrants on which smuggler to use or take migrants to locations where they can connect with samsars. These kinds of intermediaries are usually from the same country of origin as the migrants and are sometimes paid a small amount by the smuggler for their help in creating business.

On certain routes, where the traffic of migrants is immense, the business is bigger and there is a smuggler who works at the top of the hierarchy, who is never seen, but has a number of intermediaries and other smugglers working beneath him. This was observed particularly in Ethiopia but is likely to exist at other major transit locations also.

The dynamics of smuggling is demonstrated diagrammatically in Figure 5.

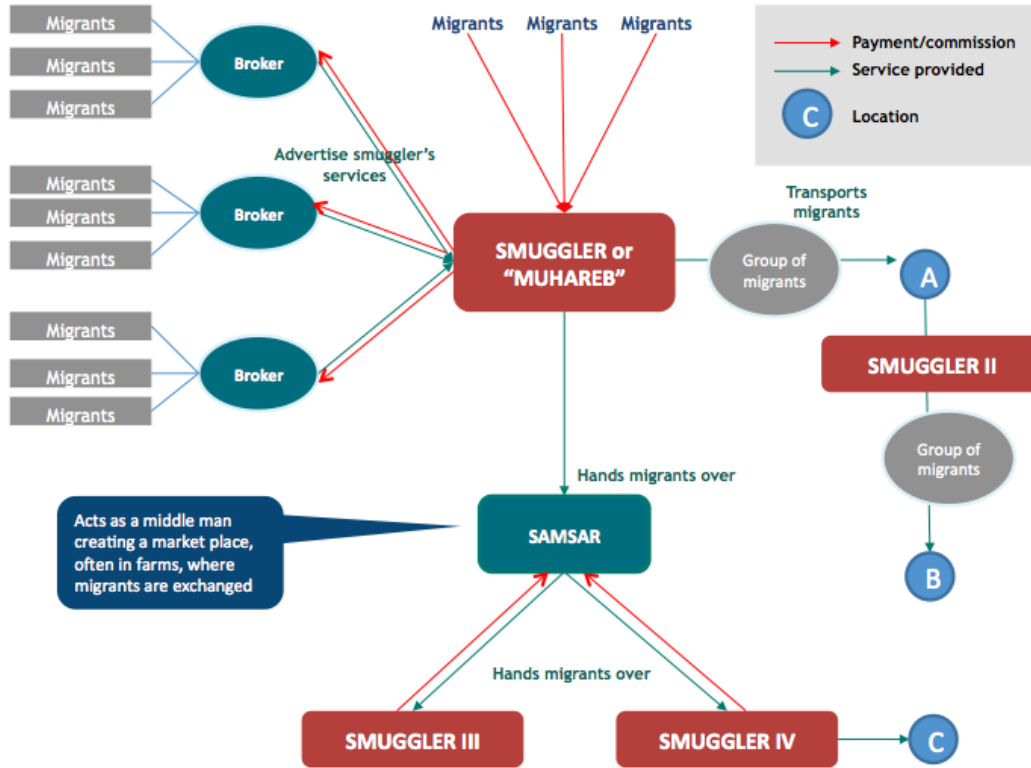


Figure 5: The dynamics of smuggling

#### 4.2.1 Information Sources for Smugglers and Smuggling

There are primarily two ways in which information spreads about smugglers and their services. Migrants can either go to specific locations that will be identified by asking other migrants or locals; or sometimes smugglers, or their intermediaries, will advertise their services in neighbourhoods where migrants live, or within their communities.

There are particular **locations that act as information hubs**. These are usually transit points or cities close to border crossings, such as Agadez in Niger where there are over 50 travel agents that provide information about smugglers. Dirkou in Niger; Omdurman in Sudan; Addis Ababa in Ethiopia; Tamanrasset in Algeria; and Ghatrun, Sabha and Tripoli in Libya play a similar role.

It is also **common for smugglers to advertise their services**, either directly or through intermediaries, within communities of migrants. This is known to happen commonly in Abu Salim neighbourhood of Tripoli<sup>7</sup> where some migrants reported that smugglers had come to their ghetto and asked if anyone was interested in taking a boat to Europe. In Ethiopia, the same phenomenon is known to occur in the Somali neighbourhood of Bole Mikhel in Addis Ababa, and there are also reports of smugglers gathering clients in the UNHCR refugee camps in Sudan.

#### 4.2.2 The Key Actors

As migrants typically make their journey in steps, a variety of smugglers are used for the different stages and they can be found in a variety of locations. They are usually native to the host country

<sup>7</sup> An area where large Somali communities reside.

(Libya, Algeria, or Sudan); or to the transit countries (Sudan, Ethiopia, Niger, Mali or Algeria) but sometimes they are also found to be from the countries of origin.

A number of profiles were identified for smugglers: in Eritrea they are sometimes ex-military personnel, whereas in Libya and Niger it is not uncommon to find former tourist guides now working as smugglers. In some cases, migrants also enter the business as smugglers or brokers.

Certain locations on the routes studied had a more developed smuggling industry in the sense that there were many more people involved and the local economy was heavily dependent on migration flows. This was usually because of the geographic position of these locations and because of their historical links to trade routes. Some examples include Agadez in Niger and Ghatrun and Kufra in Libya.

*"A lot of the youth in this town are involved in the smuggling business. They see it as a way to make easy money with limited risk, especially in these unstable times in Libya."*

Libyan smuggler interviewed in Sabha.

Members of certain tribal groups were also found to be active in the smuggling business. This is usually because they are spread over a number of borders and thus have experience in crossing borders irregularly to join family members in other locations. They also possess a strong knowledge of the desert, which allows them to move groups across the Sahara efficiently. Of course, the smuggling industry is by no means dominated by these groups and includes a variety of actors. Nonetheless, some examples include:

**The Tuareg:** Descendants of the Berber (*Amazigh*) population in North Africa, most historians consider the nomadic Tuareg to be some of the first inhabitants of the Sahara region. Operating in the trans-Saharan caravan trade with a nomadic lifestyle, the Tuareg tribes spread across the Sahara, and by the end of the colonial rule in Africa, found themselves straddled between Algeria, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, and Libya. In Libya, the Tuareg are settled mainly around the districts of Nalut, Sabha, Wadi Al Hayat and Ghat.



Image 1: Tuareg in Dirj, Libya (Altai Consulting)

Members of the Tuareg tribe are thought to be active on the routes through North Niger and Algeria and to Ghat and Debdeb in Libya.

**The Tebu:** The Tebu are a Saharan tribe that has traditionally lived in northern Chad, southern Libya, northeast Niger and northwest Sudan with a nomadic way of life as caravan traders and herders. Today, the Tebu are semi-nomadic and mainly live in the north of Chad around the Borkou-Ennedi-Tibesti area (BET) and in southern Libya. A smaller group can also be found in Niger.

Historically in Libya, the Tebu traded between Morzouk and Al Kufra. Today, however, they tend to live in Sabha, Morzouk, Al Qatrun, Tajarhi and Kufra.

Members of the Tebu tribe are thought to be active on routes through the Tibesti Mountains and on some routes through the western part of Kufra. Police officers and border post officials in this area are often Tebu, which may help facilitate connections for smugglers.

**The Zway:** The Zway are an Arab tribe that, while originating from the northern areas of the country, settled in the Kufra region in the late 1800's in an attempt to flee the Ottoman occupation. Unlike the other tribes, they have always lived in the area. In the 1980's under Gadhafi's policy of Pan-Arabism, the Zway were appointed in positions of authority in Kufra in order to thwart the dominance of the Tebu in the area and to increase Arab influence. The clashes between the Zway and the Tebu in Kufra today continue to be about a struggle for power between these two groups.

Members of the Zway tribe are thought to be controlling most of the smuggling routes to the eastern part of Kufra from Sudan and Chad. They tend to be active in providing the infrastructure for smugglers (for example, vehicles) rather than doing the smuggling themselves. There are also reports of a certain competition between the Zway and the Tebu to control the smuggling routes in and out of Kufra, particularly because the local economy is so dependent on this business.

**The Rashaida:** The Rashaida is an Arab tribe settled in Eritrea, near the border with Sudan, and in northeast Sudan. They are a nomadic people and traditionally traders. They are believed to have migrated to Eritrea from Saudi Arabia over a century ago when tribal war broke out in their native area.

Members of the Rashaida tribe are believed to be involved in kidnapping of migrants traveling from Eritrea to Sudan. This occurs at the border and sometimes within the refugee camps in the bordering states in the east of Sudan.

### 4.3 KEY LOCATIONS

As mentioned previously, if a smuggler is not used for the entire journey, it will at least be used for key locations, particularly at border crossings or where the terrain is harsh and a solid knowledge of the area is required for passage.

Some key locations observed on the routes included in this study are:

- Entering Libya is difficult for most migrants due to the need to navigate the desert and because most of the border crossings are currently closed, meaning that smugglers are required to facilitate passage.
- The risk of detainment for Somalis and Eritreans entering Ethiopia seems particularly high. While some migrants purchase forged Ethiopian passports to circumvent this risk, others work with smugglers who can allow their passage through their connections.
- Desert routes are hard to navigate without a solid knowledge of the terrain and migrants usually cross the Sahara with a smuggler who has this knowledge. This is particularly so from Agadez (Niger) to Sabha, from Dongola (Sudan) to Kufra or Sabha, and across the Algerian desert and into Libya (Tamanrasset to Djanet or Debdeb)
- The border crossing between Mali and Algeria, from Gao (Mali) to Tamanrasset (Algeria) particularly.

#### 4.4 THE ECONOMICS OF SMUGGLING

Smuggling can be big business with the cost of the journey being as high as USD \$6000 for some migrants. As most migrants do not have enough money for the entire journey from the outset, many work in transit countries along the way to be able to pay a smuggler the requisite funds for each stage of the journey that they undertake. However, in some cases it was found that migrants did not have the finances required, which led to situations of bonded labour once they reached their destination, in order to pay back the smuggler that had facilitated their journey. This was reported by a number of migrants in Libya.<sup>8</sup>

In addition to the money paid to the smuggler himself, the paying of **bribes** is also common on these routes. Sometimes this is paid by the smuggler himself, sometimes by the migrants themselves, and sometimes by both. In places where smugglers have built up good connections with border officials, they will hand over the money themselves in order to maintain contacts. Sometimes, smugglers ask the migrants to wait at the border until the officer who is their contact is on duty, then they are led over the border. In some instances, migrants are taken to the border crossing and asked to hand over the bribe themselves. This was found to be particularly so at the Borj Mokhtar border post at the Malian/Algerian border.

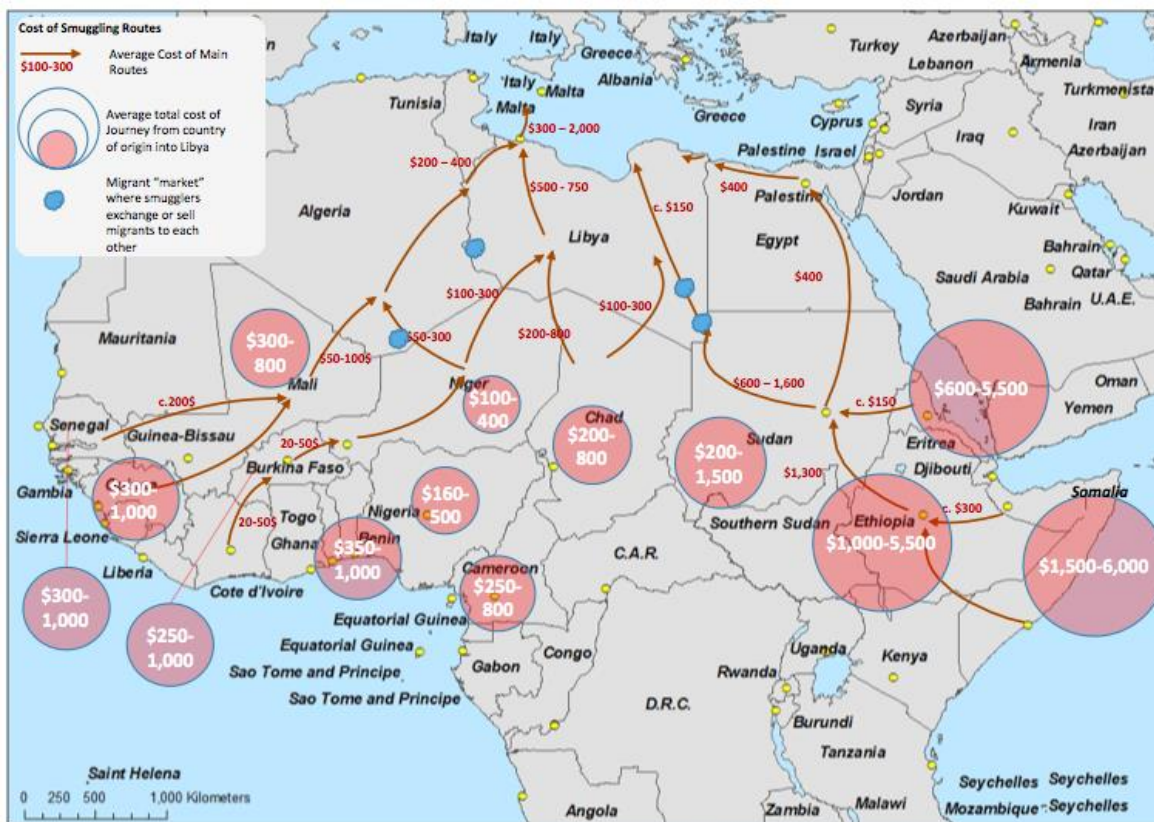
In some locations, as smuggling has become a big contributor to the economy of the area, the problem is overlooked by authorities and smugglers have easier passage. Agadez in Niger was one such location. The remittances that are sent back by Nigerian migrants abroad are another strong contributor to the economic situation of the area, also encouraging some authorities to turn a blind eye.

The costs of the main smuggling routes appear in Map 9 below.

---

<sup>8</sup> See section VI.2.4 “Involuntary Migrants: Victims of Kidnapping, Misinformation and Trafficking” for more information.





Map 9: Cost of main smuggling routes

## 5. TRANSIT COUNTRIES

### 5.1 SUDAN

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Migrants tend to settle for longer periods of time in Sudan because they are predominately asylum seekers who fled their countries without a plan. Sudan also offers them income generation opportunities, which encourages them to stay.
- On average, migrants settle for 1-3 years.
- There is a refugee status determination process in Sudan but an encampment policy for refugees, which discourages some from staying.
- Ethiopian and Eritrean refugees are worried about spies in refugee camps.
- There is some resettlement from Sudan.
- Trafficking and kidnapping are overwhelming problems.

In general, Sudan emerges as a transit country where migrants stay for longer periods of time than in other transit countries and some even attempt to settle there. This tends to be because the majority of the migrants passing through, who come from Somalia, Ethiopia, and Eritrea, are asylum seekers who have fled their countries with little planning. When they arrive in Sudan, they start to plan their next step and sometimes need to work for some period of time in order to raise the requisite funds for the next stage of the journey. Sudan tends to offer more employment opportunities for migrants, when compared to other transit locations, which also contributes to this situation. Migrants tend to stay, on average, for one to two years and find jobs in Khartoum or

Omdurman in the hospitality industry, in hotels and restaurants and as domestic workers. In some cases, asylum seekers also attempt to settle in Sudan, before the lure of greater salaries in Libya pushes them out.

Sudan has a **National refugee Law** that was passed in 1974 that sets out a refugee status determination (RSD) process. The Commission for Refugees was established to oversee this process. Refugee status is determined by an independent commission and once protection is granted, the refugee is given a refugee card that is valid for one year but is renewable. Sudan maintains an encampment policy for refugees and maintains refugee camps for this purpose, with the help of the UNHCR. According to UNHCR Sudan, there are approximately 140,000 refugees



Image 2: Office of the Commission for Refugees; Khartoum, Sudan (Altai Consulting)

living in 14 camps across the country, with the main ones being Shagarab and Gedaref camps in the east of the country along the Ethiopian and Eritrean borders. RSD is only conducted in these two camps, and it is assumed that the government limits RSD to these two locations in the east in an attempt to maintain some control over flows and movements.

There is a high **recognition rate**, with 97% of asylum seekers being granted refugee status. However, the rates of those who come to Sudan from countries of concern but never apply for asylum is reasonable. These individuals usually either prefer to live outside the camps and make money, or are wanting to move on to Libya or Europe and as they are only transiting through, don't see any benefit in applying for status.

---

#### Case Study 7: Sudanese Returnee from Libya

Saleh is a 23-year-old Sudanese that decided to migrate to Libya because he heard that he could make more money there. One of his friends made contact with a Sudanese smuggler that booked him a flight to Cairo and then arranged the trip from Cairo to the Libyan border. Once in Cairo, he was handed over to another smuggler who organised his accommodation and transportation to the Libyan border through Sallum. However, the transporter that the smuggler worked with took the group directly to the Police station at the border and he was arrested and detained in Tobrouk, Libya. After a month of detention he decided that it was better to return to Sudan so he did so with the help of the IOM through their Assisted Voluntary Return Program. He is now in Khartoum but has not figured out what he wants to do next.

---

The data suggests that the **inability to set up a life outside of the camps** in Sudan encourages some of the refugees to leave, even though they are given protection in Sudan. Usually only those who are waiting for the situation at origin to improve so that they can return home, are happy to wait in refugee camps. Those who do not see a resolution in sight (such as Somalis, for example, who have been experiencing ongoing civil war for 20 years) are looking to build their lives elsewhere and are thus, not happy to stay in camps. For the latter, some avoid the camps altogether and go

straight to Khartoum with smugglers where they either look for work or plan onward journey. Others use the camps as resource centres where they apply for refugee cards to facilitate their movement over borders later on in the journey, and then move on. Migrants that move from the camps to Khartoum also use smugglers to affect this journey. There are also reports of some male migrants leaving their families in the camps and continuing the journey alone, hoping to reunite with family later when they have secured status in Europe or reasonable living standards in Libya. Whether they have been granted refugee status or remain irregular migrants, if they decide to move on to Libya they all do so in the same fashion, with smugglers, entering irregularly.

Moreover, some Ethiopian and Eritrean asylum seekers explained that they are worried that the governors of the states which border Eritrea and Ethiopia, which is where the main camps are located, are too friendly with the governments of their home countries. For many this induces a **worry that spies are present in the camps**, opening them up to significant risk, and leading them to avoid the camps altogether.

There is some **resettlement** occurring through Sudan with the main destinations being Australia, USA and Scandinavian countries. According to the Refugee Commissioner in Sudan, over 9,500 families had been resettled over the last three years, which represents about 5% of the refugee population. UNHCR representatives intimated that often East African diaspora in Europe would encourage their family members to stay in Sudan and apply for resettlement, rather than making the dangerous journey to Europe by boat, although most make the journey anyway.

**Trafficking** is an overwhelming problem in Sudan that requires the involvement of all actors and has received considerable attention from the government in recent years. The most common forms of trafficking are kidnapping and sexual exploitation. In the case of kidnapping, it is usually in the context of migrants being kidnapped at the Ethiopian and Eritrean border crossings or on the roads from the borders to the camps (Shagarab and Gedaref). It is allegedly members of the Rashaida tribe who are responsible for these kidnappings and mainly for the purposes of attracting ransom payments. Reports from the field indicate that although the majority of cases are motivated by a desire to make money through ransom payments, abuse often occurs while the victims are held captive. Ransoms have been increasing in recent years with some being as high as USD\$30,000. It is understood that often the diaspora provides the payment for ransom, which has encouraged an increase in the price asked over the years. IOM Sudan indicated that in some cases these kidnappings are also affected for the purpose of trafficking children for camel racing in the Emirates. Kidnapping is a problem for both Ethiopian and Eritrean migrants, but Eritreans tend to be most at risk.

In terms of sexual exploitation, Ethiopian women are most at risk. Usually they are taken to Sudan on the pretext that they will work there as domestic workers but then forced into sex work when they arrive.

Beyond the asylum seekers and irregular economic migrants, there is also a community of **regular economic migrants** in Sudan who mainly originate from Southeast Asia. However, even though they enter regularly, many of them overstay their visas and become irregular while in country.

## 5.2 NIGER

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Few migrants stay in Niger for significant periods of time because there is little opportunity for income generation.
- There is a refugee status determination process in Niger but most migrants in our study did not apply for status, as settling in Niger does not appeal to them.

Niger is also a main transit point for migrants travelling from Western Africa to Libya. However, migrants do not tend to stay for long periods of time in Niger and generally just transit through. This is mainly because employment opportunities are scarce so most migrants only stay long enough to be able to plan the next step of their journey. Most travel directly to Agadez where the smugglers are located and spend little time in Niamey.

According to the *Commission d'Eligibilite au Statut de Refugees* in Niger, as of late 2012 there were roughly 89,000 migrants in Dirkou, the last Nigerien city before the Libyan border, 6271 of which were non-Nigeriens transiting through the country.

Niger also offers protection for refugees via a refugee status determination process that is overseen by the *Commission d'Eligibilite au Statut de Refugees*. In partnership with the UNHCR and other institutions, it offers voluntary repatriation, resettlement in third countries, and administrative and legal protection to refugees. There is also an encampment policy in Niger and several refugee camps in the country, in particular in the west to accommodate the influx of Malian refugees (According to UNHCR Niger, in June 2013 there were 46,265 Malian refugees in camps in Niger). However few of the migrants studied apply for status mainly because the majority of them are economic migrants, or do not see the benefit in staying in Niger, given the lack of jobs or high salaries, even if protection is provided.

## 5.3 ALGERIA

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- There are a number of routes out of Algeria but Libya seems to be the most popular because it does not necessitate crossing the country to head north (which increases the risk of apprehension by authorities) and because the relative lack of controls in Libya makes it a more ideal departure point for Europe.
- The UNHCR maintains four refugee camps in Algeria that accommodate mainly Western Saharans.

As Algeria contains a large coast from which migrants can depart for Europe and also borders Morocco, there are a number of routes available to migrants departing from Algeria. However, flows into Libya seem to be greater than these potential routes, mainly because the routes from Algeria necessitate crossing the country to reach the North, which opens migrants up to the risk of apprehension given the greater controls there. Moreover, Libya's relative lack of policing means that migrants find it easier to depart for Europe from the Libyan coast and the greater opportunities for income generation in Libya make it a more ideal location in general.

Reports from the field suggest that migrants entering Algeria from Mali or Chad, through its southern borders, did not face significant problems with border officials if the right bribes were paid. Also, officials would wave them through and on to Libya, but dissuade them from heading North within Algeria, which encourages most of them to simply transit through Algeria. There are some who do attempt to settle for a short period of time in Tamanrasset, or other southern cities, but this is usually only to make money for the next stage of the journey.

While Algeria has signed the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, they have yet to be ratified or incorporated into national law. However, since 2012 the UNHCR has been working with the National Algerian Government for the creation of a national law for refugees and an asylum system.

Nonetheless, there are currently four refugee camps in Algeria maintained by the UNHCR that accommodate almost exclusively Western Saharans<sup>9</sup>. According to the UNHCR in Algeria, as of January 2013 there are 97,000 refugees in Algeria, 90,000 of which are from Western Sahara and living in camps. The Algerian government, however, maintains that there are 165,000 Western Saharan refugees in camps. Other than Western Saharans, the UNHCR believes that there are roughly 4,000 Palestinian refugees living in urban centres in Algeria.

Unlike other transit locations, where refugee camps are sometimes seen as a resource centre by migrants, refugees tend to stay in camps in Algeria and settle there with the intention of returning home once things improve.

Other than these groups, the main migrants groups passing through Algeria are Malians, Guineans, Senegalese, and Gambians. It is generally a transit location for migrants coming through Mali and Niger.

#### 5.4 CHAD

##### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- There are 18 refugee camps across the country in Chad.
- The main refugee communities are from Darfur and the Central African Republic.

Chad is a signatory to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees without reservation, as well as the 1969 Convention governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. The constitution of Chad (1996) provides for asylum and forbids the extradition of "political refugees." Chad has also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UNHCR to protect asylum seekers against refoulement.

A national asylum law has been drafted and validated in 2013 and submitted to the government for approval. It is hoped that this process will be finalised in July 2013. In the absence of an official national asylum law, the National Refugee Authority (CNAR) oversees refugee policy. Its Sub-Commission on Eligibility determines refugee status with the assistance of the UNHCR. There is currently no review board but it is in the process of being set up.

<sup>9</sup> Western Sahara is a disputed territory in North Africa, bordered by Morocco to the north, Algeria to the extreme northeast, Mauritania to the east and south, and the Atlantic Ocean to the west.

*"It is not difficult to make the journey to Libya. A lot of people in my village have done it so it's easy to get the information."*

Chadian migrant in Libya, 35.

According to the UNHCR in Chad, as of January 2013 there were 373,695 refugees accommodated in 18 camps across the country. The main refugee communities are from Darfur and the Central African Republic. Political tension with Sudan has at times caused Sudanese refugees to be unwelcome and the Chadian government has threatened to expel Sudanese refugees in the past.<sup>10</sup> This seems to have stabilised now thanks to improvements in relations with Sudan and the work of the joint Chadian-Sudanese border-monitoring force.

Moreover, eastern Chad, which borders Sudan, is where most Sudanese refugees arrive and accordingly, 12 of the country's camps are located there. As the climate of this area is semi-arid, the large number of Sudanese refugees places a strain on already scarce resources and has caused tension between migrants and local populations. The camps have also been known to be attacked by bandits.

## 6. THE CIRCULATION OF INFORMATION

The circulation of information is represented diagrammatically in Figure 6 below. It details sources of information for migrants and information flows about the journey, at each stage of the journey. These are then dealt with in further detail in the proceeding subsections.

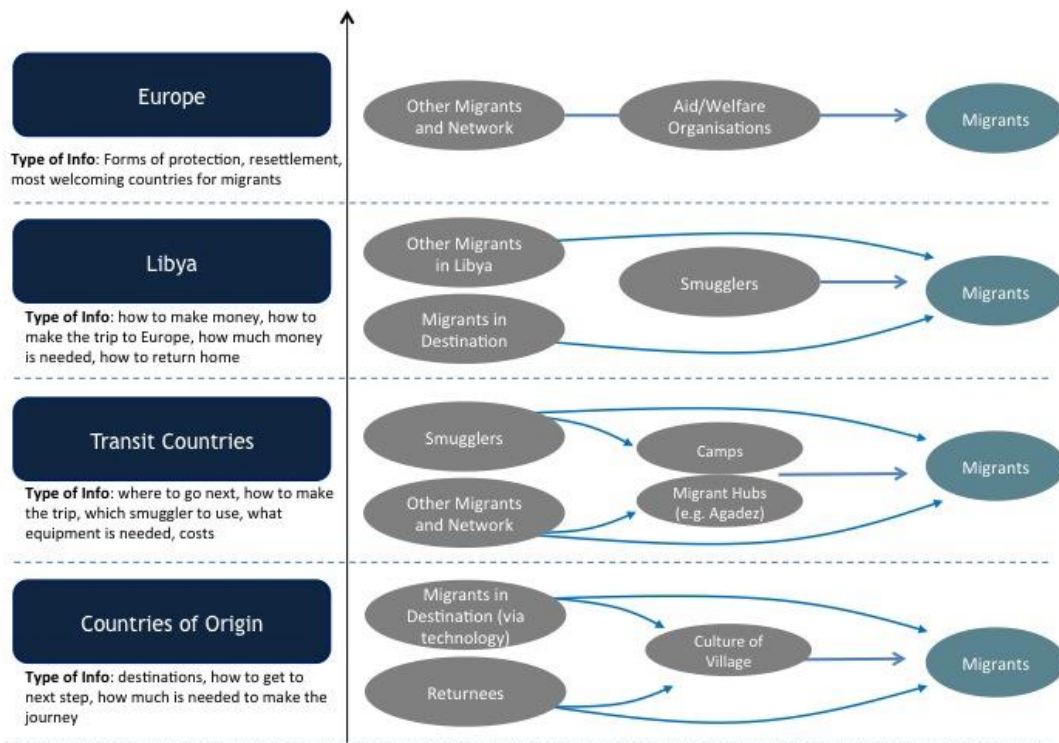


Figure 6: The circulation of information

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.refworld.org/topic,50ffbce582,50ffbce5f7,485f50c98a,0,,,CAF.html>

## 6.1 INFORMATION SOURCES

### 6.1.1 Culture of the village

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Some villages have produced so many migrants that information on how to make the journey to Libya is now common knowledge, particularly in Chad, Niger and Sudan.
- Migrants in Europe often call those in Libya, or migrants in Libya call friends and family back home, to relay information about their journey.
- Returnees don't tend to spread information further than family and close friends.
- There are also points along the route that act as information hubs.

Some migrants explained that it was very common for men from their village to make the journey to Libya for employment reasons and as a result, information about such a journey was widely available in their village and spread rapidly via word of mouth. This occurred more commonly amongst migrants from Chad, Niger, Nigeria and Sudan and particularly those that came from villages that were impacted by circular or seasonal migration patterns.

### 6.1.2 Other Migrants that Previously Made the Journey

**Those that have reached their destination:** with the ease of communication that comes with modern technology, migrants who have been successful in reaching their destination can spread news to others quite easily. There were numerous reports in the field of migrants in Europe calling those in Libya, or migrants in Libya calling friends and family back home, to relay information about their journey and success. This news would then subsequently circulate within communities. For example, a Somali asylum seeker in Libya explained, *"Some of the ones that made it to Europe would call their friends in Libya and tell them about it, then they would share it with the rest of us."* Similarly, a Guinean migrant interviewed in Ghadames explained that his brother who had migrated to Libya called him one day and asked him to come to Libya and take his place so that he could return home for a time. He relayed all details on how to make the journey over the phone.

*"Some of the ones that made it to Europe would call their friends in Libya and tell them about it, then they would share it with the rest of us."*

Somali asylum seeker in Libya, 25

**Returnees:** Migrants who return home after a period of migration abroad also constitute an information source, albeit a limited one. They tend to keep the information within their family circles or amongst close friends, sometimes to encourage others to make the journey but often to discourage them. This is usually the case when a migrant has chosen to return home because of what s/he has viewed as an unsuccessful attempt. For some returnees, the decision to return only comes at a point when they feel like they have run out of options. For example, some migrants only decide to return when they are detained in Libya and do not see an end to their detention, or when they have reached a point in Europe where they have not been able to find a job and have been living on the streets for some time. This causes them to discourage others but is also why they tend to not spread news very far; they are not proud of their perceived failure and expect others to also

see them as a failure for having come back home, particularly if many people invested in their journey.

There was some speculation by actors in the field that returnees would encourage others to make the journey by telling them about voluntary return programs, particularly those of the IOM, in an attempt to assure them that they would always be able to return home if things did not work out positively. However, this was intimated anecdotally and would need to be researched and analysed in order to be proven as a general phenomenon. In any case, it was found that returnees who had been assisted through AVR&R programs were quite happy with their reintegration into their home country and did accordingly encourage other migrants to return home through good word of mouth about the assistance package.

### 6.1.1 Particular Points on the Road

There are particular points on the road that act as information hubs for migrants and migrants know that they can go there to gain more information and to plan their journey. Often migrants will travel to these locations as their first step because they know that if they want to make the journey, this is the place to start. For example, the city of Agadez in Niger, which lies in the Sahara, is a key location for migrants moving to Libya from Niger and there are over 50 travel agents in the city that provide information about smugglers and connect migrants to smugglers. Sharia-Arbain in Sabha and Omdurman in Sudan act as similar information hubs.

## 6.2 TYPES OF INFORMATION

---

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Although information is available, most migrants begin their journey with little information because they are selective in what they want to know.
  - Most migrants are not concerned about the risks of the journey and learning about risks does not deter them.
  - Information flows less fluidly amongst asylum seekers.
  - Migrants in destination rarely send negative news home because there is a lot of pressure on them to succeed.
- 

In general, most migrants do not begin their journeys with a great deal of information. Most of it is gathered step by step along the way as it becomes necessary. It is usually information related to the subsequent steps of the journey and which route to take, the costs involved, where to find smugglers and at which points of the journey smugglers are required. While this is especially the case for asylum seekers who tend to flee their countries without a great deal of planning, it was found that western Africans, who tend to be economic migrants, also begin the journey with little information and are likely to follow others.

### 6.2.1 Information About the Journey

It is often surprising that migrants commence their journeys with such little information, given the fact that so many have made the journey before them and have information that could be shared. Moreover, the information that does spread tends to be very practical information about how to make the journey rather than information on whether the journey should be made at all or the risks involved.



*"I did not have any idea of what Libya was like before I left. I just took a map with me and started my journey. Most people in my village think that Libya is in Europe."*

Beninese migrant interviewed in Libya

The fieldwork revealed that it is not an issue of a lack of information, but rather a matter of selectively seeking information. Most migrants do not want to know about the risks, they just want to know how others made it and how they are now living in their destination. For example, a Somali asylum seeker interviewed in Malta told us, *"I knew others who had made the journey before me, but I didn't know anything about their journey, I just knew that they had made it."* This is usually linked to the fact that they feel as though their situation at home is so hopeless that nothing could be worse. Moreover, it seems to be a coping mechanism for many to look at another possible life and believe that it will change everything and be the solution to their problems.

Moreover, when migrants do learn about the risks, it does not deter them as they know that others made it despite these difficulties, which may help to explain why some women will make the very dangerous journey with very young children, or why so many other risks are assumed. Some migrants told research teams that the experience was so difficult that they now advise others not to come. For example, one Beninese migrant in Malta told us, *"When people ask me if they should come to Europe I tell them to not do it. I don't want anyone to experience the difficulties that I experienced."* Similarly, a Somali refugee said, *"Sometimes friends call me from Somalia and say they want to come to Europe and I tell them to forget it. I tell them that its 95% sure that they will die."* Yet, migrants continue to make the journey.

Economic migrants from surrounding countries are often not deterred by the hazardous nature of the journey and do not have concerns about crossing the Sahara as they cannot find jobs in their country of origin and so do not see any other option other than leaving. They need to make money and it has become almost like the culture of their area to look to Libya as a solution. Moreover, they often live in rural areas of Sudan or Niger, for example, and so do not see crossing the desert as a major issue. For example, a Sudanese migrant interviewed in Libya explained, *"There is no particular risk during the journey from Sudan. It is a normal journey for a Sudanese."*

In general, information flows less fluidly amongst asylum seekers, both because they usually flee their countries with little time to plan their journey, and because they tend to have less access to technology on their journey and in their destinations because they are either in camps along the way, detained in Libya, or living deeply underground in Libya.

### 6.2.1 Information About Destination

As mentioned previously, it is the lure of the possibilities that await in the new destination that pulls migrants to make the journey to Libya or onward to Europe, which is often clung to as a coping mechanism. This is aided by those who previously made the journey, as few of them are likely to send negative news back home. They want to say that they are succeeding because there is a lot of pressure on them to do so, given the fact that many people invested in their journey.

Migrants that travel longer distances (those from the Horn of Africa, for example, as opposed to those from neighbouring countries like Niger or Sudan), can spend up to USD \$4,000 to reach Libya, or up to USD \$6,000 if they travel on to Europe, and often ask people back home to send them money along the way. In some cases, whole villages put money together to send a migrant abroad,

or in the least, many family members would have invested in them. This means that friends and family often see them as an investment, expecting them to send money back once they arrive in their destination. This kind of pressure prevents them from sending negative news home and sometimes causes them to borrow money in order to send it home to those who are waiting. This was something observed particularly in Europe. It was also observed that migrants would sometimes take photos next to cars or homes that did not belong to them and send them home in order to create the illusion of success. Such a scenario means that the information that those in the country of origin are receiving, whether directly or indirectly, is that even if the journey is tough, life improves in the country of destination, thereby acting as a pull factor and negating any concerns about the dangers of the journey.

Moreover, money that is sent home by migrants in destination indirectly creates the same illusion. For example, Syrian refugees in Malta explained that the average wage for a labourer in Syria was roughly one Euro per day. Someone in a similar position would earn 12 euro per hour in Malta, which comes to roughly 100 Euro per day. Even if they send half of their salary home (50 Euro), they are sending home the equivalent of 50 people's wages, which acts as a pull factor for those struggling in country of origin.

### Focus box 3: Focus on Agadez, Niger

The city of Agadez in Niger is at the crossroads of a number of migratory routes coming from West Africa and Central Africa to North Africa and Europe. It represents one of the entry points for the Sahara and is located 737km from Niamey, the capital city of Niger.

Given its geographical location, it has historically been a passageway connecting sub-Saharan and North African traders and was one of the transit points for caravan routes coming from the Malian empire to the Fezzan in the South of Libya. Today, it continues to play a major role in trade and migration routes and has become one of the major hubs for sub-Saharan migrants to connect with smugglers and to gain information for the journey to Libya or Algeria.

The business in smuggling has flourished in recent years, given the decrease in tourism in the Tuareg areas that came with the deterioration in security. There are over 50 travel agencies in the area that now also provide smuggling services and can help 'customers' organise journeys to North Africa using smuggling means and who can connect them with smugglers. The local authorities protect these agencies as they contribute to the local economy, they are visible and advertise their services openly in the city. They are often led by former Tuareg rebels who were reintegrated in the late 90s, or by migrants themselves.

When in Niger, migrants have no choice but to transit through Agadez. Reaching Agadez from the south is easy as two bus companies link the South of Niger to the North of the country. From Agadez, migrants generally begin the stage of the journey that crosses the Sahara. Thus, they often spend a period of time in Agadez preparing for this long and arduous portion of the journey. They can stay for up to several months, working and preparing food and other equipment for the journey.



As a result, accommodation services for migrants are also on offer. For example, bus stations are often converted into accommodation in the evenings for migrants; other migrants organise shelter in buildings that they maintain and charge other migrants to stay in (termed "ghettoes").

## 7. THE ROLE OF NETWORKS

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- For economic migrants, family usually plays a big role in the decision to leave and in putting migrants in touch with smugglers, but doesn't help financially.
- Asylum seekers tend to be financially supported by a community that is greater than immediate family and often includes the diaspora.

## 7.1 ECONOMIC MIGRANTS

For economic migrants, family usually plays a big role in their decision to leave as they are often motivated by the need to provide revenues for immediate family. An IOM study in 2009<sup>11</sup> estimated that on average each migrant transiting through Niger had five people depending on their remittances. Usually they gather enough money for the first step of the journey and then work in transit countries along the way to make the rest. They are not as reliant on financial assistance from family members, unless they run into problems along the way. Family is usually more active in organising logistics, such as introducing them to smugglers, rather than providing financial support.

When they are the **eldest son of the family**, migrants often make the decision themselves based on the sense of responsibility they feel to contribute to the family income and have little assistance in doing so. They tend to use their own money that they have been saving for some time. When they make the decision to migrate, they start saving or accumulating what they can (thereby taking away from what they were contributing to the family). For example, a 30-year-old Senegalese migrant in Libya explained that he sold four goats when he was at home in order to raise funds for his trip to Libya.

However, family support is strong when these migrants encounter problems on the road. It is not uncommon for migrants to receive money from family at home, and in destination countries where relevant, when they are stuck somewhere because a smuggler fooled them or when they have been detained in Libya and need to pay to be released. This usually reaches them through a hawala network or via Western Union, but in the case of Western Union they often need a third person that has documentation to receive it for them. For example, the above-mentioned Senegalese migrant did receive assistance from his family when he was stuck in Algeria, in order to move on to Libya, because the smuggler that he had used had fooled him.

*"Everyone encouraged me to leave and my Mother sold all of her gold to make the money that I needed to get to Libya."*

Eritrean migrant interviewed in Libya.

For the **younger sons of the family**, often the eldest son will organise the journey for them and encourage them to leave. In some cases, older brothers in Libya will send money to younger brothers in the country of origin and organise the logistics in order for them to come and join them in Libya. The younger ones will usually leave in groups with other men from their village or town that are commencing the same journey. For example, an 18 year-old Guinean migrant in Libya explained that he did not really want to leave his home but that his brother in Libya organised everything: *"My brother took care of everything and dealt with all the payments to smugglers."* Even when his father helped financially, the payments were sent to his brother.

**Female migrants** rarely make the trip alone and if they do travel to Libya it is usually to join family already there, in which case they typically travel with other male family members who organise the trip and provide for their protection. A female Malian migrant explained, *"My husband, who was in Libya, put me in contact with someone who knew all the routes and organised the journey for me."*

<sup>11</sup> "Migration au Niger, Profil National 2009"

## 7.2 ASYLUM SEEKERS

Asylum seekers tend to be financially supported by a community that involves more people than just immediate family. It can include extended family and members of the same tribe who are abroad (the diaspora). Somalis in Ethiopia explained that the tribal system can facilitate the raising of large amounts of money through tribe members in different locations via a 'hawala' system. An Ethiopian asylum seeker in Libya also explained how his community helped him obtain money in order to leave Sudan: "*A community of Ethiopians that were aware of my situation [member of the Oromo Liberation front] raised \$600 to pay for my trip to Libya. They even paid for the food and the water*" For Eritrean asylum seekers, financial assistance from the diaspora seems to be considerable in helping them exit the country, not only to cross over to Sudan and onward to Libya, but also to assist them in getting to Ethiopia and Yemen.

As they often flee without a great deal of planning, it is not uncommon to have sold certain belongings in country of origin to raise funds, and then to receive assistance along the way. One Somali asylum seeker in Libya told us he had sold his home for \$5,000 before leaving Somalia. However, it was also commonly reported that family members abroad sent money when they realised that the situation at home was dire and the person needed to get out.

### Focus box 4: The hawala system

Hawala (meaning transfer in Arabic), is an informal system of money transfer that functions on a network of money brokers across the globe that affect the transfer between them without actually moving the money. It is predominate in Islamic countries and is basically a parallel or alternative remittance system that operates outside of, or parallel to traditional banking or financial channels. Money transfers affected via a hawala system can be very quick, often within minutes, and leave no trace. Moving money in this way is also much cheaper than formal remittance channels. There is also often a trust factor involved where people of the same group or community or tribe work together to affect such transfers in networks across the globe.

In this context, it follows a similar logic to regular vs. irregular migration, the latter being an option for those that cannot afford the high cost of regular migration. That is, the irregular migrant focuses on maximising the few resources that he or she has at his or her disposal and so is often not able, and generally not in favour of utilising formal or legal channels.

For asylum seekers, family support in times of emergency can also be strong. For example, the incidence of Eritreans being kidnapped in Sudan, particularly between the border crossing and the Shagarab refugee camp, is not uncommon and UNHCR Sudan reported that at times up to USD \$30,000 have been organised by family abroad to release migrants from the hands of kidnappers. Also, reportedly, migrants in Europe often explain that they were detained in Libya and told that with a certain amount of money they would be released and put on a boat for Europe. It is assumed that most received the money from family from abroad.



## INFLOWS AND DYNAMICS IN LIBYA

METHODOLOGY

MAIN ROUTES OF TRAVEL AND THE JOURNEY TO LIBYA

**INFLOWS AND DYNAMICS IN LIBYA**

OUTFLOWS TO EUROPE AND RETURNS HOME

CHANGES SINCE THE REVOLUTION

THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE JOURNEY

RECOMMENDATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

# VI. INFLOWS AND DYNAMICS IN LIBYA

## 1. PUSH AND PULL FACTORS

Libya's strategic geographic location has made it a cross roads for migrants from a variety of countries of origin who come to the country for a variety of reasons. This section outlines the spectrum of reasons for which migrants come to Libya (summarised in Figure 7 below) and the factors that drive their settlement in Libya or onward journey to Europe.

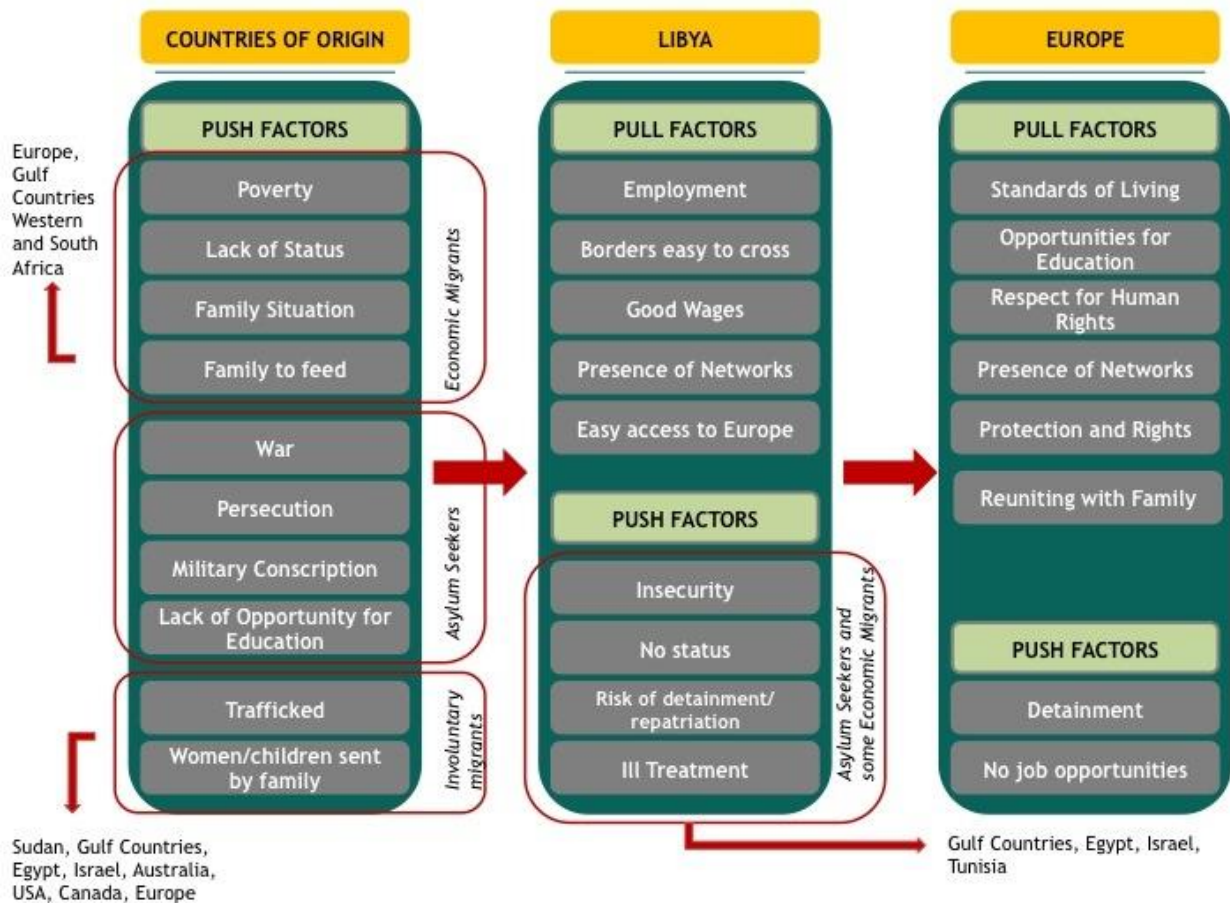


Figure 7: Push and pull factors for migration to and out of Libya

### 1.1 WHY LIBYA?

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Migrants come to Libya for economic reasons.
- Gadhafi's policy of pan-Africanism in the 90's increased the numbers of sub-Saharan migrants in the country, which led to the creation of certain habits, certain communities and networks, and a certain reputation for Libya.
- Libya's geographic location coupled with the relative lack of controls makes it a perfect platform for migrants aiming to reach Europe.

Favourable economic conditions and Libya's location as the frontier between Europe and Africa constitute the main reasons for which migrants are attracted to the country. Moreover, the longstanding legal insecurity which exists for migrants and asylum seekers in the country, while lending itself to vulnerability, also allows migrants to enter and move through the country relatively more easily. The factors which pull migrants to Libya are outlined more precisely below.

**Employment:** Libya is a resource rich country with one of the strongest GDP per capita rates in Africa, yet it possesses a small population. There is a population of roughly 6.4 million and a population density rate of roughly 3.6 persons per square kilometre. This means that certain industries suffer from a lack of labour supply, which has increased demand for foreign labour in the form of migrants. This has typically been in the agricultural and construction sectors and in other low-skilled jobs. However, there are reports that this is changing post-revolution as the economy is still recovering from the recent instability and change in government and much of the construction work ceased during this time. One 22-year-old Nigerien migrant explained, *"I was told that Libya was a good country for work but now that I'm here I can see that it's not true."* Whether this news will reach potential migrants in the countries of origin and affect future flows into the country is to be seen.

**High wages:** In addition to good employment conditions, salaries in Libya are often higher than what migrants can earn in their countries of origin, thereby acting as a pull factor. For example, daily labourers can earn up to USD \$7-\$30 in Libya, which comes to USD \$140-\$600 per month. To provide a point of comparison, the minimum wage in Benin is approximately USD \$63 per month, in Senegal it is approximately USD \$61 per month and approximately USD \$22 per month in Ethiopia.

**Past policies:** Gadhafi's policy of pan-Africanism in the 90's increased the numbers of sub-Saharan migrants in the country as it involved an open door policy whereby African nationals were allowed to enter Libya without visas between 1998 and 2007. Moreover, in 1998 Libya played an instrumental role in the establishment of the Community of Sahel-Saharan states, which brought together 28 African countries and promoted free movement of people within



Image 3: Migrants in Tripoli's old city (Altai Consulting)

these countries and the freedom to live and work in any of them.<sup>12</sup> While there has been a policy change in recent years, these policies did encourage the creation of certain habits, which continue today, and led to Libya earning a certain reputation in the region.

**Access to Europe:** Libya's geographic location makes it a perfect platform for migrants aiming to reach Europe, particularly for journeys to Italy and Malta. Libya's weaker border management, both into and out of the country, also make it a more ideal departure point than other possible locations such as Morocco and Tunisia. Moreover, the fact that there are employment opportunities in Libya

<sup>12</sup> "A Comprehensive Survey of Migration Flows and Institutional Capabilities in Libya," International Centre for Migration Policy Development, 2010.



that allow migrants to make money for their journey to Europe also contributes to it being the favoured departure point.

## 1.2 REASONS TO SETTLE

---

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Migrants who manage to find stable employment and are well integrated are more likely to stay in Libya.
  - The lack of a legal framework in Libya is in some ways positive as it allows migrants to stay in the country with the freedom to work on the black market, if they remain invisible.
- 

There are a number of factors that can encourage migrants to stay and settle in Libya, instead of moving on to Europe or other locations, or returning home. These factors are outlined below.

**Stable Employment:** While Libya offers a good employment market, the majority of the jobs on offer are low-skilled and involve daily contracts, which does not lend itself to security or stability, particularly for irregular migrants who are somewhat 'outside of the law.' For this reason, it is usually the migrants that manage to secure more permanent and stable jobs who tend to stay in the country. These migrants usually work within Libyan homes as domestic workers or doormen or in cafes and hotels. By doing so, they not only have job security and regular income that they can send home, but also less exposure (than those that wait at roundabouts for jobs on a daily basis, for example) which prevents detainment and deportation. A 22-year-old Somali migrant interviewed in Libya confirmed this by saying, "*Some migrants want to go to Europe but when they find a job here and build a stable situation for themselves, they just stay here [in Libya].*" Within this group there is also the migrants who have set up their own businesses, which not only provides the same advantages of stable employment, but also represents attempts to settle and establish a life in Libya, which they will not forsake easily.

**Levels of integration:** As mentioned previously, regularity and irregularity is often in the eye of the Libyan beholder meaning that often official documents or status are not relevant if the migrant has managed to integrate to a point of acceptance by both Libyans in the community and the authorities. This is common amongst Arab migrants, particularly those that are more educated, and Muslim migrants. One such example is the Sudanese community who are Arabic speakers and Muslim, and who tend to have a favourable reputation amongst Libyans as being educated and trustworthy. Good levels of integration tend to influence decisions to stay in Libya, as explained by the Sudanese consul in Tripoli "*The Sudanese are well educated in general, have access to the internet, and follow the news, so they know that life in Europe is hard and that there are no jobs there. They are more likely to stay in Libya where they speak the language, share religion with the locals and can find well paying jobs.*"

**The lack of a legal framework for migrants or asylum seekers:** while keeping migrants in a precarious situation, the lack of a legal framework is in some ways positive as it allows migrants to stay in the country with the freedom to work on the black market, if they remain invisible. While Europe offers a reception process and an asylum procedure, migrants remain in detention until their status is determined, which in the case of Malta can continue for up to 18 months. If they are determined to not be in need of protection, they must return home. Even if their status is determined positively, the employment market there offers little opportunity for these migrants, causing many of them to feel as though they are wasting their time in Europe. Thus, the benefit of

status is tempered by the long administrative process to achieve this, repatriation if one is not successful, and unfavourable economic conditions.

There were some migrants who left Libya during the crisis in 2011 to make the journey to Europe and after being in detention for long periods of time, asked IOM to help them return to Libya instead of their country of origin. While IOM's assisted voluntary return programs are structured for return to country of origin, meaning that it was not an option to be returned to a third country such as Libya, reports from the field indicate that it is not implausible to imagine that some of these migrants returned home with the assistance of IOM and then made the journey back to Libya for a second time. Moreover, IOM in Italy reported that since the economic crisis in Europe the rates of voluntary return have been increasing due to the fact that it has become so hard for migrants to find work in the current economic climate in Europe. The decreased attractiveness of Europe contributes to encouraging migrants to stay in Libya and to try and make it work there.

Figure 8 demonstrates the effects of stable employment and integration levels on the decisions of migrants to settle in Libya or move on. It demonstrates that migrants with stable employment and who are well integrated into Libyan society, such as the Arab migrants, have a propensity to stay in Libya and are unlikely to move on to Europe. Conversely, Eastern African migrants, who are predominately asylum seekers, tend to be unemployed and live very invisibly on the outskirts of Libyan society, and thus have a high propensity to leave. Western African migrants are straddled somewhere in the middle of this spectrum and migrants from neighbouring countries are more likely to stay in Libya than to leave. That said, even though they experience good employment rates some are very poorly integrated meaning there is still a small chance that they will leave.

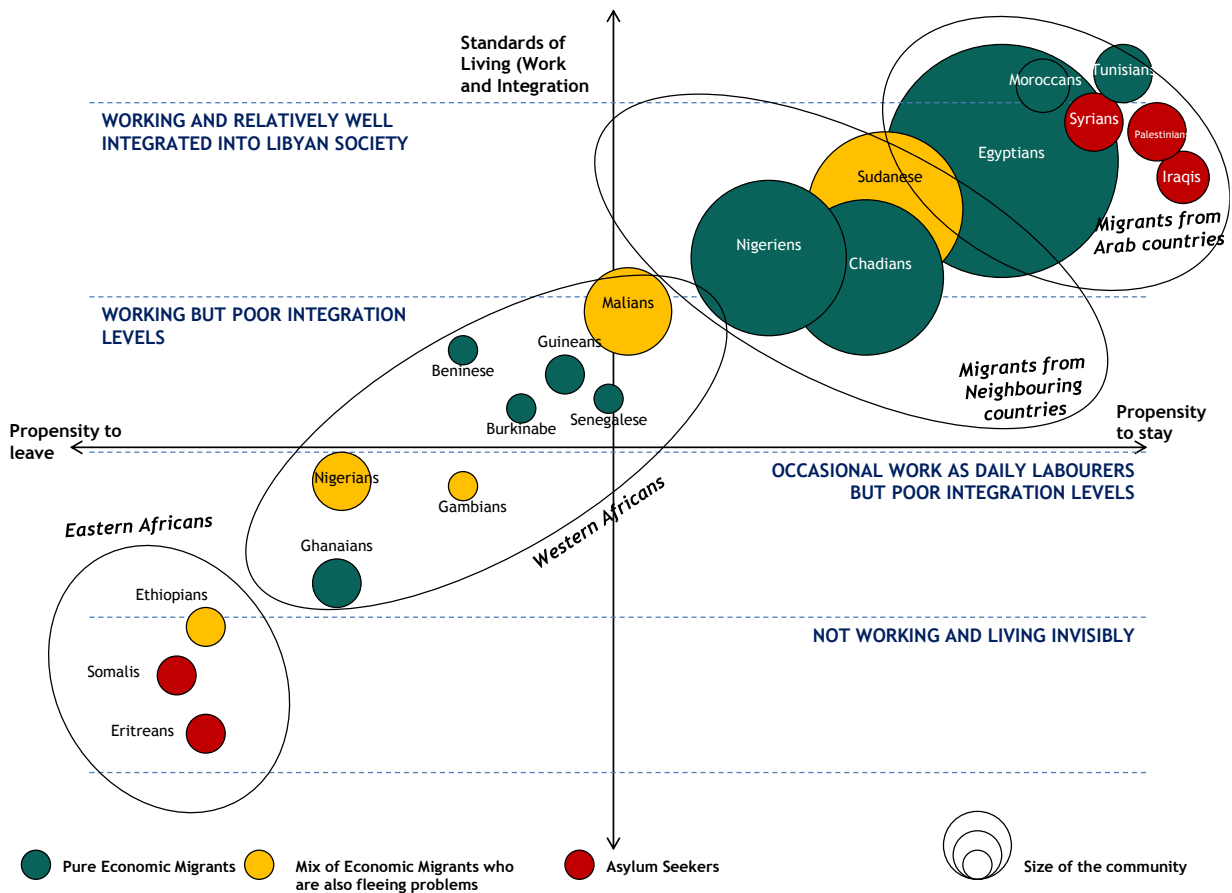


Figure 8: Propensity to settle in Libya according to employment and integration levels

### 1.3 REASONS TO MOVE ON

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The presence of networks in Europe, the inability to engage in an asylum process or regularise one's stay in Libya, and the high levels of abuse and vulnerability in Libya are all factors that cause migrants to move on.
- For West Africans that speak a different language and have a different religion to Libyans, Europe is a more attractive location because they feel that they will be better accepted there.
- There is also a community of migrants that have lived in the country for many years quite happily under the former regime who now want to leave because of new levels of insecurity post-revolution.

**Networks in Europe:** For some migrants, the presence of networks and family relations in Europe encourages them to aim for this destination specifically and to only see Libya as a transit location. For example, a 29-year-old Cameroonian man explained that he came to Libya simply to travel on to Europe; he said "I want to go to France because my cousin is there." As migration by boat to Europe from Libya has been occurring for over a decade, it is not uncommon to now see migrants arriving in Europe in search of other family members that previously made the journey. Family reunification policies in Europe that allow asylum seekers to be reunited with immediate family act as a further pull factor.

**Status:** The need for official status is more important for some types of migrants over others. For asylum seekers, the inability to engage in an asylum process in Libya, or to be offered any forms of protection, often pushes them out and onto Europe. The fact that asylum seekers from the Horn of Africa have a high recognition rate in Europe adds weight to this. For example, in Malta, the two main countries of origin represented amongst asylum seekers arriving by boat are Somalia and Eritrea



Image 4: Somali migrants in a temporary shelter in Tripoli (Altai Consulting)

and all of them are given some form of protection (even if they do not qualify for refugee status, they are given some form of subsidiary or local protection because it is not believed that they should be returned home given the state of their countries of origin). While not all of them know this when they leave their countries of origin and are not necessarily planning to travel to Europe from the outset, they do become aware of this once they arrive in Libya and speak with other migrants from their country of origin.

For economic migrants that desire official status, it is not so much for protection purposes, but rather for the ability to set up a new life, or a business of their own, which they find it hard to do if they continue to live irregularly. For example, a 30-year-old Ethiopian man interviewed in Libya

explained that he wanted to open up an Internet café in Libya but could not do so without documents, causing him to want to move on to Europe.

**Language and Culture:** Non-Muslim and non-Arabic speaking migrants are far less likely to want to stay in Libya both because the culture and language are foreign to them but also because it is difficult to integrate into Libyan society. Many West African migrants interviewed, particularly those that speak English and French (such as Nigerians, Ghanaians, Ivoirians, etc.) were eager to move on to Europe where they felt they would be better accepted and understood. Moreover, for some of them, who are devout Christians, the lack of religious plurality in Libya also acted as a push factor.

**Insecurity:** Many migrants complained about their treatment in Libya, particularly in terms of arbitrary arrest and harassment by authorities and militia, random mobbing and theft and high levels of racism by Libyans. A Sudanese man interviewed in Libya explained, "*There is strong racism towards Africans, I myself was attacked and jailed by authorities without any valid reason.*" It was not uncommon for migrants to also find themselves in situations of labour exploitation or bonded labour with employers refusing to pay them and with no avenues for redress available to them. One Beninese migrant interviewed in Malta explained, "*[Libyan employers] sometimes they pay you and sometimes they don't and if you ask for your salary they take out a gun, and because nobody wants to die, you let it go.*" This is undoubtedly the dark side of a lack of a regulatory framework, which creates high levels of vulnerability to abuse and encourages many to leave.

Moreover, there is a community of long time migrants in Libya who have been settled in the country for a number of years, often more than 5, sometimes up to 10 or 20, who lived quite happily under the former regime with stable jobs and good levels of acceptance but who now want to leave the country because of the insecurity that ensued after the revolution. This is largely due to the high presence of militia groups in the country and the changes in people's mindsets in the absence of Gadhafi. Reports of sub-Saharan Africans having helped Gadhafi also did not help the situation of these migrants post-revolution.

## 2. TYPES OF MIGRANTS AND REASONS FOR MIGRATION

The main types of migrants that this study focuses on are economic migrants, including regular, irregular and seasonal; asylum seekers; unaccompanied minors; and involuntary migrants (victims of kidnapping, abduction, misinformation and trafficking).

These groups are mapped in Figure 9 below, with full explanations appearing in the proceeding subsections. The size of the circles that are used to represent the communities demonstrates the scope of these communities in Libya.

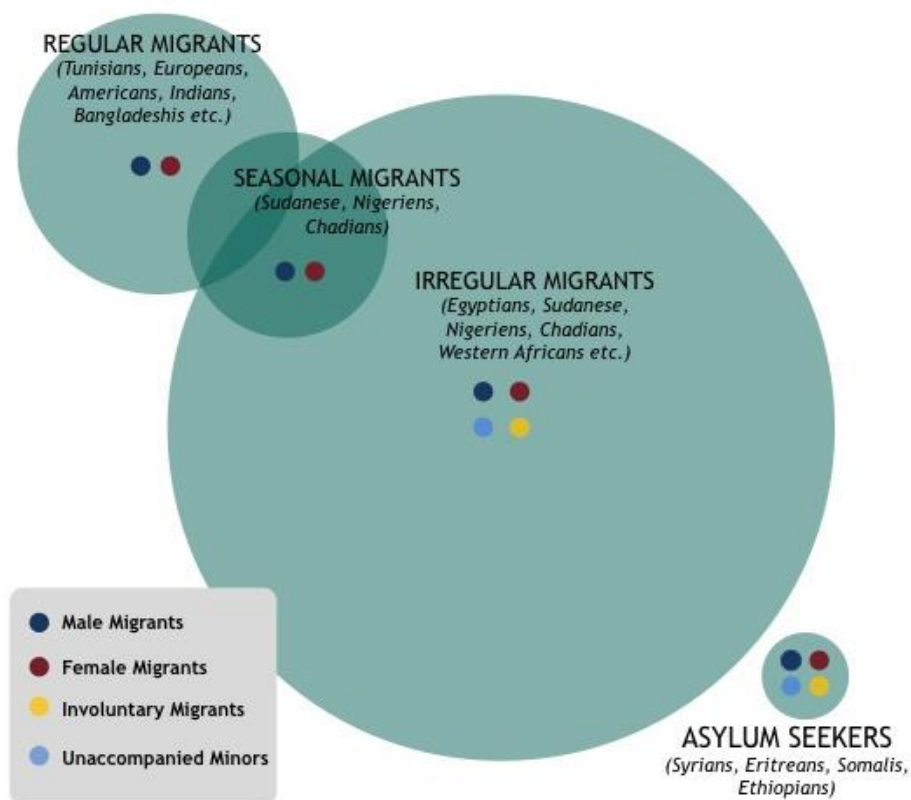


Figure 9: Types of migrants in Libya

## 2.1 REGULAR ECONOMIC MIGRANTS

### 2.1.1 Scope

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Regular economic migrants are mainly Asian or Arab and sometimes from sub-Saharan Africa.
- The last official figure on regular economic migrants is 360,000 (the Libyan Census of 2006).
- The demarcation between regular and irregular migrants is blurry at best with some migrants moving between regularity and irregularity frequently.



Image 5: Chadian migrant in Tripoli (Altai Consulting)

According to the Libyan Census of 2006 (updated in 2009), the number of regular economic migrants in the country was slightly below 360,000. It is difficult to estimate current numbers of regular economic migrants in the country, as the demarcation between regular and irregular migrants is blurry at best with some migrants moving between regularity and irregularity frequently. Many of the regular economic migrants interviewed for this study had in fact overstayed their visas so that while they had entered regularly, they

were now irregular. Some also had never had their passports stamped on arrival making it difficult to determine their current status. Often it seems that regularity and irregularity is in the eye of the Libyan beholder; that is, official documents or status are often not relevant if the migrant has managed to integrate to a point of acceptance by both Libyans in the community and the authorities. They are treated much better in Libya than the average migrant is and are far less vulnerable. As explained by one Chadian migrant working for a municipal government in Libya "*I had no concern about leaving my country, the money is easy in Libya, Libya is a good country.*"

### 2.1.2 Characteristics

Regular economic migrants tend to be Asian or Arab, with some sub-Saharan Africans amongst them. Most stay in the country for at least three years and some have been here for up to 20 years. The sub-Saharan regular economic migrants tend to settle in major urban areas such as Tripoli or Benghazi as this is where their employment takes them. In general, this group of migrants tends to be **more educated and skilled** than the irregular economic migrants in the country, which is perhaps part of the



Image 6: African garbage collectors, Tripoli (Altai Consulting)

reason why they are more able to regularise their situation. It is very common for them to own their own businesses in the form of grocery stores, hair salons/barbers, and clothing retailers in commercial areas of urban settings, such as in Tripoli's old city. The more educated and highly skilled amongst them tend to be working for Libyan companies as accountants and other similarly qualified positions, whereas the least-educated and skilled are often recruited by municipal governments to work as garbage collectors, or in other local government jobs. In some cases, migrants told research teams that they had entered the country irregularly but that when they found the job with the municipal government, their visa status was resolved for them.

### 2.1.3 Motivations

Regular economic migrants enter the country in search of **employment** and are drawn to Libya for the fact that they can earn more money than what they would earn in their own country or even in their region of origin. For example, a 31-year-old Chadian working as a garbage collector for the municipal government in Sabratha said that he left Moundou in Chad "*Just because the salaries were*

*too low, and for that reason only*" and that he was sending money back to his wife and seven year-old in Chad. Indeed, most regular migrants are saving money in Libya to send back to family at home, or to return eventually with enough capital to open up their own businesses in their countries of origin.

## 2.2 IRREGULAR ECONOMIC MIGRANTS

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Irregular economic migrants usually come from Sudan, Chad and West African countries and are usually young men between 20 and 30 years of age.
- They are typically uneducated and low skilled and come from rural areas.
- Their primary motivation is also economic.

### 2.2.1 Scope

Before the Libyan crisis of 2011, the number of irregular migrants in the country was likely to be close to two million. It is quite challenging to draw an accurate estimate of the number of irregular migrants in the country today.<sup>13</sup>

There are a number of reasons to explain why they enter Libya irregularly beginning with the fact that they are typically uneducated and have low skill levels, making it much more difficult to find avenues for entering the country regularly. Moreover:

- Most of them come from rural areas in their countries of origin and often do not have identity documents, let alone passports;
- As a good proportion of them are illiterate, they are not familiar with the administrative processes required for obtaining identity papers so they would not know where to start even if they wanted to regularise their journey and they usually believe that they would be rejected anyway;
- In some cases, field teams found that migrants did not even realise that they required papers or documentation in order to go to a neighbouring country to find work, particularly in the case of those that lived along the borders and in rural areas;
- There is no Libyan embassy in their region of origin at which they could initiate a visa process;
- They see Libya as a transit location on their way to Europe and as they do not intend to stay, they do not see the benefit in regularising their stay or entry.

*"I was the eldest son in my family and my family is very poor so I had to leave and find a job to support them."*

Senegalese migrant interviewed in Libya

It should also be noted that at the time of writing the new Libyan government had not yet fully determined its migration framework, and where regulations had been determined, this information was not always easily available to migrants.

<sup>13</sup> See section on 'Quantifying the Flows' for further information

### 2.2.2 Characteristics

Irregular economic migrants tend to come from Sudan, Chad and Western African countries such as Niger, Mali, Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, Guinea, Gambia and Benin. They tend to be men between the ages of 17 and 40, with a concentration around the age of 20-30, and generally **come from poor rural areas**. Not only are they generally poor and uneducated, but they also often lack social status in their countries of origin, such as the right family name or the right social or political connections, which further contributes to their inability to ameliorate their situation at home.

### 2.2.3 Motivations

Irregular economic migrants are also often in Libya for **economic reasons**, either because they could not find jobs in their own country or because the salaries they were offered were not high enough; usually a result of the fact that they come from poor rural areas and possess low education and skill levels. For example, a 52-year-old Nigerian migrant from the region of Zinder explained, *"I used to work as a shepherd in Niger, but there are not enough cows anymore to make a living so I had to leave and find work elsewhere."* Most reported sending money home for families they had left behind: *"I was the eldest son in my family and my family is very poor so I had to leave and find a job to support them"* (Senegal, male, 22).



Image 7: Migrants waiting at a roundabout in Tripoli (Altai Consulting)

While **security** has never been mentioned by such migrants as a primary reason for which they left their country of origin (as opposed to the asylum seekers in the sample), it has often been mentioned as a factor that limits their access to employment at home (which does push them out). For example, one 49-year-old Nigerian woman explained that she left her native Nigeria because the Islamic sect 'Boko Haram' inhibited women's access to employment, making it impossible for her to find a job.

Similarly, **education** was never a primary reason for which migrants left their countries of origin but was sometimes mentioned as a factor that pulled them to particular locations and was often linked to the creation of employment opportunities. For example, one Somali woman mentioned that she wanted to go to Europe because she could receive a good education there whereas in Somalia education standards were very poor: *"even those that have graduated from university can't find jobs in Somalia,"* she explained.



## 2.3 SEASONAL ECONOMIC MIGRANTS

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Seasonal migrants come from countries in the Sahel that suffer from drought, such as Mali, Niger, Chad, and Sudan.
- The recurrent nature of this natural phenomena means that many of these communities have become accustomed to migrating seasonally for survival.
- Once in Libya, they stay close to the border and work the land in agricultural areas.

Seasonal migrants tend to originate from Sahelian countries (such as Mali, Niger, Chad, and Sudan) that face food shortages caused by droughts, a recurrent problem in this region. Widespread drought, which hit the Sahel in 1968, worsened in 1972, and continued until 1974, killed around 40% of the region's livestock and caused many of the inhabitants of the area to migrate to Libya for survival. A second Sahel drought in 1982-1985 had similar repercussions. More recently, drought in the region in 2012, and its impact on food security, has been further aggravated by population displacement (due to insecurity in the region, particularly in countries like Mali and Nigeria), which places further stress on already scarce resources.

The recurrent nature of this natural phenomena means that many of these communities have become accustomed to migrating seasonally for survival. Of course, not all Malian, Nigerien, Chadian, and Sudanese migrants are seasonal migrants; rather, it is those coming from **rural areas, which are reliant on crops** that tend to follow a cyclical migration pattern. It is common for them to migrate to Libya every year just after the harvest, during the very warm and dry months, and then to return home for the rainy season after several months of work. Unlike other economic migrants, these tend to view their migration as a seasonal and repetitive cycle that is a natural part of their lifestyle.

That majority of these migrants tend to stay close to the border and work the land in agricultural areas. They are very unlikely to move to the major cities. While the majority of these migrants are irregular, meaning that they lack any documentation, they tend to enter the country more easily than the typical irregular migrant because they have created certain habits and relationships at checkpoints and along the route and with local tribes that control the borders that helps facilitate their entry.

## 2.4 INVOLUNTARY MIGRANTS: VICTIMS OF KIDNAPPING, MISINFORMATION AND TRAFFICKING

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Migrants are sometimes fooled by being taken to a destination different to the one agreed to or being made false promises of employment.
- Trafficking is less frequent but usually happens amongst Nigerian women being forced into prostitution.
- Migrants from the Horn of Africa are particularly prone to being made false promises of employment.
- Kidnapping is particularly common at the border crossing between Eritrea and Sudan.

In terms of involuntary migrants, a number of variations were discovered in fieldwork. There were migrants who had been misinformed, given false promises of employment, or kidnapped. While Libya is a signatory of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000) and the convention's protocols, as well as the Arab Charter on Human Rights, there is little legislation<sup>14</sup> at the national level to address such issues and less by way of enforcement.

In 2013, however, IOM Libya organised training programs in counter-trafficking in persons for 102 judges and prosecutors from all over the country. Following the training, the judges and prosecutors involved made a series of recommendations on the protection of victims of trafficking; the prevention of the crime of trafficking in persons; the prosecution of traffickers and their aiders and abettors; and partnerships with other countries and organizations like IOM, and the NGO community to address trafficking in persons strategically and comprehensively. Inter-ministerial forums between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Labour, Justice, Social Affairs and Health served as first instances for governmental exchange on the issue.

#### 2.4.1 Misinformed or "Fooled" Migrants

Some migrants reported that they had been misinformed, or fooled, by smugglers or other intermediaries who dropped them off in another location and told them that they had arrived in Libya. Some migrants reported being transported across the desert for some time and then dropped off in a village in the desert and told that they had arrived in Ghat or Ghatrun (as these locations are often the first stop in Libya for migrants coming from Niger or Chad) when in fact they were not far from where they had started. One Senegalese migrant explained that he had been aiming for Gabon but was taken to Algeria by the smuggler and dropped off there. As he had paid large sums of money and did want to return to Senegal, he decided to cross over into Libya where he was eventually interviewed by Altai teams.

#### 2.4.2 Trafficking in Persons

Other migrants, particularly those from the Horn of Africa, reported having been made **false promises of employment** where they had been told that they were going to Libya to work as domestic workers but there was no job waiting for them when they arrived. As the smugglers then wanted to be repaid for the journey, some were forced to work for him until someone was able to send money on their behalf. The smuggler usually confiscates passports or other identity documents in order to keep the migrants from leaving. They are typically housed and fed and then work for free until the debt is repaid, meaning they are kept in a situation of **bonded labour**. Some migrants also reported situations of bonded labour in Libya for employers who never paid them but eventually handed them over to smugglers who took them to Europe. The employer then paid the smuggler directly instead of paying the migrant for work rendered. The assumption is that these employers are intermediaries in the smuggling game and have certain agreements with the smugglers.

*"On our way here, when we were crossing the Chadian desert, one of the people in our group was kidnapped. We had to pay USD \$1,000 to get him out. We were very worried about it happening again."*

Eritrean woman interviewed in Libya.

<sup>14</sup> Trafficking in persons is addressed to some extent in the Libyan Penal Code.

There were also reports from key informants in the field that in some cases, **women were forced to prostitute themselves** to pay back such smugglers, particularly in the case of Nigerian women. Observations in Italy indicated that Nigerian women trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation are a sizable group. Some women arrived in Europe pregnant and they speak either of rape in Libyan detention centres or forced prostitution in Libya. However, it is mainly speculative and hard to prove, as few women are willing to talk about it. The few that have opened up were so traumatised by the experience that they ended up in psychiatric facilities in Europe and only after some time there did they end up speaking about their experiences. There is also speculation of this occurring amongst Ethiopian women taken to Sudan.

### 2.4.3 Kidnapping and Abduction

**Kidnapping** was particularly common in Sudan amongst Eritrean asylum seekers who were crossing the border into Kassala state in Sudan. Typically, Eritreans are kidnapped near the border or on their way from the border crossing to Shagarab Refugee camp and sometimes from within the camp itself. Field observations indicate that this is commonly affected by members of the Rashaida tribe who are motivated by the payment of ransom. Migrants report that they are often threatened and asked to contact their families for the payment of ransom and in some cases, torture has been mentioned as part of the game to attract higher ransom payments. Such payments can now be as high as USD \$30,000.

Some migrants in Libya also reported that **abduction** can occur within Libya at roundabouts where migrants wait for employment. Apparently, cars stop pretending to have work for migrants and pick up a few of them only to take them out of the city in order to intimidate and rob them.

## 2.5 UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Numbers of unaccompanied minors in Europe (coming from Libya) is increasing with time but the average age is decreasing.
- Some migrants claim to be younger than they are when they reach Europe because they know that they will receive some form of protection if they are minors.
- The fact that unaccompanied minors who arrive in Europe will not be sent back to their country of origin until they are of age acts as a pull factor.

### 2.5.1 Scope

In terms of unaccompanied minors who arrive in Europe on boats that departed from the Libyan coast, the numbers are increasing. In Malta in 2012, 14% of boat arrivals from Libya were unaccompanied minors.

### 2.5.2 Characteristics

While the numbers of unaccompanied minors arriving in Europe from Libya are increasing, the average age is decreasing. Previously, the **average age** of unaccompanied minors arriving in Europe was between 16-17 years whereas now the average age is closer to 12-13. In Malta the majority of unaccompanied minors arriving on boats are from Somalia; at the time of fieldwork the first boat of the year had arrived in Malta containing 82 passengers all of which were Somali, and 27 of which were unaccompanied minors. However, it is difficult to be sure of the age of minors because they

usually lack documentation or ID papers and there is a trend emerging of **migrants in Europe claiming to be younger than they are** because they know that unaccompanied minors are not sent home until they are of age (see section on 'motivations').

In Libya, fieldwork conducted amongst migrant communities gave the impression that there are unaccompanied minors coming from West Africa in increasing numbers and that they tend to come from poorer areas with the intention to stay in Libya.

*"I had to leave school because my family was too poor and needed me to help make money. I worked on a potato plantation for a few years and then my family told me to go to Libya because they heard that there are a lot of jobs there. Others in my village had gone before."*

Guinean male, 17, interviewed in Libya.

### 2.5.3 Motivations

**Unaccompanied minors from West Africa who were interviewed in Libya** seem to be from poor, rural areas and are usually sent to Libya by their families in order to make money to send back home. Sometimes when they arrive in Libya, they hear about Europe and decide to try their luck there.

**Unaccompanied minors in Europe**, however, are less likely to have been sent to make money for the family and more likely to have been sent to Libya or Europe to try and build a better life for themselves in a country where they will have more abundant opportunities. Some of them also left on their own accord after they lost parents in conflict, which was particularly the case for Somali minors.

Under European policy, unaccompanied minors who do not qualify for humanitarian protection are not sent back until they are of age, meaning that all minors are welcomed in Europe. This has started to act as a pull factor to the extent that some migrants claim to be younger than they are to benefit from this situation. Moreover, European policy also allows for family reunification, meaning a minor who has nuclear family in another European country can be sent there and have his/her asylum application processed there (rather than in the country of arrival, as required under Dublin II). Some actors in Europe also reported that there was a new phenomenon of young boys arriving in search of their fathers who had made the journey to Europe some years before.

## 2.6 FEMALE MIGRANTS

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Women usually travel with family or under the protection of men.
- There are some reports of cases of rape and sexual exploitation amongst women.
- Most women travel to Libya to join husbands that are already here.
- According to IOM Libya, in 2010 35.5% of migrants in Libya were female.

### 2.6.1 Scope

According to IOM Libya, in 2010 35.5% of migrants in Libya were women. In 2012, of the migrants that arrived in Malta on boats that left the Libyan coast, 20% were women (and 2% were girls, or female minors).

### 2.6.2 Characteristics

Fieldwork conducted in Libya and neighbouring countries suggested that, in general, female migrants tend to be more protected than other types of migrants as they tend to travel with male family members, or men from their village, and remain under the protection of men. However, this does not mean that cases of abuse are non-existent.

Cases of rape and sexual exploitation amongst women tend to be in the context of female migrants being made false promises of employment and then being forced to prostitute themselves in order to pay back smugglers. The rape of female detainees in detention centres in Libya has also been mentioned. However, as explained previously, most of this is hard to prove.<sup>15</sup> Key informant interviews in Libya with community members in areas where migrants were common also confirmed suspicions of the sexual harassment and exploitation of women.

### 2.6.3 Motivations

**Female asylum seekers** tend to be motivated by the same reasons as male asylum seekers and the fieldwork conducted for activity 1 of this project ("A Socio-Economic Assessment of Urban Refugees in Three Libyan Cities") found that amongst Ethiopian and Eritrean asylum seekers, close to half were women.

There are few pure **economic migrants** that are women, except in cases where women are trafficked to Libya under the pretence of a job that never existed. There were some examples of Nigerian women traveling to Libya alone for economic purposes, but mainly to reach Europe. In some cases, it was found that pregnant women from countries of non-concern would board boats to Europe with the hope of their child being born there and thus, gaining citizenship.



Image 8: Female African migrants, Tripoli (Altai Consulting)

Most women travel to Libya to join husbands that are already there. This was observed amongst Malian, Nigerian and Sudanese women and in these cases the husband organises the journey for them from afar, with a trusted chaperone or smuggler. In a 2011 IOM study<sup>16</sup> on Nigerian returnees

<sup>15</sup> See section VI.2.4 "Involuntary Migrants: Victims of Kidnapping, Misinformation and Trafficking" for further details.

<sup>16</sup> Résultat de l'analyse des enregistrements et profils socio-économiques des migrants nigériens retournés suite à la crise Libyenne (2011), International Organisation for Migration.

from Libya, it was found that only 3% of male Nigeriens had been unemployed in Libya whereas 60% of the females claimed to have been unemployed. This further supports the notion that most of the women had arrived to join husbands, rather than being pure economic migrants.

## 2.7 ASYLUM SEEKERS

### 2.7.1 Scope

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- UNHCR Libya estimates that there are roughly 13000 asylum seekers in Libya in 2013.
- Asylum seekers from the Horn of Africa tend to be young men between 20 and 30, with good proportions of women amongst them too.
- They live deeply underground in Libya out of their fear of detention and deportation
- The lack of humanitarian protection in Libya and poor treatment makes them want to move on to Europe.

A number of migrants arriving in Libya are asylum seekers; that is, people pushed out of their country due to generalized insecurity, war, lack of freedom and overall fear of persecution. The community of asylum seekers within our sample is composed of **Eritreans, Somalis, Sudanese from the Darfur region and Ethiopians. Palestinian, Syrian and Iraqi** asylum seekers are also present in the country and were interviewed as part of the first activity of this project.<sup>17</sup> While asylum seekers are fleeing their countries because of conflict or persecution, they also tend to be attracted to Libya because of the perception of strong employment and economic opportunities. The number of refugees registered with the UNHCR in Libya as of November 30, 2013 is 8,499 individuals and the number of asylum seekers registered with the UNHCR as of November 30, 2013 is 21,968 individuals. This data is demonstrated in Table 15 below.

Country of origin	Refugees	Asylum seekers	Total
Syria	68	15,830	15,898
Eritrea	488	2,827	3,315
Somalia	177	1,683	1,860
Iraq	2,497	595	3,092
Sudan	676	463	1,139
Other	4,593	570	5,163
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,499</b>	<b>21,968</b>	<b>30,467</b>

Table 15: Refugees and asylum seekers registered with UNHCR Libya as of Nov 30, 2013

<sup>17</sup> The first study in this tri-study project focused specifically on urban refugees in Libya. Thus, for a more comprehensive understanding of the experiences of asylum seekers in the country, please refer to "A Social and Economic Assessment of Urban Refugees in Three Libyan Cities" (Altai Consulting/UNHCR Libya, May 2013).

2.7.2 Characteristics

**Asylum seekers from the Horn of African** (Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia) tend to be young men between the ages of 20 and 30. Amongst the Eritreans and Ethiopians there are just as many women as men arriving, although the majority of Somali asylum seekers are male. They all tend to be reasonably educated, usually having completed high school.

As there is currently no framework for asylum in Libya, asylum seekers are treated as irregular migrants by authorities and militia and are often detained and deported. This causes these communities to live **deeply underground** in order to avoid such an outcome.

Asylum seekers also report experiencing ill treatment by employers and high levels of racism from Libyans. This, coupled with the fact that they cannot receive any form of humanitarian protection from the Libyan government, encourages them to **move on to Europe** and few make an attempt to settle in Libya on the long term.



Image 9: Somali asylum seeker, Tripoli (Altai Consulting)

**Arab asylum seekers**, such as Iraqis, Palestinians, and Syrians are an exception. They tend to arrive in families and are better integrated into Libyan society, given shared language and religion, which allows them to create relatively good living conditions in the country. This discourages them from wanting to move on to Europe and, unlike their counterparts from the Horn of Africa, they **tend to settle for the long term**. A number of communities of long-term Arab asylum seekers can be found in the country today. The experience of **Sudanese asylum seekers** in Libya tends to fall somewhere between that of the East Africans and the Arabs.

2.7.3 Motivations



Image 10: Somali asylum seeker, Tripoli (Altai Consulting)

As national military service is compulsory for all men and women in Eritrea from the age of 16, all **Eritreans** interviewed mentioned compulsory military conscription as their primary reason for leaving Eritrea. The lack of freedom under a dictatorship and political persecution were also mentioned as reasons for leaving. As one Eritrean man interviewed in Libya explained *“In Eritrea, there is no freedom, no work, no money, and mandatory military conscription. You have no choice but to leave.”* Most are trying to reach Europe, North America or Australia and many mentioned their desire to continue their

studies abroad. More recently, drought and the attempted coup of January 2013 have also been responsible for outflows from Eritrea (following the coup, military conscription was more seriously enforced).

**Ethiopian** migrants cited a number of reasons for leaving their country:

- The primary reason seems to be economic, indicating that not all Ethiopian nationals in Libya are asylum seekers;
- Tribal tensions were also mentioned, in the context of the persecution of Ethiopians of Somali descent and localised conflict in the Ogaden region causing some displacement and population movement;
- Political oppression was mentioned by members of the Oromo Liberation Front who felt persecuted by the national government in the Oromo region. A 32 year old Ethiopian member of the group stated, *"The (Ethiopian) Federal police was chasing me, I had no other choice than to flee [...] I fear to be shot if I go back to Ethiopia, there is no justice there;"*
- The military intervention into Somalia also creates some local pressure to join the military.

**Somali** asylum seekers primarily cited the civil war, which has been ongoing in Somalia since 1991. Many interviewees also mentioned the poor security situation, especially in the context of the Al-Shabab al Mujahidin intimidating the local population. Tribal tensions were also sometimes mentioned, as belonging to the wrong tribal group could potentially create problems for Somalis. One Somali interviewed in Libya explained, *"I left Somalia because my tribe was persecuted. There is also a war between the Al-Shabab al Mujahidin and the government so I figured nothing could be worse than staying in Somalia."*

**Sudanese** refugees from Darfur largely fled because of political pressure from the central government of Khartoum who has been fighting against a separatist movement in the region since the 1990s.

**Palestinian** asylum seekers arrived in two waves in Libya. There are those that arrived recently from Syria, as they had been living there as refugees, and those that fled from the Palestinian territories in the 90's due to the presence of Hamas in the Gaza strip (or more generally, the conflict with Israel).

**Iraqi** asylum seekers in Libya arrived either in an attempt to flee war (Iran-Iraq war of the 80's; inter-confessional war following the US invasion) or hardship resulting from economic embargos.

It should be noted that many asylum seekers interviewed also mentioned **economic reasons** for leaving their countries of origin. While it may not have been mentioned as the primary reason, it almost systematically came up as part of their decision to leave.

#### 2.7.4 The Libyan Legal Framework for Asylum

##### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Under the previous regime, Libya had not established any formal framework for the admission, protection and welfare of asylum-seekers or refugees.
- The eight-point road map created by the Transitional National Council in March 2011 demonstrated a commitment to legislate on the matter, however this is still unimplemented.
- The UNHCR in Libya carries out limited registration of asylum seekers, their reception and registration is based on a vulnerability assessment and is carried out on a needs basis.

Under the previous regime, Libya had not established any formal framework for the admission, protection and welfare of asylum-seekers or refugees. There was neither legal definition nor any law to protect their status, rights and obligations. However, this characteristic did not apply to Arab refugees, who enjoyed rights equitable to Libyans. Indeed, Gaddafi, in his search for pan-Arabism,



welcomed refugees from other Arab countries with well-established refugee status, while sub-Saharan refugees faced a complete legal vacuum<sup>18</sup>. Further, in the late 1990s, as Gaddafi re-oriented towards pan-Africanism, immigration policies from sub-Saharan Africa were often very relaxed, making Libya an attractive destination for refugees and migrants alike.

In 1969, while Libya ratified the 1967 *Amended Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa* of the *Organization of African Unity* and the *African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights*, which recognised the right to asylum; it had no national asylum system in place. For instance, the regime had authorized the UNHCR to maintain a presence in Libya from 1991 onwards, but its status was never formalised. Hence during this period the UNHCR registered requests for asylum, determined refugee status and provided humanitarian assistance, which represented a form of protection but without any guarantees for refugees, as it was not matched by the national government.



Image 11: Somali asylum seeker showing wounds from journey, Tripoli (Altai Consulting)

In the first weeks of the revolution in March 2011, the Transitional National Council (NTC) issued an eight-point roadmap entitled *A Vision of a Democratic Libya*. Point eight stated: "Immigration, residency and citizenship will be managed by government institutions, respecting the principles and rights of political asylum and public liberties"<sup>19</sup>. However, the general lack of legitimacy of transitional authorities and administrative bodies has left those measures largely unimplemented in the country. Moreover, an operating asylum framework is not perceivable in the near future as the authorities have dismissed asylum and refugee matters as a non-priority in the current period, given the pressing needs that remain in the area of security.

In 2010, in response to directives from the Libyan authorities, the UNHCR suspended most of its activities in Libya, particularly the registration of new arrivals, refugee status determination, and resettlement. Despite this, during the 2011 crisis, UNHCR did provide humanitarian assistance to those fleeing war and to IDPs. Post-revolution, UNHCR has resumed its previous agreement with the Libyan government and carries out limited registration. The reception and registration of asylum seekers by UNHCR is based on a vulnerability assessment and is carried out on a needs basis.

In 2012 alone (as of December, 2012):

- 2,695 individuals were registered with the UNHCR;
- Approximately 1000 persons of concern were released from detention centres with the help of UNHCR;
- UNHCR made medical assistance available in seven detention centres to over 3000 persons of concern.

<sup>18</sup> UNHCR – *Libya 2006 Annual Protection Report: Chapter I- Refugee Protection, and asylum policy and practice* (2007)

<sup>19</sup> *A Vision of Democratic Libya* quoted in The International Federation for Human Rights; *Libya: The Hounding of Migrants Must Stop* (2012)

### Focus box 5: The Libyan legal framework for asylum at a glance

- ❖ Libya is not a signatory of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.
- ❖ Libya is signatory to the OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa.
- ❖ 2010 Law on Illegal Migration is silent on the topic of refugees and asylum seekers.
- ❖ Law No. 6 (1987) protects asylum seekers and refugees by exempting them from any penalty for illegal entry.
- ❖ The 2011 Constitutional Declaration protects the principle of the right to claim asylum.

## 2.8 THE EXPERIENCES OF ASYLUM SEEKERS IN LIBYA

A categorisation can be made of asylum seekers in Libya, based on their levels of integration and their levels of vulnerability, with three main groups emerging: Arab refugees, less vulnerable African refugees and more vulnerable African refugees, with a variety of experiences existing for the different types of Arab refugees. The spectrum of experiences represented by these three groups is presented in Figure 10 with the proceeding sub sections describing their experiences in more detail. The data for this section was collected via a survey<sup>20</sup> conducted for the first study of this project "A Social and Economic Assessment of Urban Refugees in Three Libyan Cities."<sup>21</sup>

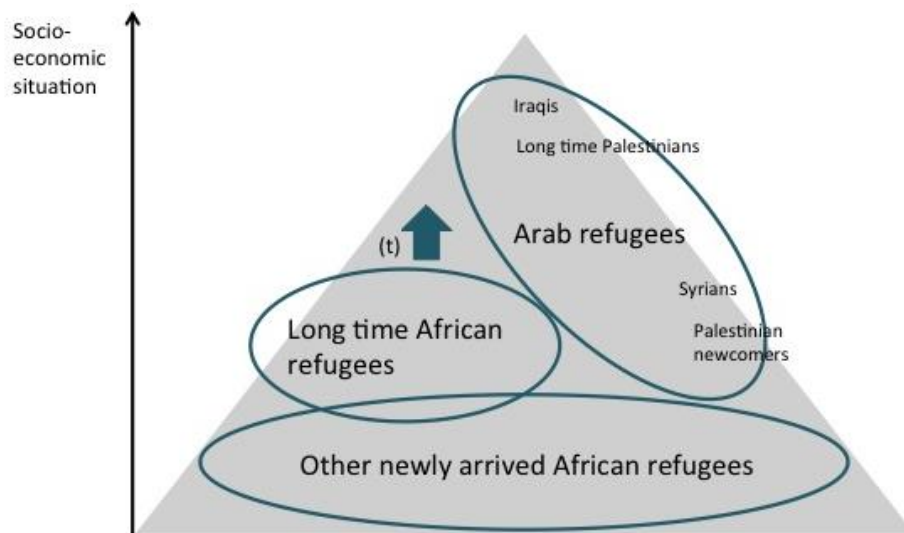


Figure 10: The spectrum of experiences for asylum seekers in Libya

<sup>20</sup> A total of 401 quantitative surveys were conducted across seven nationalities and three urban locations.

<sup>21</sup> Please refer to this study for further details.

### 2.8.1 Arab Asylum Seekers

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Arab asylum seekers are well integrated which makes them less vulnerable.
- Iraqis and longer-term Palestinians tend to be in high skilled and well paid jobs whereas Syrians and newly arrived Palestinians often do not possess the same skill level, making them less competitive on the labour market.
- Insecurity appears to be a primary issue for long time Iraqis and Palestinians.
- Arab asylum seekers are unlikely to want to move on to Europe.

Arab asylum seekers in Libya (such as the Iraqis, Palestinians, and Syrians) tend to be relatively well integrated given the fact that they share language and religion with Libyans. Moreover, Iraqis and Palestinians that came from Palestinian territories in the 90's (as opposed to the newly arrived Palestinians from Syria) are generally well educated and occupy high-skilled jobs, such as working as university professors in some cases. Some of them were also registered as refugees by the UNHCR under the former regime.

While Syrians, and Palestinian newcomers from Syria, share some of these characteristics, they tend to be in low skilled jobs and have fewer links to Libyan society. Despite this, **levels of integration** for Syrian asylum seekers remain quite good, mainly due to sympathy from Libyans for the Syrian struggle. Palestinian newcomers are less integrated, mainly due to a lack of appreciation for the concessions that were given to Palestinians under the former regime. Nonetheless, the relatively good levels of integration for Arab asylum seekers in the country makes them far less vulnerable when compared to their African counterparts.

The main problem encountered by Syrian and Palestinian newcomers is that they usually do not possess high skills or qualifications for employment, which means that they are **not particularly more attractive to employers** when compared to other low skilled economic migrants on the local employment market. **Insecurity** appears to be a primary issue for long time Iraqis and Palestinians mainly because they are in well-paid employment and enjoy a good standard of living, which can make them targets for petty theft and crime. Moreover, they have lived in Libya for a number of years so they have a point of comparison for life under the new regime and perceive a relative state of lawlessness post-revolution.

The Arab asylum seekers are **highly unlikely to want to move on to Europe**. For Syrians, and Palestinians from Syria, this is mainly because they hope to return home soon when things improve in Syria and see their time in Libya as temporary.<sup>22</sup> Iraqis and the other group of Palestinians have been in Libya for some years and are quite settled, so they have little inclination to move on to Europe. Having said that, there is a **small group of these long time Iraqis and Palestinians that now wish to leave the country**, given the relative state of lawlessness post-revolution, however most of them hope to do so through legal means, rather than crossing the Mediterranean in boats.

<sup>22</sup> This started to change in July 2013 (after fieldwork had been completed) when the UNHCR saw a huge surge in the number of Syrians on boats that left the Libyan coast for Europe.

### 2.8.1 Less Vulnerable African Asylum Seekers

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Less vulnerable African asylum seekers are long time Sudanese and Ethiopians and Eritreans.
- Their employment rates are better than the more vulnerable African asylum seekers but they still struggle with ill treatment by employers and the lack of avenues for redress.
- Insecurity is a major problem for Sudanese who are targeted by thieves and for the others who live in insecure areas such as Benghazi.

This group includes **Sudanese asylum seekers who arrived in Libya over five years ago** and who tend to be concentrated in the Al-Krimiya neighbourhood of Tripoli and **Long time Eritreans and Ethiopians living in Benghazi**.

While the length of time that this group of Sudanese asylum seekers has spent in Libya has enabled them to establish reasonable standards of living (unlike their newly arrived African counterparts who live in more precarious conditions), their self-evaluated financial status is often described as poor or average. Access to employment remains complicated but their trade skills (e.g. electricians, plumbers) contribute to their **unemployment rates being lower than other Africans**. They tend to experience reasonable levels of integration, thanks to their Arabic language skills. Long time Eritreans and Ethiopians living in Benghazi tend to possess lower skills and find themselves in low-paid jobs.

Despite better employment rates than the more vulnerable African asylum seekers, these groups do still struggle with **ill treatment by employers and clients**. They often mentioned not being paid for services rendered and feel inhibited by their lack of status from seeking recourse.



Image 12: Somali migrants in Abu Salim (left) and the streets of Abu Salim (right) (Altai Consulting)

The Sudanese community in Tripoli cites **insecurity** as a major challenge as they are in generally regular employment and live in neighbourhoods where they are relatively better off than their neighbours, making them a target for thieves. For long time Eritreans and Ethiopians from Benghazi, the issue is somewhat different as they are too poor to be targeted by thieves, however, the frequency of clashes in the city, which were non-existent before the revolution, causes them to cite insecurity as a main challenge. Moreover, the fact that the majority of them are women also increases their vulnerability in the face of such clashes and general lawlessness.

### 2.8.1 More Vulnerable African Asylum Seekers

---

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The most vulnerable of the asylum seekers in the country tend to be African newcomers.
  - They are usually young men who arrive alone; live in poor conditions, deeply underground with large numbers of other asylum seekers; have poor employment prospects and poor levels of integration.
  - They tend to be isolated, invisible, and inaccessible and thus, highly vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.
- 

The most vulnerable of the asylum seekers in the country tend to be African newcomers originating from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan (Darfur); as well as a long time Sudanese community living exclusively in the Al-Wahishi area of Benghazi.

Most are **less than 30 years of age**, if not 25-year-old men who consider themselves to be very poor. They live in basic rented places or abandoned shelters with large numbers of other asylum seekers, very often without family members as most of them **arrived in the country alone**. Their levels of integration are very low as they **live amongst themselves** on the outskirts of urban areas and on the fringes of Libyan society (for example, in the Abu Salim area of Tripoli or Al-Wahishi in Benghazi), in quite poor areas comprised mainly of other asylum seekers or migrants.

In addition, their lack of identification papers makes them particularly concerned about being apprehended by authorities and causes them to remain invisible and to **live amongst themselves deeply underground**. They rely exclusively on other asylum seekers for support and have **low levels of assistance from aid organisations**, which usually takes the form of financial support or the provision of basic goods.

These factors create a concerning situation where these communities, due to the fact that they are isolated and invisible, and consequently inaccessible by aid organisations, are highly vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Moreover, this precarious situation causes many of them to **decide to move on to Europe**, by boat, even if that was not the initial intention, which exposes them to life threatening risks.

### 3. ENTRY POINTS

---

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Libya contains 1,900 km of Mediterranean coastline and 4,375km of land borders that it shares with six other countries.
  - There are eight land border crossings in Libya, four international airports, seven maritime seaports and five petroleum seaports. The Tibesti Mountains at the Chadian border also represent an entry point for migrants coming from or through Chad.
  - It is difficult to source a comprehensive list of official entry points into Libya today.
-



Image 13: Somali asylum seeker, Tripoli (Altai Consulting)

Libya contains roughly 1900 km of Mediterranean coastline and 4,375km of land borders that it shares with six other countries: Chad, Sudan, Niger, Tunisia, Algeria and Egypt. There are eight official land border crossings in the country, four airports, seven maritime seaports and five petroleum seaports. In the east, there is a 1,430km border line shared with Egypt and Sudan; in the south there is a 1,350km border line shared with Chad and Niger; and in the west there is a 1,595km border line shared with Tunis and Algeria. Roughly 90% of the country is desert,

mainly Sahara, and 4600km of the country's land borders are within the Sahara, making it difficult to control.

While these entry points are listed below, it should be noted that under the transitional government that currently<sup>23</sup> exists in Libya there is much confusion surrounding official/unofficial entry points and active/inactive border crossings. While Gadhafi's General People's Committee Resolution 125/1373 in 2005 made the official entry points into the country very clear, it is difficult to create such a comprehensive list today. This is mainly because the transitional government has not yet officially identified entry points into the country, because there are local tribes/militia groups controlling certain borders outside of the authority of the central government, and because the conflict in the south of the country makes it difficult to judge the status of entry points into that region.

Nonetheless, the main land border crossings relevant to this study are represented in Table 16 below:

<sup>23</sup> At the time of writing; May 2013.

	Border Crossing	Location	Status	Estimated Flows
1	Ghadames/Deb Deb	Libyan/Algerian border	At the time of research, there was a military post controlled by the police at this location, which was managed by former militia that had been absorbed by the national army. The border was officially closed so no non-Libyans were given passage over the border.	100-200 individuals per month
2	Uwaynat	Libyan/Sudanese border	At the time of research, this border was officially closed but there were no officials manning the border.	300 individuals per month
3	Tumo/Ghatrun	Libyan/Nigerien border	There is a police border post at Tumo that is now closed but migrants usually by-pass it in order to go through the desert and onto Wigh or Ghatrun anyway.	3,000-4,000 individuals per month
4	Tin Alkoum	Libyan/Algerian border	At the time of research, this border was officially closed and there were border officials at the crossing ensuring that no non-Libyans crossed over.	500-1,000 individuals per month

Table 16: Libyan border crossings studied

The four other land border crossings in the country are:

1. Um Said-Salloum at the Libyan/Egyptian border;
2. Wazzin at the Tunisian/West Libyan border;
3. Ras Jdir at the Tunisian/Southwest Libyan border;
4. Sarah at the Nigerien/Libyan border (understood to be currently inactive).

The Tibesti Mountains at the Chadian border also represent an entry point for migrants coming from or through Chad. This road has no checkpoints and ends up in Ghatrun. It is quite difficult to cross and requires a smuggler usually.

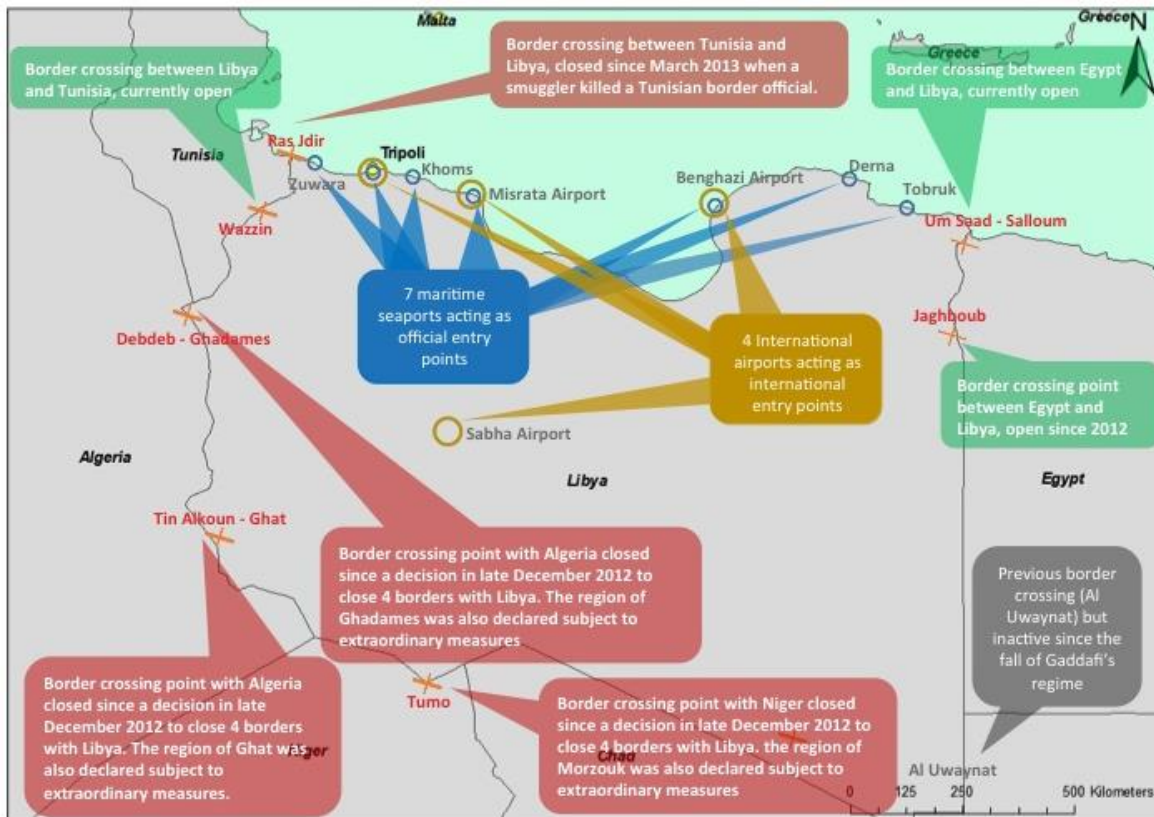
Other entry points include international airports and maritime and petroleum seaports, all of which are listed in Table 17 below.<sup>24</sup>

International Airports	Maritime Seaports	Petroleum Seaports
1 Tripoli International Airport	1 Tripoli	1 Ras Lanuf
2 Benghazi Benina Airport	2 Benghazi	2 Brega
3 Sabha International Airport	3 Misrata	3 Zuetina
4 Misrata International Airport	4 Tobruk	4 El Heriga
	5 Derna	5 Es-Sidra
	6 Zuwarah	
	7 Khoms	

Table 17: Air and sea entry points, Libya

<sup>24</sup> Based on the General People’s Committee Resolution 125/1373(2005), maritime and petroleum seaports had a border crossing point status under the Gaddafi regime.

These border crossings and entry points are represented visually in Map 10.



Map 10: Entry points into Libya

### 3.1 BORDER MANAGEMENT

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Since 2005 the border crossings between Libya, Niger, Chad and Sudan were meant to only allow passage for individuals native to those countries with strict requirements for documentation.
- After the revolution, borders were managed by local tribes.
- In December 2012, the borders between Libya, Niger, Chad and Sudan were officially closed in an attempt to increase border security.

Theoretically, since 2005, border crossings between Libya, Niger, Chad and Sudan are meant to only allow passage for individuals native to those countries. Moreover, anyone crossing over the border from these countries and into Libya is meant to be holding a passport and LYD 500 to demonstrate that they carry enough money to cover their expenses in Libya. Since 2007, a health certificate demonstrating that the migrant does not carry any contagious diseases has also been required.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Perrin, D. (2009), La Gestion des Frontières en Libye; Migration Policy Centre; CARIM-South



However, since the revolution, the borders have been managed by local tribes, which has left border management slightly disorganised and outside the control of the central government. The government of Ali Zeidan made a decision to organise these groups into brigades, under the Ministry of Defence, in an attempt to officialise their role and legitimise their presence at the national level. While this was a positive initiative, some groups still remain independent of the central government, which means that the situation is still somewhat confused and creates space for irregular passage over borders.

---

#### Case Study 8: Female Eritrean Migrant in Libya

Hayat, a 19 year old Eritrean asylum seeker, left Eritrea because she did not want to be conscripted into the army. She wanted to be able to continue her studies and find a good job to support her very poor family. She had not intended to travel to Libya when she first set out from her home and initially spent two years in a refugee camp in Sudan. However, the inability to work and build a life outside of the camps in Sudan eventually pushed her out and she continued on to Libya. She was smuggled into Libya, entering the country via the Southern border at Um Al Aranib. She reports that during the desert crossing, another migrant in the group was kidnapped by an armed group and that all the other migrants had to put their money together to pay approximately USD \$1,000 in ransom to free him. She says that the journey was very hard and she thought about abandoning it. When she arrived in Sabha, the big city of the South, she went to the hospital for treatment but was treated like "an animal". When she got to Tripoli, she was detained for two month and eventually released. She is currently pregnant, living in a *ghetto* for Eritreans and Ethiopians in Abu Salim (a neighbourhood of Tripoli), and aiming to reach Sweden where she believes there will be more opportunities for her and her baby.

---

To address this, in December 2012, the central government declared all of the borders mentioned in Table 16 (see page 95) as temporarily closed through a parliamentary decision. The decision was made in order to block the illegal movement of weapons and the irregular movement of people across the borders. The same parliamentary decision also ordered the Defence Minister to appoint a Military Governor to the southern region with executive powers to control the borders. Prime Minister Ali Zeidan also called for further discussions with the governments of Niger, Chad and Sudan on the issue of border security in the framework of a regional summit.

Moreover, the EU made a commitment to supporting Libyan authorities in developing their capacity for enhancing border security in January 2013, along with an Integrated Border Management concept and strategy. The EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Vice-president of the Commission, Catherine Ashton, said: "A civilian mission to build Libyan capacities in border security and management is not only important for Libya, but for the entire region. The EU's plans have been discussed in detail with the Libyan authorities and their ownership is key for us."<sup>26</sup>

However, despite these initiatives, at the time of fieldwork, the irregular passage of migrants over the borders was still occurring, usually with the assistance of smugglers.

---

<sup>26</sup> [http://www.eu-un.europa.eu/articles/es/article\\_13105\\_es.htm](http://www.eu-un.europa.eu/articles/es/article_13105_es.htm)

#### 4. THE LIBYAN LABOUR MARKET

##### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- While migrants are attracted to Libya for employment reasons, the competition for low-skilled jobs is immense and incidences of labour exploitation are rife, meaning that most do not make as much money as they expected.
- However, as Libya is rich with a small population there are certain labour supply needs that migrants help to fill.

As mentioned previously, migrants are often attracted to Libya because of the job opportunities that exist in the country. As Libya is a resource rich country with a high GDP per capita but a small population, certain industries suffer from a lack of labour supply, which has increased demand for foreign labour in the form of migrants. The Libyan labour market has always employed foreign labour, including regular migrants in a variety of industries; according to the 2006 population census, 11.34% of the foreign labour force in Libya was in economically related jobs.<sup>27</sup>

Today, most irregular economic migrants think that they will work for one to two years in Libya and then return with enough money to start their own business at home or build a house. However, they do not realise that for low-skilled jobs the competition is immense given the large number of irregular economic migrants that make their way to Libya. Moreover, the lack of a legal framework opens them up to exploitation in the form of low salaries, or in some cases, a complete lack of payment, in the face of which they have no avenues for redress. All this means that most of them are not able to save as much money as they initially anticipated and end up only earning enough to maintain themselves in Libya.



Image 14: An African migrant flogs his wares at a market in Tripoli (Altai Consulting)

In terms of the composition of irregular migrants in the Libyan labour market, the main labour market gaps that they are fulfilling are as follows:

**Daily labour:** This refers to migrants who propose their services on a daily basis in low-skilled jobs. This usually occurs at roundabouts, where migrants will wait and demonstrate to passing cars that they have services to offer and individuals that require services will stop and pick them up. This happens all over the country and was even observed in Malta. This tends to be common amongst irregular economic migrants.

A 2011 IOM study<sup>28</sup> on Nigerien male migrants returning from Libya found that 41% of them had been working in the construction sector in Libya (painting, tiling) and 24% of them had been working in the agricultural sector. Observations in the field in Libya suggest that in fact most of

<sup>27</sup> Sofrani, O.D. and Jwan, H.S. (2008) *International Migration to Libya*: International Organization for Migration.

<sup>28</sup> *Résultat de l'analyse des enregistrements et profils socio-économiques des migrants nigériens retournés suite à la crise Libyenne (2011)*, International Organisation for Migration, Niamey.

them are not in full-time employment but rather work on demand, on a daily basis, when work becomes available in these sectors.

The job can be for a few hours, for an entire day, or for a few weeks depending on the needs of the 'contractor'. Migrants will often wait at roundabouts with tools as a way to demonstrate what skills they are able to propose. Those who do not don any tools portray the image that they are available for any non-skilled jobs, such as destroying walls, cleaning construction sites, moving, and so forth.

The most common jobs proposed to migrants that are picked up at roundabouts are plumbing, painting, construction work, tiling, mechanical work and blacksmithing.

**Petrol Station Staff:** It is common for petrol station staff in Libya to be foreign workers who pump the petrol, work the till, and wash cars. This is typically a job for Egyptian migrants, because of their Arabic language skills, although Nigerien and West African migrants often work in the car washes within the petrol stations.

A number of migrants also mentioned that when they were in a situation of bonded labour, in order to repay the smuggler that brought them to Libya, they were taken to car washes and worked there for a number of months where they were also housed and fed within the petrol station.

**Agricultural Work:** Migrant labour is also typically found on farms across the country and on the outskirts of Tripoli. This is common amongst all types of economic migrants, especially at the time of harvest when there are greater labour needs. In general, however, this type of work is common amongst seasonal Sudanese and Nigerien migrants.

At times, this type of work is contracted on a monthly basis, especially when the soil needs tilling and the farm needs to be maintained. During harvest time, it is common to be contracted on a daily

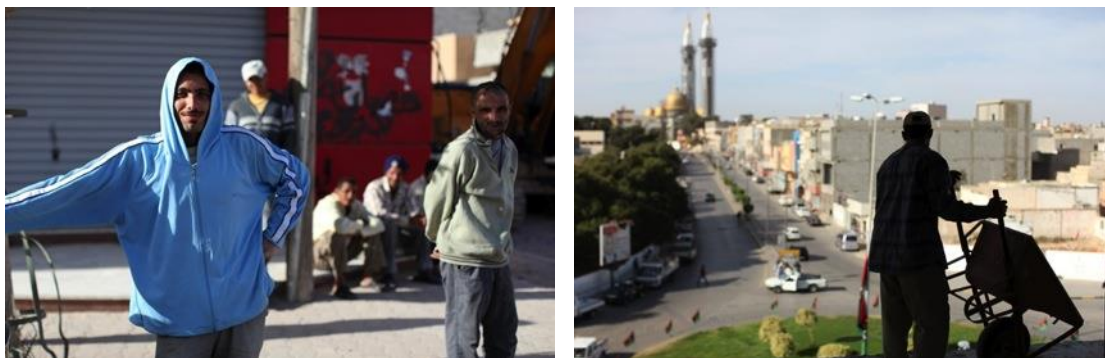


Image 15: Egyptian migrants waiting for work in Fashloum (left) and working on a construction site (right) in Tripoli (Altai)

basis.

**Domestic Work:** It is also common for migrants to be contracted as domestic workers within homes in Libya. This is often in the form of cleaners, which is common amongst female migrants, or doormen, which is common amongst male migrants. This type of work is normally ongoing and in the case of doormen can include accommodation on residence. Most migrants in this type of a set up manage to create a stable situation in Libya, which encourages them to stay for longer periods of time.

**Supermarket Staff:** It is common for irregular economic migrants to work in supermarkets as cleaners, to assist in stacking shelves, and to handle the goods. Some regular economic migrants own their own grocery stores or green groceries, particularly in the case of Egyptians.

**Service Providers:** Some long-term regular economic migrants have their own stores where they offer services such as tailoring or hairdressing. As this requires a bit of capital to begin with, the more irregular and less established typically hire a space in a souk or bazaar where they sell goods that they themselves have created, such as baskets, knitwear, or home-made toys.

**Garbage Collectors:** It is common for both regular and irregular migrants to work as garbage collectors in Libya. In the case of irregular migrants, if they are contracted for this type of work, the municipal council that they are employed by will regularise their stay for them at the local level. They are usually contracted on a monthly basis, but sometimes this can be extended for longer periods of time. Migrants in this position also find themselves in a relatively stable set up and are prone to stay for longer periods of time. For example, one Chadian migrant in Sabratha explained, *"I work as a garbage collector and I am well treated by my employer and have a good relationship with him. I have a monthly contract and I am paid LYD150/month (approx. USD \$120)."*

## 5. QUANTIFYING THE FLOWS OF MIGRANTS IN LIBYA

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A number of estimates have been made over the last seven years of the flow of migrants into Libya but they are largely inconsistent with one another, questioning their reliability.
- The methodology starts with a pre-revolution estimate of the number of migrants and then subtracts outflows and adds inflows.
- Inflows are estimated by accounting for flows over all borders and outflows are estimated by combining flows to Europe, outflows at the time of the revolution, assisted voluntary returns through IOM, and other outflows (forced deportation, unassisted voluntary returns).

Various studies conducted on the topic in the past have made attempts to size the number of migrants in Libya, as well as the inflows and outflows to and from Libya. This section attempts to review available data in light of any variations that may have occurred in usual flows over the last five years. In the absence of any official data or efforts to monitor these flows in a steady manner, this section will also recommend methodologies to improve estimates in the future.

### 5.1 AVAILABLE DATA

The various data sets collected through secondary research brought together a number of estimates that had been made by different organisations over the last seven years. The process revealed that these estimates encompassed a broad range of figures with little consistency. Many reports tend to quote other reports and while some do interview local authorities, these authorities also lack rigorously obtained figures, especially when it comes to irregular migrants.

The only data sets that are reliable are those that relate to arrivals in Europe, as well those that relate to Assisted Voluntary Return programs and Assisted Voluntary Return and Re integration programs managed by IOM in various countries. These data sets are reliable because statistics are actively maintained in both instances.

The spectrum of available data, with sources cited, is presented below in Table 18. The numerous gaps in the table demonstrate the complete lack of certain types of data.

		2006	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013 (S1)	Sources
# of migrants in Libya	Total number		2,500,000					A Humanitarian Response to the Libyan Crisis, IOM
	Regular Migrants	349,040	359,540					ICMPD 2010 (quoting IOM)
	Irregular Migrants		1,500,000					ICMPD 2010 (intvs with authorities, June 2009)
	Total Inflows to Libya						TBD	
Inflows	Inflows Overland	96,000	45,500					ICMPD 2010 (intvs with authorities, June 2009)
	Through Gatroun	76,800					78,000	ICMPD 2010 & Altai estimates from border intvs
	Through Kufra						3,600	Altai estimates from intvs in the Kufra region
	Other entry points	19,200						ICMPD 2010 (from intvs with authorities, June 2009)
	Airports							
	Total Outflows from Libya							
Outflows	to Europe	23,796	4,422	487	25237 (1)	6,924	2,619	UNHCR Malta Factsheet 2011, Italian Mol
	AVR through IOM	84	1,000	1,343	1,892	4,929	598	IOM Tripoli, Q1-Q2 2013
	Other returns							
Outflows: Libyan Crisis	Assisted by UNHCR/IOM				796,915			A Humanitarian Response to the Libyan Crisis, IOM
	Euro Citizens assisted by EU				5,800			Kristalina Georgieva, EC Commissioner
	Self Returned							

(1) 51,658 arrivals by boat to Lampedusa of which 28,000 Tunisians (mainly departing from Tunisia)

- Estimates of total number of migrants
- Census data on total number of migrants
- Available data on outflows of migrants
- Estimates on inflows of migrants
- Most important gaps in data

Table 18: Sizing the number of migrants in Libya: estimates and gaps in data

## 5.2 THE BODY OF MIGRANTS IN LIBYA

In order to size the number of migrants in Libya in 2013, a starting point was required, such as a previous estimate of this number, from which adjustments could be made to estimate the present day number. A number of estimates were considered for this exercise.

**IOM made an estimate of the size of the migrant community before the 2011 Libyan crisis**, and it was sized at 2.5 million migrants overall, including both regular and irregular migrants.<sup>29</sup> It is, itself, an estimate as there are no official sources or methods to size the number of irregular migrants in Libya and the number of regular migrants has not been updated since the Libyan census of 2009.

Moreover, while there are **various official estimates of the number of regular migrants**, there is great variation amongst them. For example, the Libyan census of 2006 (updated 2009) sized the community of regular migrants in Libya at 359,540 people; however, in 2010 the World Bank estimated the figure to be 682,000 people.

The **ICMPD attempted to size the number of irregular migrants in Libya** for their 2010 study<sup>30</sup> through interviews with Libyan authorities, and estimated it at somewhere between 1 and 2 million. The Egyptian Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) also claims that the number of Egyptians (the largest migrant community in Libya) in the country was 1.5 million in 2010, including both regular and irregular migrants.

<sup>29</sup> Taken from *The humanitarian response to the Libyan crisis* (2011), International Organisation for Migration. Also quoted in the CARIM country profile for Libya.

<sup>30</sup> *A Comprehensive Survey of Migration Flows and Institutional Capabilities in Libya (2010)*, International Centre for Migration Policy Development

The combination of all of the above-mentioned estimates leads one to believe that the number of migrants in the country is likely to be superior to two million individuals and the IOM estimate was thus taken as a starting point for the exercise.

### 5.3 INFLOWS INTO LIBYA

Most estimates of the inflows of migrants into Libya are sourced from the work of other researchers and represent rough estimates, in the **absence of any major attempts to officially estimate these flows** (highlighted in yellow in Table 18).

According to ICMPD,<sup>31</sup> roughly 45,000 to 100,000 migrants entered Libya in 2006. Interviews conducted with different actors in the South of Libya during the fieldwork of this study led to an estimate of 3,000-4,000 migrants entering Ghatrun per month, 500-1,000 migrants entering via Ghadames per month, 200 entering via Ghat, and 300 entering via Kufra. Combining these estimates bring us to a total of 48,000-66,000 migrants per year, which is in line with the **ICMPD quoted estimate**.

However, it should be noted that the large margin of error, the inexistence of empirical observations, and the fact other entry points sometimes provide contradictory figures, **limits the reliability of these estimates**. For example, the Governor of Kufra stated in 2004 that there were 10,000-12,000 migrants passing through Kufra every month<sup>32</sup> yet interviews with authorities during the fieldwork of this project in 2013 indicated a current figure closer to 300 migrants per month. While the clashes in Kufra have led to a decrease in flows in this area and over this border, the large discrepancy between 2004 and 2013 would surely need to be due to more than just the clashes, thereby further demonstrating the limitations in using only key informant interviews and secondary research to size these flows and the need to bring together a number of sources to be cross-checked against local observations.

It is also important to note that these estimates do not include **movements across the Egyptian border**, which are more complex to monitor due to the nature of the movements (cross border strategies for a number of legal Egyptian workers) and the **recent inflows of Syrian refugees** that has increased these flows significantly (tens of thousands) over a short period of time. For these reasons, estimating these particular flows would require a specific focus.

### 5.4 OUTFLOWS FROM LIBYA

#### 5.4.1 Outflows from Libya to Europe

The figures on outflows from Libya to Europe are the most reliable as Italy and Malta maintain statistics on boat arrivals. Such arrivals are also easier to monitor given the fewer entry points and the great control of these sea borders (highlighted in cyan in Table 18). The figures demonstrate that these flows follow irregular patterns, most likely mirroring changes in policy and political events. For example, numbers dropped in 2010, at the time of the repatriation agreement between Italy and Libya, and there was a peak in 2011, at the time of the Arab Spring (with flows from both Libya and Tunisia increasing, particularly in Italy).

<sup>31</sup> "Between 65,000 and 120,000 sub-Saharan Africans enter the Maghreb (Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, and Libya) every year, of which 70 to 80% are believed to migrate through Libya and 20 to 30% through Algeria and Morocco." De Haas (2006) *Trans-Saharan Migration to North Africa and the EU: Historical Roots and Current Trends*, <http://www.migrationinformation.org/feature/display.cfm?ID=484> - quoted by *A Comprehensive Survey of Migration Flows and Institutional Capabilities in Libya (2010)*, International Centre for Migration Policy Development

<sup>32</sup> Hamood, S. (2006), *African transit migration through Libya to Europe: the human cost, Forced migration and Refugee Studies*, The American University in Cairo

In 2012, 6,924 migrants arrived in Malta and Lampedusa combined. While in Malta, almost all boat arrivals are from Libya, in Lampedusa there are a number of flows coming from different countries. In 2011 specifically, a large portion of the migrants arriving in Lampedusa came on boats from Tunisia (28,000 out of 51,658). Since then, flows have normalized and it is estimated that roughly 60% of arrivals at Lampedusa come from Libya. This is estimated by making a breakdown according to the country of origin of arrivals.

Another limitation is the fact that the numbers of migrants departing Libya does not always equal the numbers of migrants arriving in Europe as there are a proportion of boats that do not survive the trip (deaths at sea). Naturally, this is a figure that is hard to obtain, however, in the first semester of 2011 UNHCR estimated that there were 1,500 deaths at sea between Tunisia/Libya and Malta/Lampedusa. The network 'UNITED for Intercultural Action' estimates that there have been 5,500 deaths at sea, in this particular area, since 2003<sup>33</sup>.

#### 5.4.2 Impact of the Libyan Revolution

Another traceable outflow is the number of people who fled the country during the Libyan revolution in 2011, specifically those who were evacuated by IOM, UNHCR and other NGOs. IOM has maintained data on these assisted migrants and sizes the outflow at 800,000.<sup>34</sup> Since then outflows have stabilized.

#### 5.4.3 Assisted Voluntary Returns

Another regular outflow of migrants from Libya is the flow of returnees who are assisted by IOM through their AVR programs. This represents a regular outflow, as opposed to the outflows at the time of the revolution, which represented a unique case. There are also reliable figures to quantify this outflow as IOM keeps data on the numbers of migrants that they assist. In 2012, 4,929 migrants left Libya through IOM's AVR Program and interviews with IOM staff in Libya revealed that IOM expects this number to continue increasing in 2013.

#### 5.4.4 Other Outflows

Within this category there are forced returns that are not documented and difficult to estimate, as well as unassisted voluntary returns (migrants who return home on their own, using the same smuggling routes). There have been no attempts to track these flows, although large numbers are thought to pass through transit countries such as Niger, according to local sources in those countries, which could be indicative of flows.

### 5.5 OVERALL ESTIMATE

To come to an estimate of the total number of migrants in Libya today, if we begin with IOM's figure of 2.5 million migrants in Libya before the 2011 revolution (which emerges as the most reliable estimate available) and subtract the outflow of migrants as a result of the revolution (800,000) that would bring us to a total figure of 1.7 million migrants at the end of 2011.

Since then, inflows from sub-Saharan Africa are estimated at 48,000 to 66,000 per year (up to 100,000 over 18 months) and it seems reasonable to estimate that another 80,000 to 100,000 migrants arrived from Egypt and Tunisia over the same 18-month period (including the large influx of Syrian refugees).

<sup>33</sup> Atlas des Migrants en Europe – Armand Collin, p.136 Map based on Data Collected by UNITED

<sup>34</sup> *The humanitarian response to the Libyan crisis* (2011), International Organisation for Migration

Simultaneously, recorded outflows, which combine migration at sea and AVR's through IOM, add up to 12,000 in 2012. Other outflows, such as migrants who return home unassisted, are unknown and unrecorded.

On this basis we can estimate that the total number of migrants in Libya is between 1.8 and 1.9 million (as of June 2013) with an increase of 50,000 to 100,000 migrants per year to be expected in the current context.

## 5.6 MOVING FORWARD: EMPIRICAL METHODOLOGY

Based on the review of existing data and observations and interviews conducted by Altai field teams, as described above, it becomes apparent that an attempt to size these flows via a more empirical methodology would be worthwhile for obtaining a more accurate estimation of the number of migrants and flows into and out of Libya.

### 5.6.1 Methodology for Estimating Inflows

Such a methodology would require a screening exercise at a number of entry points into the country and strong collaboration between Libyan authorities at different levels. A field-based screening exercise could be conducted over a period of 6-12 months through a network of individuals charged with screening flows at the cities closest to each border crossing or close to the border crossings themselves (ideally Morzouk, Ghat or Tobrouk). These local 'fixers' would monitor the number of trucks carrying migrants that cross the borders per week for a period of time.

Ideally, other partners such as local NGOs, detention centre staff and DCIM staff would also report their estimates on flows on a weekly basis, to add another layer of screening. They would report the number of migrants entering detention centres over the same period, and the number of migrants entering migrants communities (or ghettos) in urban centres. Smugglers could also be interviewed regularly to gauge their impressions on flows and the changes in flows.

The data coming from these various sources would be collected on a regular basis and then triangulated to come up with an estimate of the inflows during this period of time. Repeating the exercise over a period of time would allow variations in flows and the seasonality of movements to also be detected.

### 5.6.2 Methodology for Estimating the Total Number of Migrants

In addition to the data on flows, a stronger estimate of the current number of migrants is also required. This could be achieved via a mapping exercise undertaken in the main migrant communities in urban centres in Libya, which would be much like an informal small-scale 'census.' This would require the mobilisation of a large team of researchers who have good access to local migrant communities who would interview community leaders in these communities, as well as migrants at roundabouts (waiting for work) and in detention centres. The objective of such an exercise would be to capture a picture of the total migrant population at a specific moment in time.

In all of these cases (measuring the inflows, outflows and current number of irregular migrants), it would be challenging for officials or government authorities to undertake the exercise as these migrants communities are likely to be avoiding authorities, given the irregular nature of their presence, and averse to being interviewed by them. Ideally, the exercise would be carried out by a team of local researchers, who are either well integrated, or can easily integrate into migrant communities, and they would be trained in an ad-hoc methodological framework. Their work would be monitored regularly and rigorously and the various figures obtained would be cross-checked. The



exercise would then be repeated a number of times throughout the year to gain a sense of the seasonality of the flows.

This exercise would have to be done with the approval of the Libyan authorities and include official data available, including data from main border crossing points, ports and airports, but the field data collection would be done with a certain degree of independence.

Such an exercise would lead to a sizing of the numbers of migrants entering and exiting the country and thus, would allow an understanding of the scale of policies required to address the numerous problems faced by migrants on their way to Libya and in the country.

## 6. HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- As the government of Libya currently maintains no asylum process, all migrants that enter the country without official authorisation are treated as irregular migrants and detained for an indefinite period of time with no opportunity to contest their detention.

As a number of previous reports on the topic have dealt with human rights abuses in Libya in great detail, this section does not attempt to repeat this process and instead briefly summarises the main issues. For further information on human rights abuses, please refer to *A Comprehensive Survey of Migration Flows and Institutional Capabilities in Libya* by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and *Libya: The Hounding of Migrants Must Stop* by the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), to name a few.

### 6.1 DETENTION AND DETAINMENT

As the government of Libya currently maintains no asylum process, all migrants that enter the country without official authorisation are treated as irregular migrants and detained.

In the aftermath of the Libyan revolution, former government-controlled migrant detention centres fell into the hands of militia groups and military councils who took them over. Temporary centres were also established by independent militia groups in the country, with their motivations for doing so remaining unclear.<sup>35</sup>

In an attempt to absorb these militia groups and military councils into the government, the Department for Combating Illegal Migration (DCIM) was established within the Ministry of Interior in May 2012. It is mandated to oversee detention centres in the country and at the time of research there were 19 detention centres in Libya under its authority (outlined in Table 19). However, there are still detention centres in the country that remain outside of the control of the DCIM that are not reflected in this table.

<sup>35</sup> It is rumoured that independent militia groups open detention centres in order to create the market for their smuggling endeavours, however this remains speculative at best.

	Name	Location	Last Reported Population (UNHCR, 09/05/2013)
1	Toweisha	Tripoli	716
2	Sabha	South	1600
3	Awbari	South	0
4	Jofra	South	37
5	Aburshada	Gharyan	237
6	Al Hamra	Gharyan	70
7	Surman	Surman	131
8	Sabrahta	Sabrahta	140
9	Al Karareem	Misrata	70
10	Khums Detention Centre	Khums	259
11	Ajdabia	Ajdabiya	122
12	Kufra	Kufra	200
13	Brak Alshati	South	448
14	Al Qatroun	South	480
15	Algwa'a	Garaboli	unknown
16	Ain Zara	Tripoli	unknown
17	Dirj	Ghadames	100
18	Ghat	Ghat	0
19	Zeliten	Zeliten	150

Table 19: List of detention centres under DCIM as of 09/05/2013

Migrants reported that when they are detained they are not told how long their detention will last nor are they given an opportunity to contest their detainment, meaning their right to habeas corpus, as safeguarded by the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, is ignored. The human rights protections for all persons charged with criminal offences include the right to be presumed innocent; the right to a hearing with due guarantees and within a reasonable time, by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal; and the right to have a sentence reviewed by an appellate tribunal.<sup>36</sup>

Many migrants reported contacting their embassies for assistance in this regard and ambassadors interviewed explained that they can sometimes manage to have migrants released, usually if they are vulnerable, on the premise that they will return home. Some reported being detained for up to 10 months.

IOM Libya is active in supporting the Libyan Government in enhancing the capacity of protecting vulnerable migrants in the centers, through the assessment and needs analysis of the centers; the drafting of standard operational procedures for the daily operation of the centers; and the installation of an identification and case management system, with biometric features in at least six migrant processing centers.

## 6.2 DETAINMENT OF ASYLUM SEEKERS

The lack of a system for asylum in Libya means that asylum seekers are treated in the same way as irregular migrants and also face arbitrary detention. There is no means by which they can apply to have their claim for asylum assessed and therefore regularise themselves. An Ethiopian migrant interviewed in Libya, who fled Ethiopia because of his ties with the Oromo Liberation Front explained that he had been in detention in Benghazi for some months and did not know how to find a way out. He said, *"If I could be given refugee status in Libya, I would stay, but if not, I'll find a way to go somewhere where I can be protected."*

<sup>36</sup> "Human Rights, Terrorism, and Counter-Terrorism" Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Fact Sheet No. 32; Article 11 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

As these asylum seekers fled their homeland due to persecution, returning home is not an option for them, nor is it possible for them to contact their embassies for assistance, so they remain in detention with no release in sight.

### 6.3 DETAINMENT OF VULNERABLE MIGRANTS

Vulnerable migrants, including women, children and the infirm have traditionally been detained with other migrants with no special provision made for their particular vulnerabilities. While at the time of writing some detention centres had been gender segregated, this was not the general case. Moreover, adequate living arrangements are not made for these migrants meaning that there is a lack of healthcare and a lack of schooling for unaccompanied minors.



Image 16: Somali asylum seeker, Tripoli (Altai Consulting)



# OUTFLOWS TO EUROPE AND RETURNS HOME

METHODOLOGY



MAIN ROUTES OF TRAVEL AND THE JOURNEY TO LIBYA



INFLOWS AND DYNAMICS IN LIBYA



OUTFLOWS TO EUROPE AND RETURNS HOME



CHANGES SINCE THE REVOLUTION



THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE JOURNEY



RECOMMENDATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES



# VII. OUTFLOWS TO EUROPE AND RETURNS HOME

## 1. ONWARD JOURNEY FROM LIBYA TO EUROPE

Migration to Europe, often in dangerous and risky ways, is not a new phenomenon. The search for safety, in the face of persecution and conflict, or the search for economic security, has pushed migrants to Europe for decades.

Migration by sea has involved a number of routes, including from West Africa to the Canary Islands in Spain; across the straight of Gibraltar to Spain's southern coast; from Africa and Asia across the Aegean Sea into Greece; and from North Africa to Italy and Malta. The routes to Italy and Malta involve crossing the Sicilian Channel from Libya, Egypt, Tunisia, or Morocco.

Although the Arab Spring in 2011 led to an increase in departures from other North African countries, since the turn of the century, Libya has been the major departure point for sea journeys to Italy (Lampedusa specifically) and Malta and accordingly, routes into the country, across the Sahara, and out of the country, across the Sicilian channel, have flourished.<sup>37</sup>



Image 17: Boat of migrants arriving at Lampedusa, April 2011 (Giorgos Moutafis)

Both Malta and Lampedusa are very small islands that are very much challenged by the numbers that arrive annually, not only financially but also physically. Often boats arrive successively, meaning that hundreds of migrants can arrive in a matter of days, generating further logistical pressure. Beyond these pressures there is also the more long-term question of what to do with the migrants, in terms of integration but especially since it is a mixed migration flow and those that do not qualify for protection need to be sent home.

### 1.1 PROFILES OF MIGRANTS TRAVELING TO EUROPE

While many of the migrants who were escaping persecution or insecurity declared having made their decisions to leave quite hurriedly with little thought about a specific destination, some profiles left their country with a specific intention to reach Europe, while others were aiming for Libya and did attempt to settle there before being pushed out for various reasons.

<sup>37</sup> For a visual representation of the routes from the Libyan coast to Europe, please refer to Map 7: Routes from Libya to Europe

### Profile 1: No final destination identified

For the first group, predominately asylum seekers who left hurriedly to escape a specific threat, the imperative was to leave the area where the threat persisted and a final destination was not necessarily selected, nor was much thought or effort put into planning the journey. For this group, it was not uncommon to have changed one's decision in relation to final destination at a number of points along the journey and to have experimented with a number of possibilities along the way.

*"I left Somalia because the Al Shabab came looking for me. I didn't have a destination in mind, I just had to leave; every country was an option. First I thought I would stay in Kenya but when I got there I saw that there were no jobs. I called my Mum and she sent me some money and after 15 days I left. I was aiming to get to Libya and thought that I would stay there but Libya was too hard. There was no refugee status, no UNHCR to protect you, no family, no one to help you. I tried to find the UNHCR there but found nothing. So once I got there I knew I would have to move on to Europe. I just stayed long enough to make enough money to be able to get to Europe."*

Somali refugee, Malta, 19 years of age.

For most of the migrants in this group that did end up in Europe, the implication is that they did not find favourable conditions in other locations (such as Libya or other countries of transit; many asylum seekers from the horn of Africa had tried to settle in Sudan too but eventually moved on) and so kept moving. Usually, it is ill treatment/racism, lack of rights, and unfavourable economic conditions that forces them to move on. They also often hear about Europe from the other migrants in Libya, once they arrive, or from smugglers, and it is often represented as a place where there is a lot of work and opportunity, encouraging them to move on.

### Profile 2: Specific intention to reach Europe

For those who left their home countries with a specific intention to reach Europe, the profiles were more mixed:

- Some of them were escaping persecution and conflict and looked to Europe as a **haven of safety**. When migrants were asked what they thought they would find in Europe that they could not find in Libya, asylum seekers were likely to say "protection, people to help me;"
- Others left their countries in search of more favourable **economic conditions** and in an attempt to improve their economic position and saw Europe as the most ideal place to achieve this;
- Those that originated from non-Muslim and non-Arabic speaking countries had a tendency to aim for Europe because they felt that they would be **better received there than in Libya or Sudan**, given shared language and religion. It should be noted, however, that many of them did indicate that had they found better conditions in Libya, they would have remained there;
- A relatively newer phenomenon of migrants making their way to Europe **to join family members** that had made the same journey some years prior, also emerged. While this

profile existed in a relatively smaller group of migrants it does look like it is on the rise. Among the **unaccompanied minors** making the journey to Europe, there was also some indication of some of them doing so in order to find fathers or brothers who had travelled to Europe some years prior.

### Profile 3: Initial attempts to settle in Libya before moving on to Europe

Amongst those who had attempted to settle in Libya, many reported being treated very poorly and being pushed out as a result. Racism on the part of Libyans, arbitrary arrest by militia and authorities, detention for unspecified periods of time and in grave conditions, and theft, robbery and rape (when concerning women) were all mentioned in this context. One Somali asylum seeker in Malta said, *"Libyans; sometimes they help you, sometimes they don't, sometimes they want to kill you."*

Moreover, the revolution, and resulting change in government in Libya caused some migrants who had been settled in the country for a number of years prior to 2011, and who had been working quite happily, to change their minds and decide to move on post-revolution. They generally recounted that their situation in Libya deteriorated after the revolution due to a decline in job opportunities and an emerging sense of lawlessness and chaos. They did not want to return home, so they attempted the journey to Europe. This was most common amongst West Africans and during the revolution their numbers increased in boats headed to Europe, but it has somewhat stabilised now. Some said *"I lived and worked in Libya for 5 years and life was ok there. I would have stayed if the revolution had not happened."* Rumours of sub-Saharan Africans having fought for Gadhafi also contributed to their poor treatment in Libya and their consequent exit out of the country.

For the more classic economic migrants, some felt that they were not earning enough money in Libya and so moved on to Europe to try their luck there, even if they had jobs in Libya.

## 1.2 THE SEA VOYAGE

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Journeys from Libya to Europe take 2-6 days but can be as long as 10 days if migrants find themselves lost at sea.
- Smugglers organise the journey and equipment, and provide food and water, which is often inadequate.
- The journey costs between USD \$500-\$2,000.

The boat voyage to Europe, from Libya, is always undertaken through a smuggler who organises all aspects of the journey. The boat, usually a small rubber dinghy; basic navigational equipment; limited supplies of food and water; and a "captain" and "engineer" are provided by the smuggler.

**Smugglers:** Most migrants interviewed reported that it was not difficult to find a smuggler as information about smugglers spread quite rapidly amongst the migrant community in Libya. Some migrants also reported that smugglers would come to their place of residence (especially to locations where large numbers of migrants lived together in abandoned places) and advertise their services. Anecdotal stories from the field indicated that smugglers for journeys to Europe were sometimes Libyan but could also be from other African nations. The data suggests that smugglers organise a number of boat departures around the same time, when weather conditions are favourable, sometimes sending off a number of boats in one night. For example, at the time of

fieldwork, one boat arrived in Malta and three boats arrived in Lampedusa on the same weekend, after months of no arrivals and after a few days of calm weather.

*"My boss in Libya put me on a boat, I didn't even know I was going to Europe. After the first month of work, when he didn't pay me, I asked him for my salary and he pulled a gun on me so I didn't ask again. He fed us and gave us a place to sleep, so I just kept working and kept my mouth shut. Then after 7 months, one night, he put us all into the car and drove us to a port. There, we were handed over to a smuggler that put us on the boat. The smuggler didn't ask us for money so we assumed that our boss had paid him."*

Beninese migrant interviewed in Malta.

**Cost of journey:** The cost of the journey to Europe ranges from USD \$500 to \$2000. While some migrants quite literally transited through Libya and only stayed for a short period of time in order to board a boat to Europe, many stayed in Libya long enough to make the required amount of money for the journey. This ranged from six months to a year, on average. Some stayed longer than others because they had to pay off the smuggler for the journey from their home country to Libya before they could start accumulating money for the onward journey to Europe.

*"The smuggler provided water, fuel and food. We got a can of water and a croissant each but once we took off the croissants were soaked by the seawater so we couldn't eat them and the water ran out on the first day. I drunk sea water to survive; the others vomited when they drank it but I was ok."*

Nigerian migrant awaiting deportation, Malta

Some migrants reported that their employers in Libya did not pay them a salary but instead provided room and board for the time that they were in employment and then paid the smuggler directly for their journey to Europe. In some cases, this was unbeknown to the migrant himself who continued working without salary before one day being transported to the port of departure and shuffled onto a boat.

**Conditions of Travel:** The journey from the Libyan coast to Malta or Lampedusa usually takes anywhere between two to six days but sometimes can take up to 10 days if the boat ends up drifting at sea. This can be a common occurrence given the poor navigational equipment that is provided by the smugglers. One Nigerian migrant interviewed in Malta explained, *"At sea we looked for other boats and planes to know where to go and watched the sun to know our direction."*

Usually, the smuggler provides food, water and fuel. Migrants reported being given a can of water and a biscuit or croissant each for the entire journey. They usually have very little information about the journey and smugglers tell them that they should reach Europe within four hours, so they do not take more food and water with them. Many end up drinking seawater as an alternative, which makes them very sick. There are a large number of casualties at sea and of those that survive, most are quite sick once they arrive.



### 1.3 DEPARTURE POINTS

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Departures occur from the stretch of coast between Tripoli and Zuwara.
- UNHCR Libya has records of 8000 people departing from Libya for Europe in 2012

#### Focus box 6: The Dublin II Regulation

The Dublin II regulation is an EU law that was adopted in 2003 and which determines the EU member state that is responsible for examining an application for asylum within the union. The regulation maintains that the country that an asylum seeker first arrives in is responsible for processing its application and prevents migrants from moving on to other European countries to apply for asylum there.

While reports from the field indicated that Sabratha used to be a main departure point for migrants traveling to Europe by boat, this was no longer the case at the time of research. Field teams that visited the area had reports from both migrants and key informants that numbers of boats departing Sabratha had decreased and mainly due to an apparent increase in security and monitoring of the area. The stretch of coast between Tripoli and Zuwara is the area where most boats are departing today with the exact location being determined by smugglers after an assessment of security conditions.

Usually smugglers tell the migrants to come to a particular location, close to the port, days earlier where they are kept in closed and hidden buildings in order to wait for the right weather conditions to depart. This can sometimes take up to weeks and is sometimes also caused by logistical issues. They are kept with little food or water meaning that the migrants are often already in bad health once they start the journey. One Nigerian migrant in Malta explained, *"They only gave us food from time to time; they would give us a tomato or an onion to bite into. Once we received a can of tuna."*

*"The smuggler told us to come to the port and we were supposed to leave immediately but ended up waiting for 3 weeks because the dinghy had a hole in it."*

Nigerian migrant interviewed in Malta

In close cooperation with their counterparts in Italy and Malta, since 2012 UNHCR Libya has been trying to keep track of boat departures from the Libyan coast and monitors and records rescue at sea operations. The figures for 2012 are represented in Table 20 below.

	# Boats	# People
Boat departures	100	8,000
Number of women		524
Number of children		125
Recorded deaths at sea		137
Rescues at sea - Maltese coast guards	18	1,639
Rescues at sea - Italian coast guards	43	3,540
Number of boats intercepted and returned to Libya	35	2,207

Table 20: Departures at sea, Libya 2012 (UNHCR)<sup>38</sup>

For 2013 (as of November 30) UNHCR Libya estimates that 24,090 persons in 169 boats attempted to cross the Mediterranean.

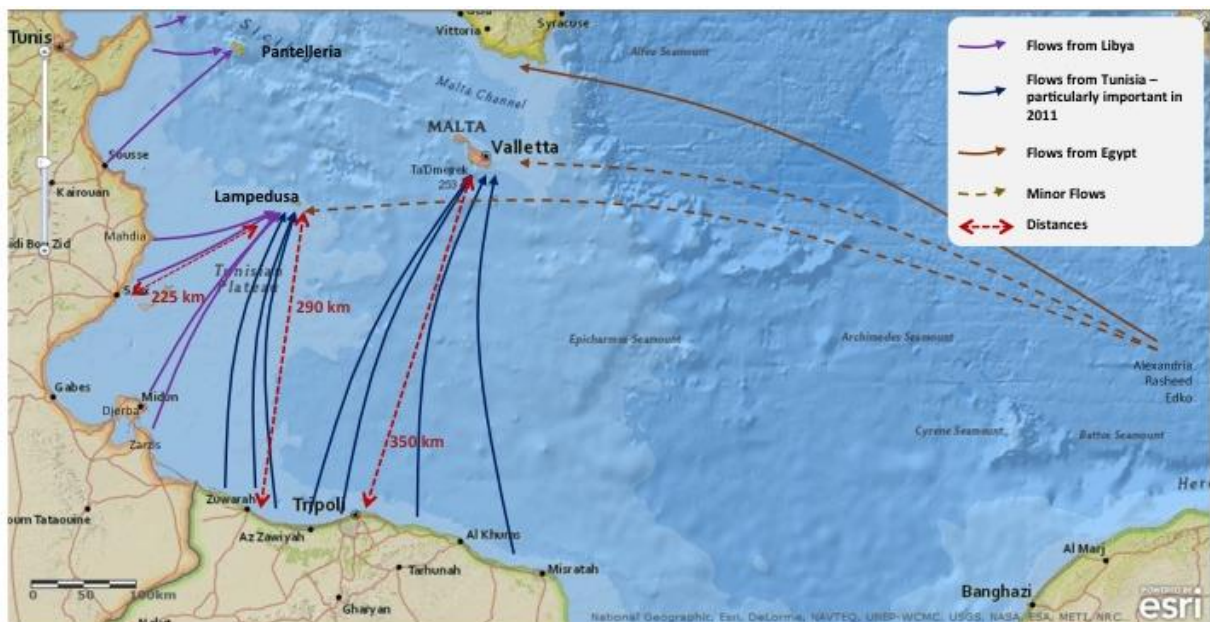
### 1.4 ENTRY POINTS

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Main points of arrival are Lampedusa and Malta, both are considered transit countries by migrants.
- Most migrants arrive in Malta by accident, Italy is preferred because it is on the mainland and easier to move to other European countries from there.

The main points of arrival are Malta and Italy. Lampedusa, which is the largest island of the Italian Pelagie Islands in the Mediterranean Sea, is the specific port of arrival for Italy.

114



Map 11: Routes from Libya to Europe

**Malta** is not a target country; most of the migrants that arrive there were aiming for Italy and did not even know that Malta existed prior to their arrival. This may have started to change in more recent years, however, as over the years certain migrant communities have established networks in

<sup>38</sup> While these figures are rigorously maintained by cross-referencing data and reports from a number of sources (including the media), they are estimates at best.

Malta, which acts as a pull factor (for example, there are currently 1000 Somalis living in Malta). Moreover, Malta has earned a reputation for being a location from where one can be resettled to the United States (as Italy does not offer resettlement). Since 2007, approximately 16000 migrants have arrived in Malta; of those, roughly 1000 were resettled to the USA and 700 have been resettled in other European countries. It is not certain the extent to which these factors really do act as pull factors to Malta, however.

Migrants tend to prefer **Italy** because it is on the mainland and it is therefore easier to move from there to other European countries, particularly since migrants are transferred from Lampedusa to the mainland for processing. However, Italy is also seen as a transit country.



Image 19: Nigerian migrant at Hal Far Tent Village, Malta (Altai Consulting)

In terms of **European destinations targeted by migrants**, the most important decision making factors are whether there is a community there (from the same country of origin) and whether there is a good welfare system. These factors usually play out quite obviously in decisions to accept relocation offers. For example, under the first phase of the EUREMA<sup>39</sup> project, Poland had accepted to relocate six migrants from Malta, however no migrants accepted to be relocated there because there was no network of other migrants from their country of origin present in the country. In the second

phase of EUREMA, Poland pledged to accept 50 migrants and the UNHCR in Malta managed to find a community of Somalis in Poland. The UNHCR put Somali refugees in Malta in touch with their counterparts in Poland and the ensuing discussions conducted to them accepting to be relocated there.

## 1.5 MALTA

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- In the ten-year period between 2002 and 2012, 16,645 migrants arrived in Malta by boat.
- In 2012, the recognition rate was 78% and the main nationality of arrivals is Somali.
- Roughly 80-90% of arrivals were rescued at sea.

While the number of migrants arriving in Malta is not very large in absolute terms, in terms of the ratio per capita, Malta receives more migrants than any other EU member state, as well as any other country in the industrialised world.

As mentioned previously, few migrants are aiming for Malta specifically and Malta is seen as limiting by most of them as it is small, lacks land borders with the rest of Europe and has few opportunities for employment. Moreover, migration is a phenomenon of the last decade for the Maltese and thus,

<sup>39</sup> A pilot project for intra-EU relocation from Malta to assist Malta in coping with the pressure of hosting a relatively large number of recognized beneficiaries of international protection.

the African presence is a relatively new one. This lack of exposure to African communities creates an environment that can make integration relatively more challenging for sub-Saharan migrants in Malta.

Finally, the Maltese economy is seasonal and strongly dependent on tourism. Thus, there are certain times of the year when employment levels are low and it is challenging to find work. The fact that the majority of the migrants who arrive are unskilled does not help their employment prospects; even when they are qualified, their qualifications are usually not accepted.

**1.5.1 Trends**

In the 10-year period between 2002 and 2012, 16,645 migrants have arrived by boat in Malta on 398 boats. However, the flows have varied over the years. As demonstrated in Figure 11 below, boat arrivals peaked in 2008 but dropped significantly in 2010. This is mainly due to a repatriation agreement between Libya and Italy where migrants were interdicted at sea by Italian vessels and sent back to the point of departure. Although Malta was not party to this agreement, it affected the number of boat arrivals in both Malta and Italy. In 2011, arrivals picked up again presumably in response to the curtailment of this agreement and the crisis in Libya and the Arab Spring in general.

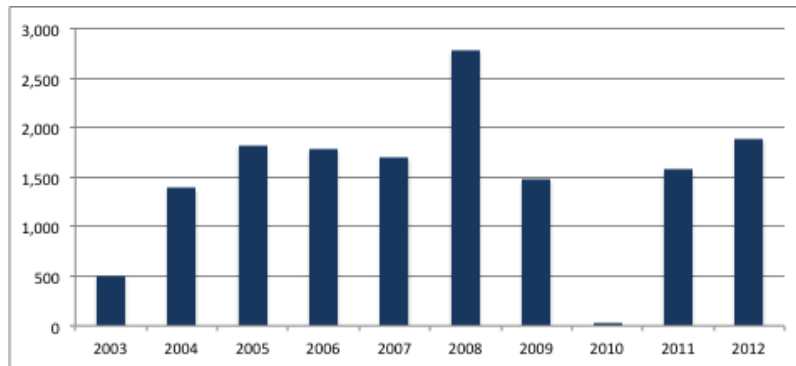


Figure 11: Boat arrivals in Malta 2003-2012

In 2012 alone, 1,890 individuals arrived, of which, 78% were granted some form of protection, as demonstrated in Figure 12.

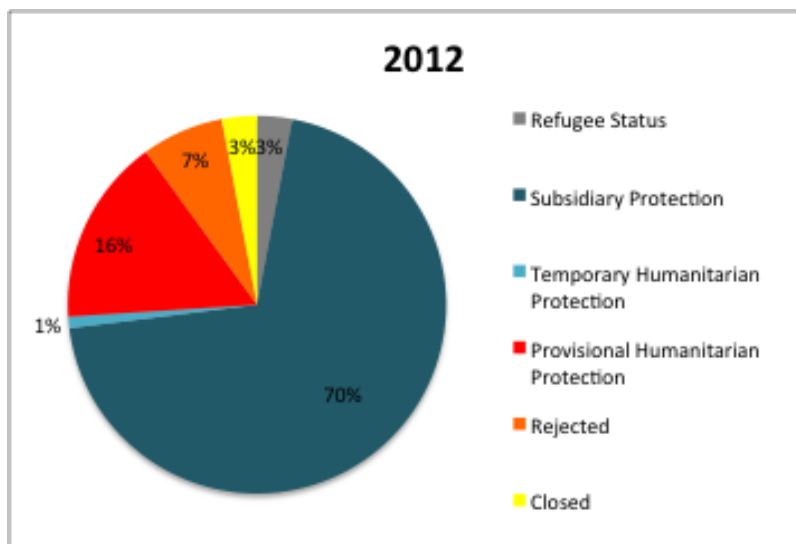


Figure 12: Outcomes of applications for asylum, Malta 2012

86% of those granted international protection in 2012 were from Somalia, 12% were Eritrean and 1% were Ethiopian, as demonstrated in Figure 13.

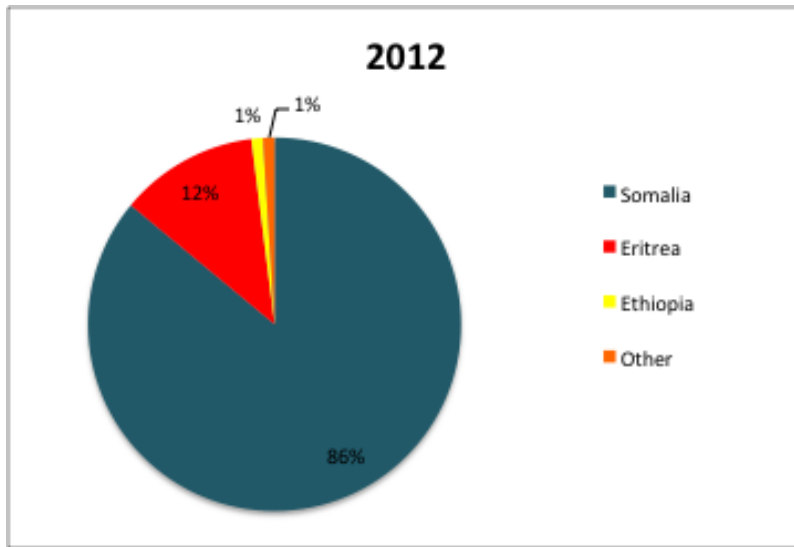


Figure 13: Protection granted according to nationality in Malta, 2012

**1.5.2 Rescue at Sea**

Roughly 80-90% of arrivals in Malta were rescued at sea. There are three authorities responsible for monitoring Malta’s borders: the armed forces, the police, and customs.<sup>40</sup>

As Malta is a small country with limited resources, the armed forces are also responsible for border control. While the police force works close to the shore, the armed forces are responsible for offshore activity. At sea, they have police powers but the police force coordinates quite strongly with them; once a boat has been rescued at sea by the armed forces, it is brought to shore and handed over to the police forces.

The Maltese authorities are obligated to monitor the waters within 25 miles of their territory, so their patrols occur within this distance and are affected by the armed forces. If boats are rescued further away from the shore, it is usually because the authorities were alerted of a boat in distress. They usually receive information from passing boats. The Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security, when interviewed in Malta, also mentioned that sometimes border authorities receive calls about boats in distress from family members (who live in Europe) of migrants who are on the boat.

Despite these efforts, the UNHCR in Malta estimates that 1,500 people died attempting to cross the Mediterranean to Europe in 2011, which amounts to approximately 2.5% of the 58,000 migrants who made the crossing.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Customs are located at the airport and deal more with goods than people

<sup>41</sup> “1,500 Died Crossing the Mediterranean Last Year—UNHCR,” Times of Malta, January 31, 2012; quoted in “Boat Ride to Detention: Adult and Child Migrants in Malta,” Human Rights Watch, 2012.

### 1.5.3 Reception Process

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- All migrants are detained on arrival and until their status is determined, at the exception of the vulnerable.
- Open accommodation centres are maintained as a transitional offer for migrants when they are first released from detention.

In Malta, all migrants are **detained upon arrival** and until their status is determined, with the exception of vulnerable migrants who are accommodated in open centres. The period of detention for asylum seekers is capped at 12 months, whereas for other migrants the process can take up to 18 months. There is an **appeals board** through which migrants can appeal the decision that was made about their status. According to the Refugee Commissioner, the success rate of appeals has been 10 cases over the last six years. The Refugee Commissioner also explained that



Image 18: Beninese migrant at Hal Far Tent Village, Malta (Altai Consulting)

migrants often understand that if they apply for asylum in Malta and are rejected, according to Dublin II they cannot apply again somewhere else in Europe, so some prefer to go home and try the journey again, hoping that they will reach Italy the second time around.

If the first contact of the migrants is with the police (which is usually the case, given that around 80% of arrivals were rescued at sea) then it is an immigration issue and they are detained until their status is determined as Maltese law designates a person who enters the country without "right of entry" as a "prohibited immigrant."<sup>42</sup> However, if they manage to enter Malta undetected and then they approach the Office of the Refugee Commissioner, then their first contact is with the Refugee Commissioner and it becomes an asylum issue instead of a migration one. In such a case, they are not detained. There was a case of a boat intercepted by Maltese coast guards in March of 2013 of fisherman who were smuggling migrants into the country. While in this particular case the boat was intercepted by Maltese police when it was disembarking the migrants, there are reports of this kind of journey being a new phenomenon with migrants entering in this way undetected (the Refugee Commissioner in Malta had examples of migrants who had approached him after entering the country undetected). Such journeys are naturally much safer (because of better equipment and boats), have a better outcome (because when successful, the migrant avoids detention), but are more expensive. Thus, they are limited to certain types of migrants (such as Syrians) who are often the least vulnerable.

<sup>42</sup> Articles. 10(2), 14(2), and 16; Immigration Act to Restrict, Control and Regulate Immigration into Malta and to Make Provisions for Matters Ancillary Thereto, Cap 217 of the Laws of Malta, 1970, amended repeatedly until 2009.

There are 11 official accommodation centres in Malta; nine are open centres and two are closed centres. They are set out in Table 21 below.

Open Accomodation Facilities		
#	Name	Comments
1	Marsa Open Centre	
2	Hal Far Tent Village	
3	Hal Far Hangar	
4	Hal Far Refugee Centre	Houses single women
5	Hal Far Family Open Centre	
6	Dar Il-Liedna	Houses unaccompanied minors and families
7	Dar Is-Sliem	Houses unaccompanied minors
8	Peace Lab (Hal Far)	
9	Balzan Open Centre	Houses vulnerable migrants
Closed Accomodation Facilities		
1	Hal Far Detention Centre (Lyster Barracks)	Some blocks house women and children
2	Safi Detention Centre	

Table 21: Accommodation facilities in Malta

The open centres are offered as transitional assistance in recognition of the fact that migrants will not have a place to live in immediately after release from detention. It is offered to all migrants that have been through the asylum process, even those that were rejected. Migrants who have been rejected some form of protection are not deported until their country of origin confirms their identity via a passport or other documents so they are often in a position where they have to wait for some time. The open centres are offered as accommodation during this time. In the open centres, migrants are provided with services to assist them in integrating and in being able to establish a life in Malta on release (such as language classes, vocational training, etc.).

#### 1.5.4 Forms of Protection

Malta offers international protection to asylum seekers and also forms of local protection; 95% of migrants that arrive by boat apply for asylum.

**International protection:** Refugee status is a form of international protection that stems from international sources of law, such as the Geneva Convention of 1951 and the Protocol of 1967. It gives protection to those that have a well-founded fear of persecution on religious, social or political grounds. In the period between 2002 and 2012, 346 individuals have been granted refugee status in Malta, which amounts to 2% of arrivals. In 2012 alone, 3% of arrivals were granted refugee status (see Figure 12 on page 116).

**Local Protection:** *Subsidiary protection* derives from the EU Qualifications Directive of 2004 and the Procedures Directive of 2005 and is granted where there is “well grounded fear of persecution,” which makes it more open than the criteria for refugee status.

**National Protection:** Malta also offers two forms of national protection: *Temporary Humanitarian Protection* and *Temporary Humanitarian Protection (New)*. Temporary Humanitarian Protection is given to those who do not qualify for other forms of protection but cannot be sent home (such as unaccompanied minors or sick migrants). Temporary Humanitarian Protection (New) is a form of protection that is given to those that did not qualify for protection but are in Malta waiting to be sent home; it basically regularises the rejected migrants so that they can work while they await deportation.

### 1.5.5 Returns

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Repatriation requires the cooperation of the country of origin, which is often difficult to elicit.
- Voluntary returns also occur through IOM.

Repatriating migrants who do not qualify for protection, under humanitarian law, requires the cooperation of the country of origin as the identity and nationality of the migrant in question needs to be proven. This is often problematic for the Maltese government as the majority of the countries of origin do not have diplomatic relations with Malta and there are no embassies on the island. Prior to the Libyan crisis, the Maltese government would coordinate with embassies in Tripoli, since then it works with embassies in Rome. The fact that there are no historical or economic ties between Malta and the countries of origin further strains the ability for cooperation.



Image 19: African migrant working as garbage collector, Malta (Altai Consulting)

There are also impressions that the countries of origin may not be eager to cooperate because they appreciate the inflow of foreign money into the country that migrants provide. A representative of the Ministry of Home Affairs and National Security also indicated that, *“If migrants are risking their lives on land and sea to come here then they must be escaping something, so we can imagine that the countries of origin must have a number of internal problems which makes it easy to understand why they are not enthusiastic about bringing the migrants home.”* Reports from IOM Malta indicate that embassies are happy to cooperate for assisted voluntary returns but less for forced repatriations.

Voluntary returns also occur with the assistance of IOM. IOM started implementing assisted voluntary return programs in Malta in 2009 and they are now completing the third phase of the project. Since the inception of the program until April 2013, approximately 150 migrants had returned home through AVR and the trend is that the rate is increasing.

NGOs working with migrants in Malta indicated that the ones who return voluntarily are usually those who feel like they have persisted in Malta and achieved nothing. The trend seems to be that the older migrants are more likely to decide to do so as they tend to be more attached to homeland and cultural identity than the younger generation. Having a family (wife and children) at home also tends to make migrants more likely to return home.

Detention also affects decisions to return, as economic migrants do not wish to spend 18 months in detention only to be repatriated at the end. IOM AVR programs that include a reintegration component tend to encourage decisions to return voluntarily, as they allow the migrant to return home with something and thereby alleviate the sense of failure they might otherwise feel.

### 1.6 ITALY

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS



- Migrants prefer Italy because it is on the mainland and they can move to other parts of Europe more easily.
- Italy does not have a policy of systematic detention.
- Between 2001 and 2011, 190,425 migrants have arrived by boat in Lampedusa, roughly 60% came from Libya.

---

There are a number of migration flows to Italy and a number of entry points into the territory, these include **Sicily, Calabria, Apulia, Sardinia** and very occasionally, **Lazio** and **Friuli**. However, the majority of boats are arriving at Lampedusa with 38% of total arrivals to the Italian coast in 2012 docking at Lampedusa. Sicily, Calabria and Apulia combined received 62% of arrivals in 2012.

The island of Lampedusa constitutes Italy's farthest southern border. It is 205 km from Sicily (Porto Empedocle), yet only 167 km from Tunisia (Ras Kaboudia). Its geographic location makes it the first port of entry for migration flows to Italy from North Africa. Roughly 60% of boats arriving in Lampedusa are coming from the Libyan coast; while no statistics are kept on the ports of departure of boats that arrive, a rough breakdown is made according to the nationality of arrivals.

Italy has traditionally been a transit country for migrants because it is on the mainland. Even when migrants arrive at one of its islands, they are transferred to the mainland for processing. However this has started to change with the introduction of the Dublin II regulation as many migrants were returned to Italy when they tried to move on to other European countries. Some migrants today try to by-pass these regulations by giving false identity information in Italy so that when they arrive in their desired European destination it looks as though it is their first port of arrival and they cannot be sent back to Italy.

Italy's position on the mainland is also the reason why most migrants who leave Libya aim for Lampedusa and not Malta. The other reason relates to the fact that not all migrants are detained in closed centres in Italy. Those that stay in open centres tend to leave and find work and have the potential to start making money even before their applications are processed.

Like Malta, less than favorable economic conditions and employment prospects (worsening with the European crisis) make life in Italy less desirable for migrants than they had anticipated. There are reports of migrants being caught up in crime in Italy out of their desperation to make money and the pressures that they experience from friends and family back home who are waiting for money to be sent back to them. These unfavorable conditions have also led to increases in voluntary returns.

### 1.6.1 Trends

In the 10-year period between 2001 and 2011, 190,425 migrants have arrived by boat in Lampedusa. As explained above, it is estimated that roughly 60% of these boats came from Libya. In 2011, 28,000 migrants arrived from Tunisia because of the emergency situation in North Africa. As shown in Figure 14 below, like Malta, the flows in Lampedusa have also varied over the years; 2009 saw a dramatic decrease in boat arrivals and in 2010 there were close to no arrivals (2, 946 migrants arrived in 2009 and 459 arrived in 2010). This is mainly due to the repatriation agreement between Libya and Italy that was described above. Otherwise, the trends in flows between Malta and Lampedusa are quite similar.

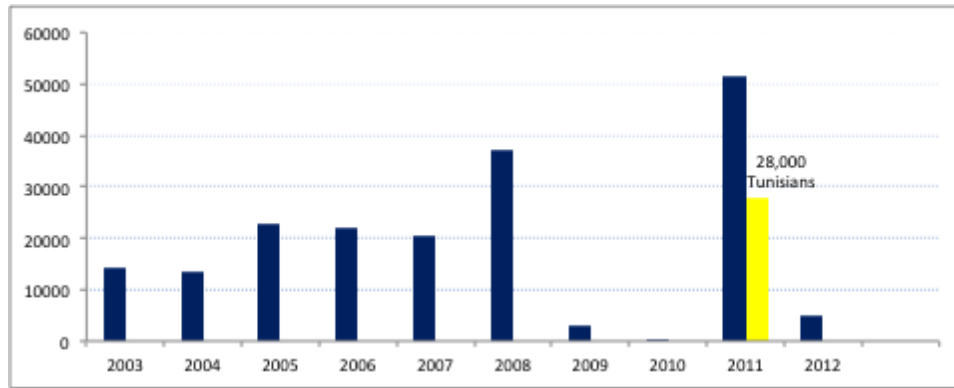


Figure 14: Arrivals by boat at Lampedusa, 2003-2012

### 1.6.2 Rescue at Sea

Actors in the field estimate that probably 5-10% of boats that were aiming for Italy were lost at sea. The Italian Red Cross estimates deaths at sea through information from family members who contact them for help locating 'missing migrants.'

The entire northern coast of the island of Lampedusa is dominated by cliffs, which creates risks for migrants. Without strong navigational abilities there is great risk of hitting the cliffs, which has fatal repercussions. If the Italian coast guards spot a boat of migrants at sea, they usually send two boats to surround it and guide its passage away from the cliffs and to the shore even if they are not necessarily in 'distress.' According to UNHCR Libya, 3,540 migrants were rescued at sea by Italian coast guards in 2012, which represents 70% of arrivals in that year.

### 1.6.3 Reception Process

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Migrants are transferred from Lampedusa to the mainland for processing.
- Asylum seekers go to open centres and economic migrants to detention centres.
- An inter-agency project called Praesidium monitors the reception process.
- There are four forms of protection in Italy: constitutional right of asylum; international protection (refugee status); subsidiary international protection (EU local protection); humanitarian residence permit (national protection).

Lampedusa and the other entry points in Italy act as clearance points where migrants stay for a just a few days until they are categorised and sent to the mainland for processing. Those that come from countries of concern are sent to open centres ('Reception Centres for Asylum Seekers') and economic migrants who do not apply for asylum are sent to detention centres ('Identification and Expulsion Centres') where they await deportation. There are special centres for vulnerable migrants and unaccompanied minors. Migrants who arrive from Egypt and Tunisia are not given the opportunity to apply for asylum and are repatriated within 48 hours, due to repatriation agreements between Italy and these countries. As a way to circumvent this limitation, there has been an increase in Egyptian families sending minors to Italy as they know that the Italian government cannot and will not repatriate a minor until they are of age. In fact, this phenomenon has increased with other nationalities too and there are also reports of migrants lying about their age and misrepresenting themselves as minors in order to not be sent home (particularly Afghans and Somalis).

There are also reports of migrants giving false identity information on arrival in order to be able to move to other European destinations and not be blocked by Dublin regulations. This is usually in the form of giving false names, refusing to be fingerprinted, and if forced to do so, sabotaging the fingerprint (by smearing it so that it is unreadable).

An inter-agency project by the name of Praesidium has been set up in Italy with the joint participation of the Italian Ministry of Interior (Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration), UNHCR, IOM, the Italian Red Cross, and Italian Save the Children. The project encourages multi-agency cooperation among all the institutional and organizational stakeholders and NGOs involved in the management of migration flows. Its main activities include legal counselling at border points and in detention and reception centres, the identification of vulnerabilities, and monitoring of reception standards.

#### 1.6.4 Forms of Protection

In Italy, there are four forms of protection:

- Constitutional right of asylum;
- International protection (refugee status);
- Subsidiary international protection (EU local protection);
- Humanitarian residence permit (national protection).

If an asylum seeker is recognised as a refugee, s/he will be granted a permit with validity for five years. The permit can be withdrawn if the conditions in the refugee's country of origin change or if one of the conditions listed in article 1 of the Geneva Convention<sup>43</sup> apply. Subsidiary protection provides a permit valid for three years and humanitarian residence permit provides a one-year permit. All permits are renewable on review.

#### 1.6.5 Returns

Those that approach IOM Italy for assisted voluntary return (AVR) tend to be those who feel that they are at the end of their migratory process; they have tried everything and they feel that they are now out of options. IOM staff in Italy explained that often the men that come to them for AVR have pushed their mental and physical limits. They have often lost jobs but been determined to stay, so by the time they approach IOM they are either very sick or mentally disturbed. Women, on the other hand, tend to make the decision earlier, before they get to a point where they are living on the streets. According to IOM Italy, in the short and medium term, repeat migration for those who returned through an assisted voluntary return program is low. There is little data to assess this on the long term. The only exception to this is migrants who have family in Italy, the family links to Europe tend to keep them a little in transit on return.

There are a number of packages that IOM offers and generally, the level of vulnerability of the migrant determines the package that applies to them. Some carry a reintegration component, which is money given in kind to help the migrant create a project that will lead to a sustainable income on return. Most migrants that come under the reintegration programs end up creating some kind of business with this assistance as they see it as the only way to create a regular income.

<sup>43</sup> Article 1 states: "A person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.."

Rates of assisted voluntary returns conducted by IOM Italy appear in Figure 15 below for the period 2009-2012. As the figure demonstrates, rates of AVR are increasing. There are reports from the field to suggest that the crisis in Europe and the subsequent difficulty in finding employment there contribute to the increase in voluntary returns home and the trend is expected to continue in this manner.

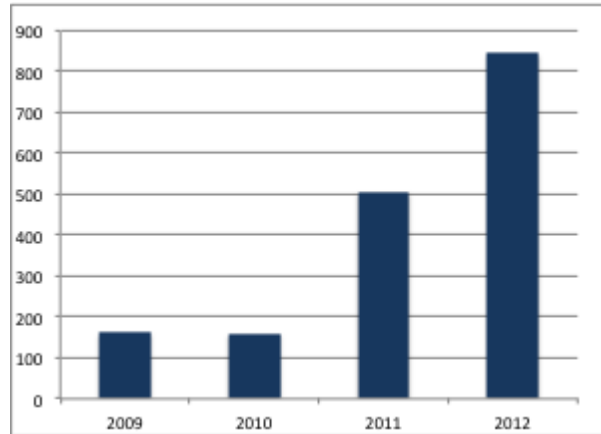


Figure 15: Assisted voluntary return provided by IOM Italy (IOM)

In terms of forced repatriation, like Malta, Italy is often challenged by the lack of cooperation of countries of origin, which makes the process impossible.

## 2. RETURNS FROM LIBYA TO COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Other outflows from Libya include forced deportation by the government, voluntary returns using smuggling routes and assisted voluntary returns through the IOM.
- Embassies are often contacted by migrants when in detention. They usually only succeed in releasing them on the promise that they will be sent home and they usually coordinate with IOM for returns.
- Few returnees interviewed in countries of origin felt that their situation had improved on return.

Other outflows from Libya include returns back to country of origin. This can take a number of forms including forced deportation by the government, voluntary returns using the same routes that were adopted for travel to Libya, and assisted voluntary returns through the IOM. It should be noted, however, that few returnees interviewed in countries of origin felt that their situation had improved on return. Even those that managed to set up a business or some form of income generating activity on return did not feel like it was enough to lift them out of poverty. Those who had been assisted by IOM through a reintegration package gave very positive feedback and their experiences show that in the immediate period after return their situation seems to improve. However, there has been little monitoring of their situation over the longer term so whether this change is sustainable is yet to be determined.

### 2.1 FORCED DEPORTATION

Under the Gadhafi regime, commercial flights had been organised to return migrants to countries of origin in large numbers, with planes conducting a circling of the region and stopping in most major

cities to drop off migrants. Currently, the Department for Combating Illegal Migration (DCIM) is responsible for deporting migrants and this is usually organised with buses that are used to return migrants overland. Again, they usually stop in major cities, so migrants are responsible for finding their way to their town or village of origin.

Under the current regime, there have also been cases of migrants being driven to borders in trucks and expelled at the border crossing and told to make their way home, no matter which country they originate from. For example, Nigerien key informants mentioned cases of Cameroonian migrants being expelled by Libyan authorities at the border with Niger (near Tumo) and expected to make their own way home. Moreover, In April 2013, there was a case in Ghadames of migrants being driven to the border by local police and expelled. However, Algerian authorities did not allow them passage into Algeria so they were stuck in the no mans land between the two countries.<sup>44</sup>

## 2.2 VOLUNTARY RETURN



Image 20: African migrant in Tripoli's old city (Altai)

For most of the economic migrants in the country, their migration to Libya is not viewed as a permanent relocation. In general, migrants interviewed did not want to stay in Libya for more than five years and were hoping to amass enough money in that time to be able to return home and either start a business, get married, organise marriages for their children, or build a house. For such migrants, there is a point at which they have made enough money in Libya and their migration comes to an end.

There is also a smaller group who at some point, when they feel that they have run out of all options, and their migratory experience has not yielded the results that they had expected, decide to return home. This is usually when they are unemployed, have not managed to make much money in Libya and experience very poor integration levels or abuse. Often, migrants who reach this point also feel a sense of failure and shame and many will opt to return with a reintegration package through the IOM so that they do not return home empty handed.

## 2.3 ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURNS

Generally, migrants who decide to return home through an assisted return package with IOM, are those who have either accomplished all they set out to achieve and thus feel as though their migration has come to an end; those who have reached rock bottom and are very disillusioned with their migratory experience and would rather return home; or those who are detained without an end in sight and would rather return home than remain in detention.

IOM assisted voluntary returns sometimes also carry a reintegration package that provides migrants with a sum of money, given in kind, in order to help them re settle back in their hometown. It allows them to start businesses or other projects with the aim of addressing the reasons that persuaded them to migrate in the first place (such as poverty, lack of status, etc.). Often many people, such as family, close friends, and other community members from the same village, invested in the journey of a migrant to reach Libya; they view their financial contributions as an investment because they imagined that the said migrant would make a lot of money in Libya and eventually repay them with

<sup>44</sup> <http://www.libyaherald.com/2012/04/18/life-is-tough-for-an-immigrant-in-ghadames/>

more than what they contributed. Such migrants find it very difficult to return home when they won't be able to repay these individuals and this can often cause them to stay in a difficult situation in Libya and one where they are highly vulnerable. Reintegration packages can allow migrants to return with dignity and so can be influential in a decision making process to return.

In some cases, migrants approach their embassies for assistance to return home. Interviews with embassies of the main countries of origin in Libya<sup>45</sup> revealed that migrants often contact their embassies when they are in detention and want to find a way out. Most embassies explained that it is difficult for them to reach agreement with the Libyan government to free their nationals, unless the migrants are vulnerable (sick, infirm, not of age, etc) or unless they agree to send them home once they are freed. In such a vain, one migrant explained that the embassy of Sudan in Libya had facilitated release from detention and passage back home for him, "They facilitate your journey home as if you are a regular migrant. They provide official documents that allow you to pass every checkpoint without having to pay anything."

Often, embassies that manage to have their nationals released from detention on the promise that the migrant will be sent home, coordinate with IOM for the migrant's return (naturally, in cases where the migrant wants to return and it is thus, voluntary). IOM receives referrals from embassies and in their own words, there is "excellent cooperation." If they are referred cases by the Somali, Eritrean, or Ethiopian embassies, IOM passes these on to the UNHCR as these countries are deemed countries of concern.

Total rates of assisted voluntary return conducted by IOM in Libya between June 2006 until 16 June 2013 are represented in Figure 16. Naturally, rates spike in 2012 as a result of the Libyan revolution.

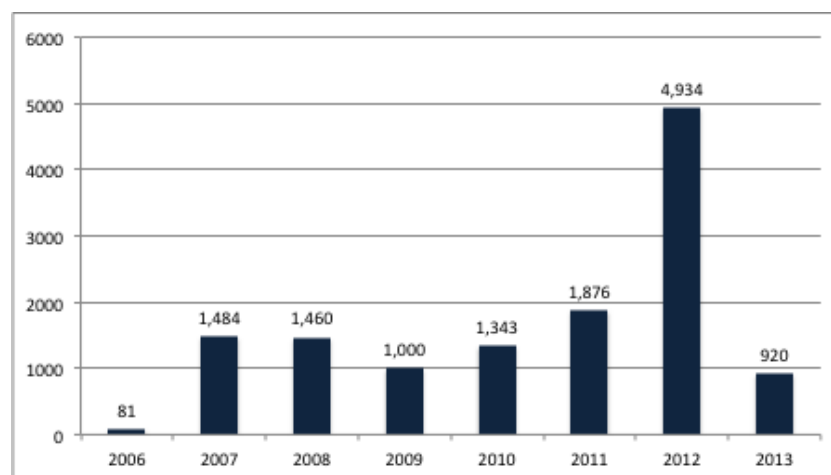


Figure 16: AVR from Libya to home country, 2006-3 Nov 2013 (IOM)

The rates for 2013 are represented in Figure 17 below for the period January 2013-October 2013.

<sup>45</sup> Interviews were conducted with the embassies of Somalia, Burkina-Faso, Eritrea and Sudan, in Tripoli, during the fieldwork for this project.

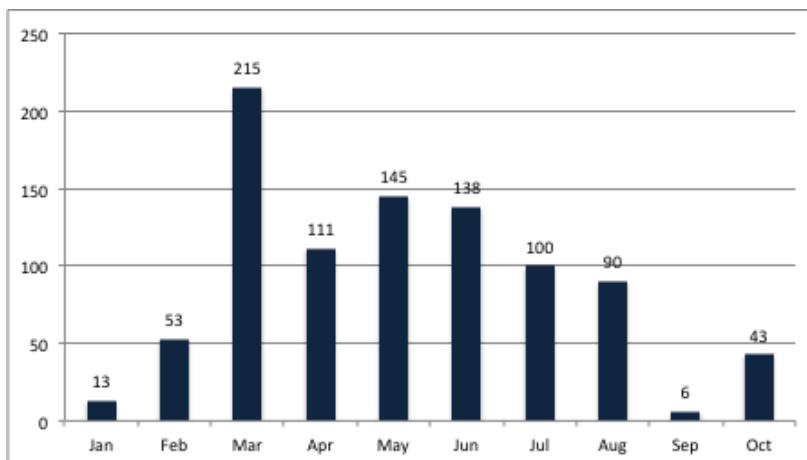


Figure 17: AVR from Libya to home country, Jan-30 Oct 2013 (IOM)

During the period January to October 2013, the main nationalities assisted include: Gambia (150), Burkina Faso (145), Mali (140), and Ghana (93). This is presented diagrammatically in Figure 18.

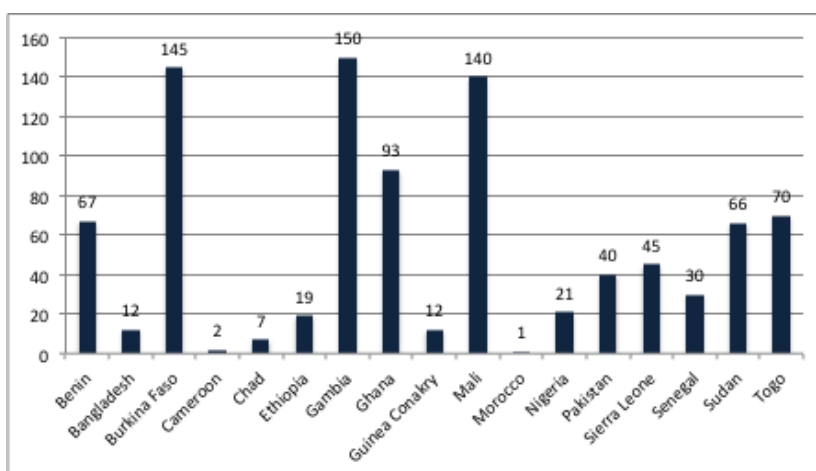


Figure 18: Main nationalities of AVR in Libya Jan-Oct 2013 (IOM)

During the period 2006 to 3 November 2013, the main nationalities assisted include: Niger (4,153), Mali (1,645), Nigeria (1,575), Sudan (1,347) and Ghana (1,167). This is presented diagrammatically in Figure 19.

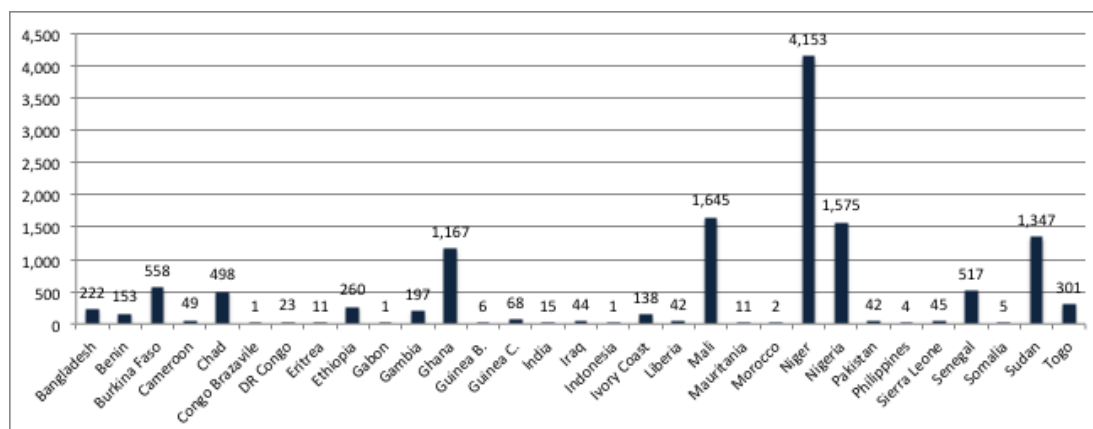


Figure 19: Main nationalities of AVR in Libya, 2006-3 Nov 2013 (IOM)

## 2.4 CONDITIONS OF RETURN JOURNEY

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Returns using smuggling routes is common for seasonal migrants. Some economic migrants become stranded in transit countries on the way home.
- Those that made enough money in Libya fly home.
- AVR transports migrants by plane back to location (city, village, etc.) of origin.

The journey to return home, even when undertaken without assistance, is usually quicker, easier, and less expensive than journeys undertaken to reach Libya. This is usually because migrants already know the routes and prices, thus, need less assistance in the form of smugglers and brokers, and have gained a lot of information in Libya by meeting other migrants there.

**Return using smuggling routes:** migrants that return using smuggling routes usually repeat the same journey that took them to Libya, but in the reverse. They avoid checkpoints and authorities as much as possible, use smugglers, and sometimes pay bribes for passage over borders. This is very common for seasonal, or circular, migrants who are accustomed to making the journey regularly. They usually have a good network of smugglers that they know and have built relationships with border authorities. Thus, they tend to pay less than others and know the journey well.

However, economic migrants that decide to return home using smuggling routes do still face with the same risks on the journey, particularly those who do not leave with sums of money. For this group of migrants, they sometimes need to stop in transit countries, along the route home, to make money for the next step of the journey and as such, sometimes find themselves stranded along the way.

**Return by flying home:** some migrants who feel that their migration has been “successful” and have made enough money to be able to afford it, and particularly those that enter and exit the country regularly, use commercial flights to return home.

### Case Study 9: Female Malian Migrant in Detention in Libya

Fatima, a 28 year old Malian woman, left Mali to join her husband who, one year ago, had fled the violence in Gao to travel to Libya in the hope that he would find a job there. They had thought Libya would be the best place for him to go, because there would be more work there than in Algeria or Morocco. Her husband asked her to join him and organized the whole journey for her through an intermediary. She made the journey with her 6-month old baby who suffered in the cold of the desert evenings. She says people and smugglers were relatively kind to her because she was a Muslim woman carrying a baby. She is not sure of the cost but she thinks her husband spent around CFA 4,000,000 (USD \$600). Now they are both detained in two different detention centres. She is in Surman sharing a room with around 50 other female detainees with poor access to sanitation. She claims that there is no food for her baby and disease is common. She wants to return to Mali to take care of her family but her husband needs to make enough money first.



**Return through IOM:** Assisted returns through IOM are usually by plane and return the migrant back to his place of residence, not just the capital city or nearest major town. If the migrant is obliged to transit somewhere on the way, IOM will cover the cost of accommodation during transit and the migrant is also given a sum of money to cover basic expenses on the way home. Reception upon arrival in country of origin is also provided.



## CHANGES SINCE THE REVOLUTION

METHODOLOGY



MAIN ROUTES OF TRAVEL AND THE JOURNEY TO LIBYA



INFLOWS AND DYNAMICS IN LIBYA



OUTFLOWS TO EUROPE AND RETURNS HOME



CHANGES SINCE THE REVOLUTION



THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE JOURNEY



RECOMMENDATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES



## VIII. CHANGES SINCE THE REVOLUTION

### 1. MIGRATION TRENDS UNDER THE GADHAFI REGIME

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 90% of migrants in the 90's were Arab (pan-Arabism).
- Pan-African policies in the late 90's led to free circulation for sub Saharans but they still experienced poor treatment when in Libya. This was curtailed in 2006 when the number of migrants in the country was perceived as being too large.
- Repatriation agreements with Italy led to 30,000 migrants being repatriated between 2003-2006. Gadhafi also sent boats of old and infirm migrants to Europe to pressure European governments.
- In 2004, Libya signed the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families and quotas were established.

Since its inception, the Gadhafi regime managed migration in a haphazard way with migration being encouraged or discouraged according to the state of diplomatic relations at the time.

Initially, migration was mainly from Arab countries, as a result of pan-Arabism policies. In the 1970's, close to 90% of migrants in Libya were Arabs.<sup>46</sup> In the 1990's, however, as a result of isolation by the international community, Gadhafi turned his sights to Africa and a policy of pan-Africanism. As his vision was to eradicate all reliance on the international community, he realised that he would need foreign labour from sub-Saharan Africa in order to absorb the gap created by a small population locally and encouraged the migration of African workers. This led to the creation of the Community of Sahelian-Saharan States in 1998, which enabled free circulation amongst the countries that were members and Libya removed all visa requirements for African migrants entering Libya.

Yet despite these encouraging messages to African migrants, migrants were still poorly treated in the country (culminating in riots against African migrants in September 2000, which led to the death of approximately 200 African migrants and causing thousands to flee) and mass expulsions were instigated by the regime from time to time.

Towards the end of his regime, the signing of repatriation agreements with Italy saw Gadhafi making efforts to reintegrate into the international community and an abandonment of his pan-Africanism policies. Such policies led to a common patrol between the two nations, the supply of financing and equipment to assist Libya in monitoring the coasts, and the apprehension and repatriation of more than 30,000 migrants per year between 2003 and 2006<sup>47</sup>. Simultaneously, however, Gadhafi was sending migrants on boats to Europe as a way of exerting pressure on their resources and economies. According to the IOM in Italy, during this time, the profile of migrants arriving was older, generally infirm, and included many women. According to the Somali ambassador in Tripoli, as a result of that time, most Somalis still believe that Libya is the best way to reach Europe.

<sup>46</sup> Perrin, D. (2009) *Le Gestion des Frontiers en Libye*, CARIM.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

In 2004, the Gadhafi regime entered a new era of creating and placing quotas for migrants as Libya signed the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families. The quota for migrant workers was set at 46,000 migrants per year and particular policies were developed for Niger and Chad.

In 2006, the Libyan government estimated the number of migrants in the country to be 1.5 million, 70% of which were economic migrants. As a result, in Feb 2007, Libya decided to reinstate visa requirements for all foreigners (excluding those from the Maghreb, with the exception of Egyptians) including Africans who had previously enjoyed free movement.

## 2. IMPACT OF THE LIBYAN REVOLUTION

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- During the revolution, flows decreased and so did the number of migrants in the country.
- This outflow led to a void in Libya in terms of professional regular foreign workers.
- Beyond the very immediate effects, the Libyan revolution had little influence on migration flows to Libya. Flows are assumed to have resumed to normal now.

As there has been little (close to none) data kept on flows into and out of the country, it is hard to estimate the effects of the crisis on migration flows. However, interviews with migrants and key informants across the seven countries of the study indicate that the crisis, beyond the very immediate effects, has had little influence on migration to Libya in general. Today, the flows continue in close to the same levels and migrants still see Libya as the rich neighbour where they can make money. In fact, for those wishing to travel to Europe, the aftermath of the revolution was seen as a good time to journey to Europe as there was a certain administrative void that could be exploited.

During the crisis itself, however, and particularly during the first three quarters of 2011, not only did flows to Libya decrease, but also the number of migrants in the country. Many migrants fled to third countries (mainly Egypt, Tunisia, and Niger) or back to countries of origin. IOM estimates that 796,915 migrants crossed the borders out of Libya in order to flee the violence. They fled to Chad, Niger and Algeria, but the majority left for Tunisia (345,238) and Egypt (263,554) with 45% of flows to Tunisia and Egypt being third country nationals. During this time, as inflows were close to non-existent, the total migrant number of migrants in Libya is thought to have shrunk to one-third of its previous size. In Murzuq alone, 22,000 migrants left voluntarily during this time, mainly to Niger and Chad.<sup>48</sup>

Authorities in Sudan and Chad reported that the number of migrants in their countries increased during the Libyan crisis as third country nationals crossed over the border from Libya, waiting in these transit countries for the crisis to end so that they could return to Libya once again. The routes through Kufra and Ghatrun saw little movement in the first months of 2011 but activity resumed again by the end of 2011.

There were also flows to Europe at the time of the crisis. IOM Italy estimates that some 20,000-22,000 third country nationals entered Italy from Libya at that time. Most were from Nigeria, Niger,

<sup>48</sup> *A Humanitarian Response to the Libyan Crisis* (2011), IOM.

Chad, Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea. Many of them had been working in Libya prior to the revolution and most likely would not have moved to Europe had it not been for the unrest in Libya. This is intimated not only through statements made by migrants themselves but also by the fact that, once the crisis had ended, many of them approached IOM Italy to be assisted to return to Libya.

Flows are assumed to have resumed as normal by 2012, and are currently estimated to be at pre-revolution levels. However, the outflow of migrant workers during this time did leave a void in Libya in terms of specialised manpower, mainly professional regular foreign workers.<sup>49</sup>

### 3. CHANGES POST-REVOLUTION

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Due to rumours of sub-Saharan Africans having fought for Gadhafi during the revolution, they are treated very poorly in Libya and targeted by militia, which causes some to leave and affects inflows of others.
- For others, the current state of anarchy is seen as an opportune time to make the journey to Europe as controls are minimal.
- In general, while it has become easier to make the journey to Europe post-revolution, the stories of life in Libya for migrants are much more striking and the local labour market is less inviting.

During the crisis, African migrants were often considered by Libyans to be pro-Gadhafi, an impression arising from rumours that the regime was using African mercenaries to fight the rebellion. Previous policies encouraging African migration to Libya do not help impressions of Africans supporting the regime. As a result, there is a deep hostility towards sub-Saharan Africans and they are often randomly targeted by militia. This creates an unstable security situation for migrants, causing many to leave and discouraging others from arriving. Migrants today report that life in Libya post-revolution is much more challenging, given the incidences of arbitrary treatment and arrest and many live deeply underground as a result. According to the consul of the embassy of Burkina-Faso *"Migrants are returning today because of insecurity in the country and violence against them; they get robbed, they are not paid by employers who do not respect them. In general, the militia and the police are a threat to their lives in Libya, they arrest and rob them continuously."*

For some, however, the current state of anarchy, as Libya grapples with establishing a new government, is believed to be an opportune time to make the journey to Europe as controls are minimal. Especially since other countries in the region, such as Algeria, are becoming increasingly more difficult to journey to Europe from. So, while the stories of life in Libya, for migrants, are much more striking post revolution, it has become easier to make the journey to Europe.

The main changes since the revolution are summarised in Figure 20 below. It demonstrates that while it has become somewhat easier to make the journey to Europe from Libya, life in Libya has become far more challenging and the local labour market is not as inviting as it previously was due to high levels of competition for low-skilled jobs.

<sup>49</sup> A Humanitarian Response to the Libyan Crisis (2011), IOM.

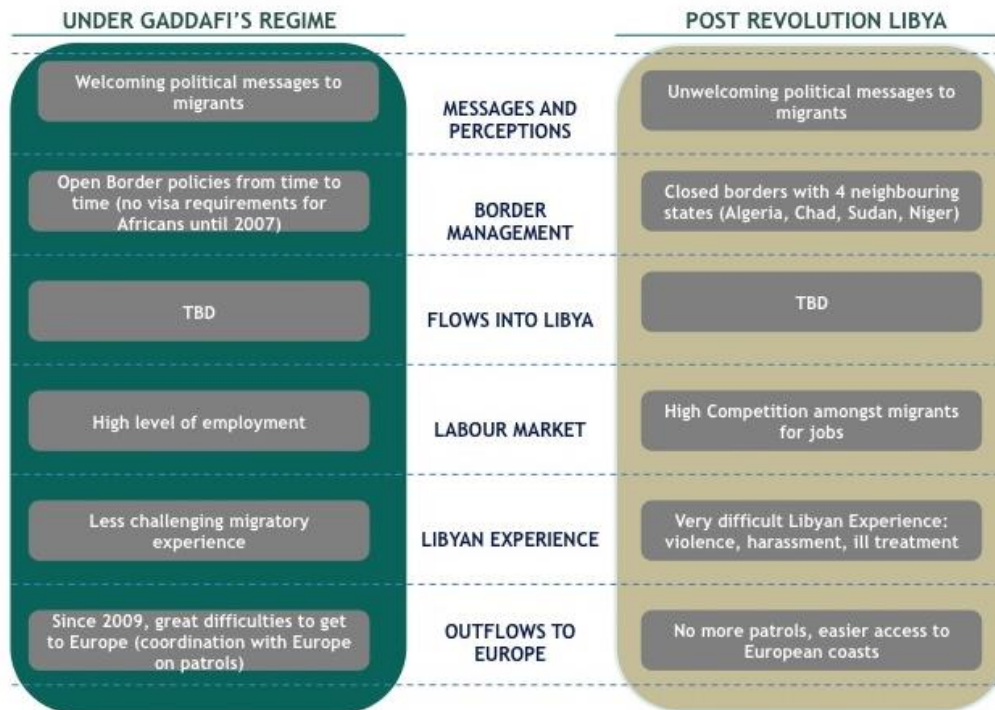


Figure 20: Main changes in Libyan migration since the revolution



## THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE JOURNEY

METHODOLOGY



MAIN ROUTES OF TRAVEL AND THE JOURNEY TO LIBYA



INFLOWS AND DYNAMICS IN LIBYA



OUTFLOWS TO EUROPE AND RETURNS HOME



CHANGES SINCE THE REVOLUTION



THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE JOURNEY



RECOMMENDATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES



## IX. THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE JOURNEY

As the preceding sections have demonstrated, the mixed migration flows into Libya include a number of different types of migrants that leave their countries of origin for a number of reasons and may have different needs, yet they are all traveling on the same routes. As these migrants pass through different countries along the route, different factors in those countries can affect that evolution of their journey.

In the case of asylum seekers and refugees, for example, the existence of a **refugee determination process** allows them to 'regularise' their entry into the country, whereas in locations where that is not possible, they remain irregular. Similarly, the existence of **refugee camps** can act as a push or pull factor depending on the needs of the refugee in question. For example, some leave their country temporarily hoping to return once things improve and are thus, happy to wait in a refugee camp elsewhere in the meantime. Others come from ongoing conflict and don't see much of an end in sight. They hope to build a new life elsewhere and are, thus, not interested in staying in camps for long periods of time and are likely to want to leave a country with an encampment policy. Such profiles tend to still plan their journey around the existence of camps but *use the camps as resource centres and move on*. The opportunities that exist for employment in certain locations can also affect the ways in which migrants interact with the location. For example, in Sudan, there is a national refugee determination process but an encampment policy requires refugees to remain in camps. Some refugees in the country end up leaving the camps in order to move to Khartoum to find employment and thus, return to an irregular situation even though they have been granted refugee status. Moreover, the **lack of an asylum process** in some countries (such as Libya) means that all migrants enter irregularly and have no way of regularising themselves. These dynamics are represented in Figure 21 below.

Similarly, for economic migrants, while some countries provide free movement (such as those within the ECOWAS region) and thus allow migrants to enter regularly, **the lack of employment opportunities** in those countries still pushes them out and encourages them to enter Libya irregularly in search of employment, or to travel on to Europe irregularly in the same vein.

The changing nature of the journey of these different types of migrants, according to the situation in the countries that they pass through, means that it is often difficult to isolate the asylum seekers from the economic migrants and vice versa, and thus, difficult to create policies for one group in isolation from the others. Attempts to address the problematic of mixed migration require the efforts of a number of actors and an understanding that the profiles and needs are various and may change from country to country.



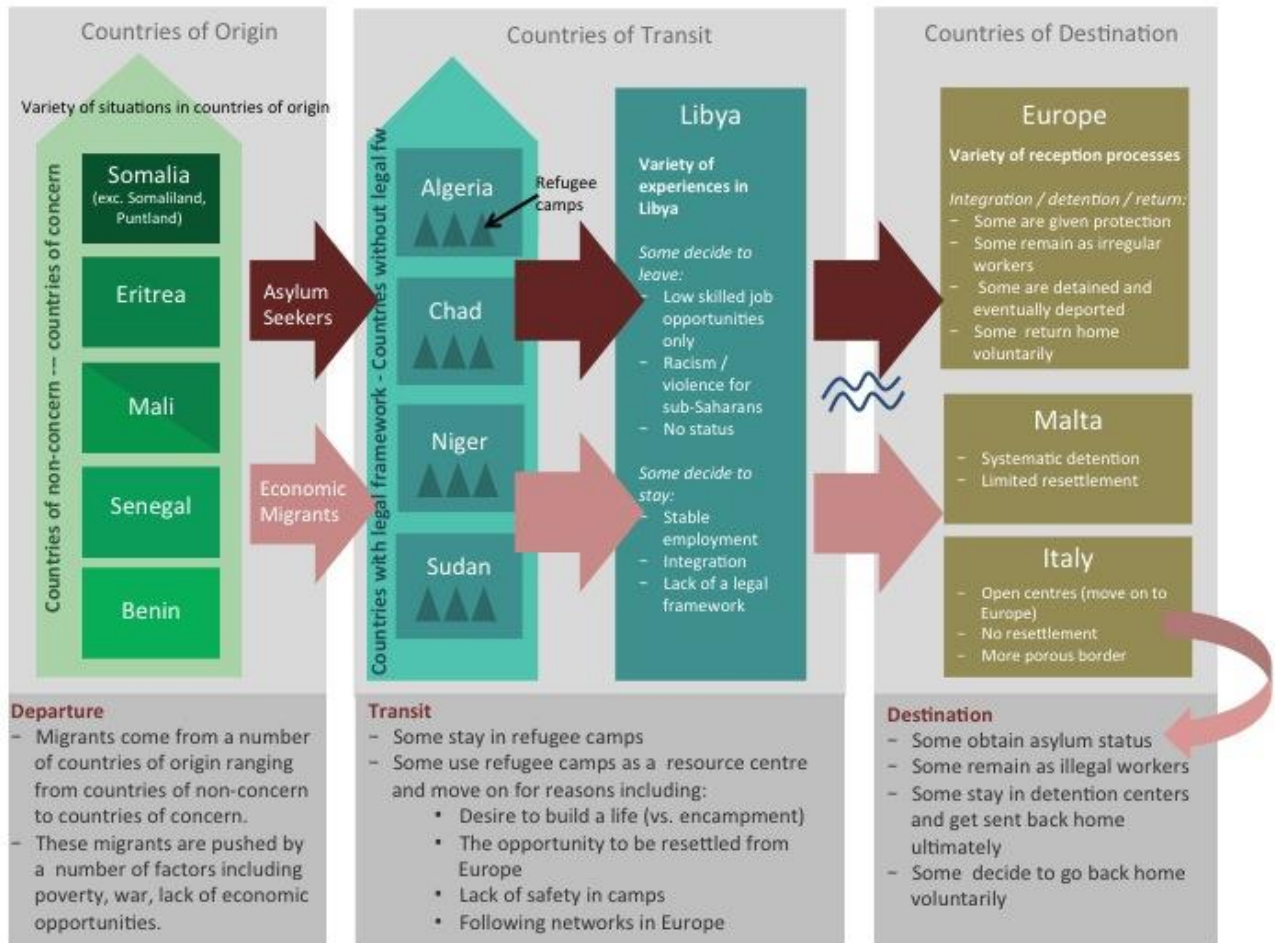


Figure 21: Mixed Migration: A variety of motivations and means along the same routes



## RECOMMENDATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

METHODOLOGY



MAIN ROUTES OF TRAVEL AND THE JOURNEY TO LIBYA



INFLOWS AND DYNAMICS IN LIBYA



OUTFLOWS TO EUROPE AND RETURNS HOME



CHANGES SINCE THE REVOLUTION



THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE JOURNEY



RECOMMENDATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES



## X. RECOMMENDATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

### 1. A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF MIXED MIGRATION

The analysis in the preceding sections demonstrates that mixed migration flows to Libya are problematic for a number of reasons and present a number of concerns, thereby requiring effective management. More specifically:

- There are a number of countries of origin and a spectrum of pre-departure situations which leads to a variety of profiles of migrants;
- There are a number of obstacles and consequent vulnerabilities that migrants are faced with in transit countries ranging from legal constraints, lack of job opportunities, racism, crime and smuggling, and challenges represented by the terrain (desert and sea) to their irregular status and their general lack of rights;
- The governments of these transit countries have their own policies for dealing with migrants, which means the situation changes from country to country and often migration organisations need to adapt their own strategies and preferences to respect the decisions of the local government;
- There is a lack of formal coordination across countries and few concrete attempts to create regional border management strategies, which contributes to the contextual inconsistencies that migrants face as they pass through various countries;
- In parallel, there are also different reception arrangements at the European ports of arrival as well as a growing concern about boat arrivals in Europe as the countries of destination struggle with the large flows they receive;

Given such a landscape, there is a need for a comprehensive approach to the management of mixed migration based on the spectrum of vulnerabilities and risks, actors, and opportunities that exist. Given the mixed flows and the challenges in separating asylum seekers from other migrants, tight coordination between the various actors in the field is essential in order to ensure that the issues at stake are effectively targeted.

This spectrum of actors, vulnerabilities and risks, and opportunities is delineated in Figure 22 below. It demonstrates that:

- A number of actors can be identified when it comes to the management of mixed migration, including international organizations (EU, UNHCR, IOM, as well as ICRC, UNODC, ILO, NRC, DRC and others depending on the country in question and issues at stake); the governments of the countries of origin, transit and destination; and a number of local NGOs and organizations that could potentially play an active role in addressing vulnerabilities provided that they are included in a well coordinated effort.
- A number of vulnerabilities, risks and obstacles, which were identified through this study, present themselves at different stages of the journey. They range from things such as poverty, war, political pressure and persecution in the countries of origin; to trafficking, crime, lack of status, racism and difficult terrain (to name a few) in countries of transit; and racism, detention and lack of employment in countries of destination. Many of these risks can be recurrent in the different countries that migrants pass through.

- A number of solutions can be envisioned to address these risks and resulting vulnerabilities that would require the engagement of the various actors available on the ground in each location. Due to the complex nature of mixed migration, such solutions would only be effective when viewed as part of a holistic approach to the issue and in an acknowledgement of the interrelated nature of the risks involved. Therefore, support opportunities would need to be positioned at appropriate points along the routes, coordinated in a timely manner and closely monitored in order to adapt to any changes adopted by migrants to circumvent interventions.

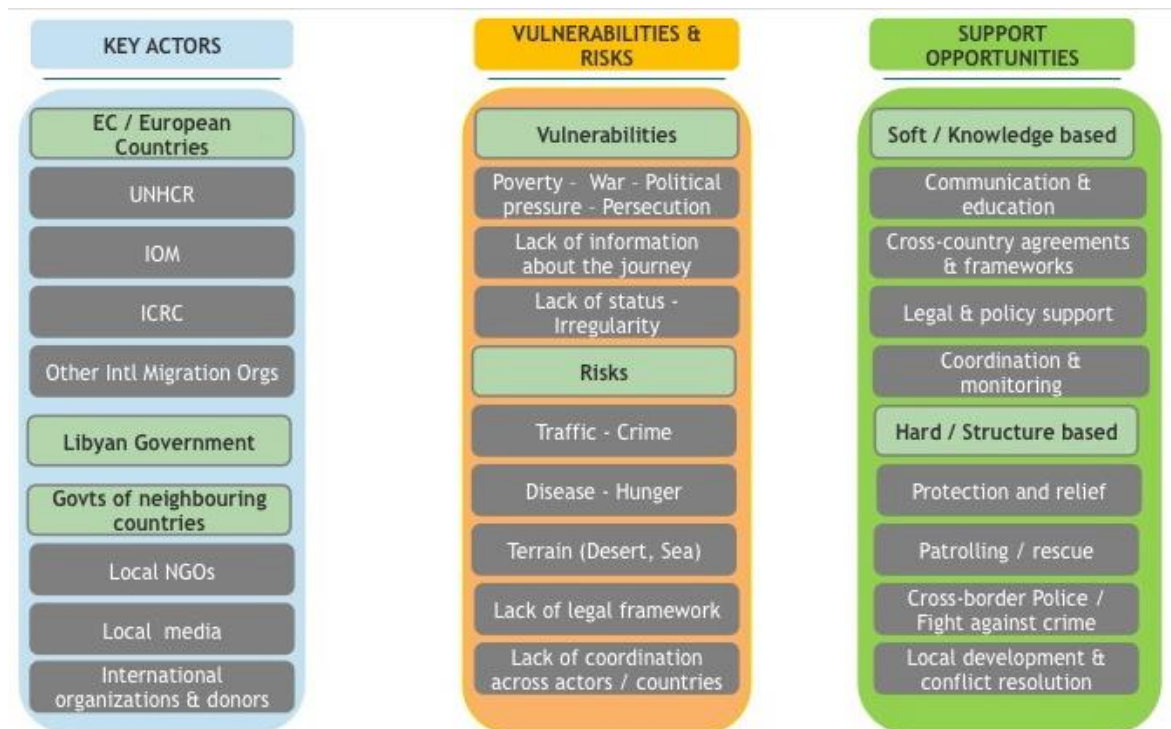


Figure 22: Management of mixed migration - spectrum of actors, risks, opportunities

### 1.1 TOWARDS A MIXED MIGRATION FRAMEWORK AND STRATEGY

To account for the complexity of mixed migration and the variety of actors to involve, issues to address and solutions to be deployed, a comprehensive mixed migration framework would need to be created which engages the collaboration of the key stakeholders from all countries involved. Specifically:

- It would need to take into account all key countries along the route (from countries of origin to destination) and the different actors that exist across the route;
- In each country, specific obstacles and areas of vulnerability can be highlighted (some examples being highlighted in the diagram below but not all of them);
- In each country local authorities and existing initiatives, actors and assets would be assessed, together with their willingness to collaborate in a collective effort;

- Each area of vulnerability would be linked to a strategy to address it, as well as a number of actors able to coordinate their work, across countries. This should lead to a number of action plans, covering the entire matrix of issues and opportunities, with a time dimension to be integrated so that initiatives are appropriately placed at the relevant points along the route;
- This work plan would be presented to all relevant actors in a multi-year strategy to manage mixed migration between Africa and Europe (probably requiring preliminary data to be gathered in West Africa and Morocco to ensure that the plan is comprehensive);
- Once validated by all stakeholders, the work plan would need to be closely monitored on a yearly basis to ensure that lessons learned, best practices and successes are built upon accordingly, while also allowing any inconsistencies to be addressed.

Such a framework is delineated in Figure 23.

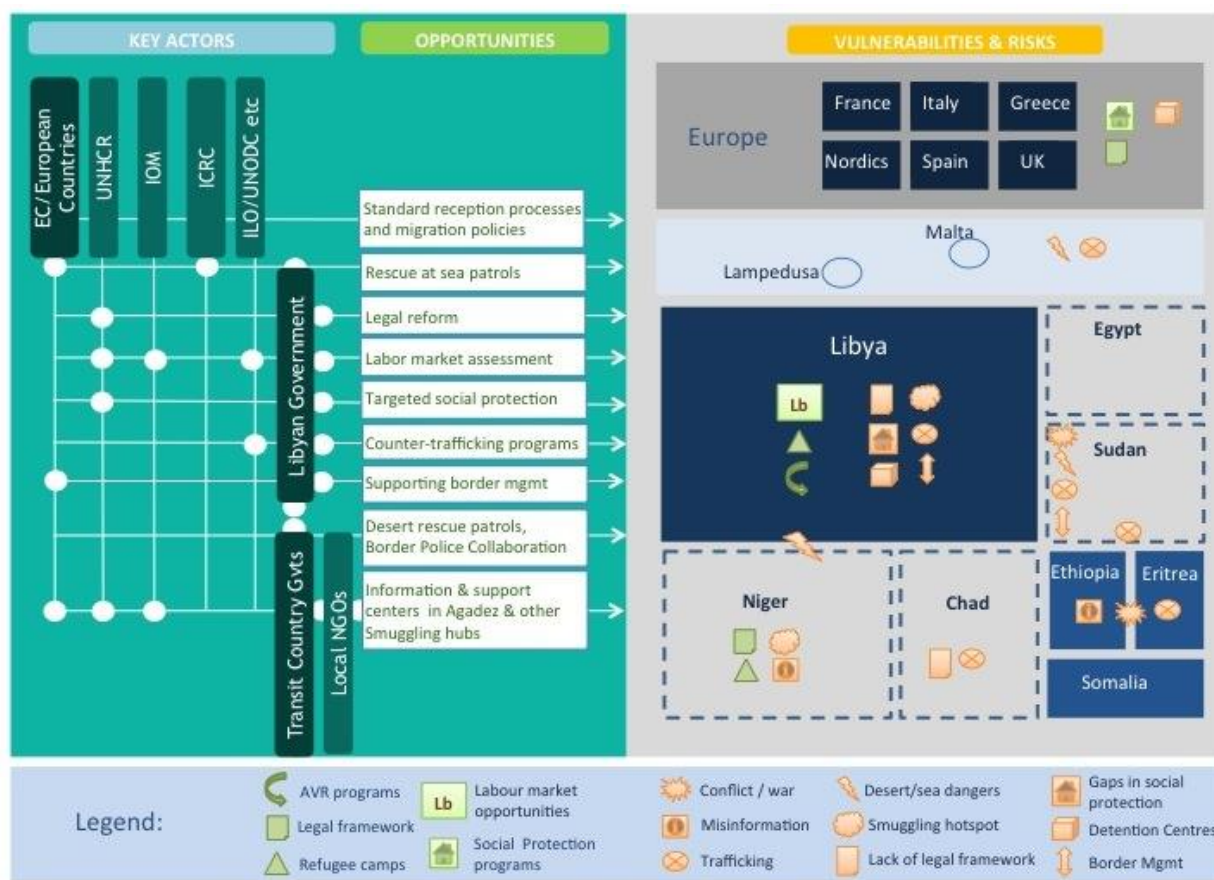


Figure 23: A roadmap for comprehensive management of mixed migration

In each country, a number of existing programs can be identified as already providing invaluable assistance to migrants. These are delineated in green in Figure 23 and include things such as return programs and protection programs. They represent assets to be incorporated into a future comprehensive strategy.

Along the different routes, certain vulnerabilities, risks and gaps were identified through this study and often they were recurrent at different points in the journey. They include things such as detention centres, war and conflict, lack of legal frameworks, and crossing the desert. They are

**delineated in red** in Figure 23 and most of these gaps can be addressed via the collaborative work of the different actors positioned on the left hand side of Figure 23.

In essence, the diagram provides a roadmap that demonstrates how the different actors can work together to target the various concerns along the way, across a number of countries.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the long-term framework for mixed migration that has been delineated above, some more immediate areas of opportunities can be addressed by international agencies in Libya, as well the UNHCR and the Libyan government.

### 2.1 FOR INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES IN LIBYA

Create strong coordination mechanisms and coordinated programs by:

- Identifying key areas of vulnerability for migrants;
- Identifying gaps in the legal framework and in the data on migration flows and the number of migrants in the country;
- Designing comprehensive protection strategies that incorporate the variety of expertise that can be provided by each relevant agency (such as IOM, UNHCR, DRC, ICRC, UNODC, ILO etc.) and include a variety of field, such as:
  - Legal framework
  - Detention policies and the management of detention facilities
  - Social assistance and welfare
  - Assisted returns
  - Labour market integration
  - Smuggling and trafficking
- Involving the Libyan government in these initiatives, particularly in the areas of data sharing and capacity development;
- Ensuring regional coherence by encouraging similar coordination of key actors involved in migration in the countries of origin and transit;
- Monitoring the impact of these programs, to avoid externalities, and the evolution and changes in migration patterns in general, in order to ensure that policies are relevant and effective.

### 2.2 FOR THE UNHCR

- Promote the creation of a comprehensive framework for the management of mixed migration between Africa and Europe that includes the engagement of national governments in each country;
- Develop strategic communication campaigns in conjunction with local partners in the various countries on the route in order to inform migrants at different stages of the migration cycle of the realities that await them in destination so that they can make more informed decisions. Also, to provide migrants with better information about the journey itself and the risks involved;
- Support the Libyan government in the development of a legal framework for refugee status determination and migration;
- Support the assessment of concrete opportunities on the Libyan labour market that could optimise the integration of refugees and asylum seekers.

### 2.3 FOR THE LIBYAN GOVERNMENT

- Develop a solid knowledge base on mixed migration, as well as the risks and opportunities that these flows represent for Libya, its economy and its society;

- Establish and maintain capacity and a system for data collection on migration issues, particularly inflows and outflows;
- Create a system for status determination as it will not only allow asylum seekers to be protected but may also discourage flows as migrants will no longer be able to take advantage of the legal vacuum;
- Re assess the policy of detaining migrants and the current management of detention centres (for example, separating vulnerable migrants from the rest);
- Continue creating links with neighbouring countries for the purpose of better border management and a coordinated regional approaches;
- Make greater efforts to integrate migrants into the Libyan labour market as it will address local labour supply needs while also effectively integrating migrant flows into the fabric of the country.



### 3. PERSPECTIVES

The analysis in the preceding sections demonstrates the complicated nature of mixed migration flows and leads to a number of perspectives to be considered when exploring strategies for the management of mixed migration flows.

#### 3.1 THE NEED FOR COMPREHENSIVE MANAGEMENT OF MIXED MIGRATION FLOWS

The analysis demonstrates that mixed migration flows to Libya are problematic for a number of reasons and present a number of concerns, thereby requiring effective management.

Migration flows into Libya are becoming a growing concern for Europe as a good proportion of the migrants arriving in Libya are taking advantage of the relative lack of controls and post-revolution anarchy in that country to make the boat journey to Europe. This is placing migrants at significant risk with a number of casualties, as well as deaths at sea, becoming realised. Moreover, it represents a growing social, political, and economic problem for Europe, particularly Italy and Malta, the main destinations for boats leaving the Libyan coast, as these countries are generally not in a position to be able to cope with the large influx of migrants that can arrive at any one time (particularly when many boats arrive in succession). This often necessitates regional solutions and finds these countries turning to the rest of Europe for assistance, and thereby turning the issue into a European one. One example of this is EU policies for burden sharing, which are meant to relieve the pressures on Italy and Malta and other European nations that act as major entry points for migration at sea by attracting the assistance of the rest of the continent.

Moreover, because the flows into Europe are mixed, and thus, not all migrants arriving qualify for protection, there is also the question of how to manage the inflows of economic migrants who enter irregularly. This question becomes especially pertinent in light of the fact that countries of origin are not always keen to intervene and facilitate passage home of their nationals in Europe, and as repatriation cannot occur without documentation to prove the identity of the migrant in question, these migrants can remain 'stranded' in Europe for many years.

There are also a number of serious humanitarian concerns wrapped in the problematic of mixed migration. Migrants are assuming great risks as they undertake dangerous and hazardous journeys, both through the Sahara to enter Libya and then at sea on the way to Europe. Many become sick and suffer injuries and of course, there are also a number of deaths.

Beyond the risks for human safety, migrants are also highly vulnerable to abuse and exploitation all along the route from country of origin to destination. They are exploited by smugglers and employers and abused often by locals in the countries they pass through. These high levels of vulnerability lead to many of them living deeply underground when they are in Libya, which further isolates them from the potential assistance of the UNHCR and other aid organisations, and thereby, further fuels their vulnerability.

#### 3.2 THE POTENTIAL NEXUS BETWEEN MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Beyond strategies to manage mixed migration flows in order to minimise risk, there is the question of tackling the problem at its root and improving the situation in countries of origin in order to eliminate the reasons for leaving. While it is traditionally thought that increasing development in countries of origin would decrease migration out of these countries, it is possible that migration could also have a positive effect on the development of the countries of origin. For example,

remittances sent home by migrants; the new skills that migrants learn during their migration and bring home with them; the exposure migrants receive to new ways of doing things, foreign cultures, and other lifestyles; and in some cases, the new levels of education they acquire abroad have potentially positive effects on the development of their countries of origin, which suggests that there may be other perspectives from which one could view the management of mixed migration.

### 3.3 WHAT SHOULD BE THE ROLE OF LIBYA IN THIS LANDSCAPE?

Libya plays a strategic role in this landscape, given the fact that it borders six nations and is positioned as a gateway between Africa and Europe. The crisis of 2011 also demonstrated that the state of affairs in Libya can have great consequence on flows into other countries in the region and the size and scope of those flows. It has also become clear that migrants view the current transitional period in Libya as a perfect time to the journey to Europe from the Libyan coast.

Moreover, the extent to which Libya remains attractive to migrants also affects flows into Europe. That is, the more challenging the Libyan experience becomes for migrants the more likely they are to leave and move on to Europe. The research demonstrated that there are a number of migrants that left their homes with no specific destination in mind and made attempts to settle in Libya before moving on to Europe. Had the environment been more welcoming these migrants could have been persuaded to stay in Libya and prevented from undertaking the extremely dangerous journey to Europe.

There are also affects in the opposite question. During the crisis, a community of long-term migrants in Libya, who had been living and working in the country for years, left and made their way to Europe in order to escape the conflict. After some time in Europe, waiting for their status to be determined and having difficulty securing employment, a number of them approached IOM and asked if they could be returned to Libya (which IOM was not in a position to facilitate). It is to be seen how much the continuing economic crisis in Europe will increase the attractiveness of Libya for migrants and what effect it can have on the flows between the two nations.

Beyond this interplay between Libya and Europe there is also the question of how foreign labour, in the form of migrants, could fit into the future Libyan economy. It is clear that Libya's strong GDP rates and small population have necessitated foreign labour in the past so this is likely to be the case in the 'new Libya.'

### 3.4 THE ROLE OF INFORMATION

Currently, it seems that both negative information about the risks of the journey, as well as positive information about 'the European dream' are circulating in countries of origin, creating mixed messages for migrants. As a result, there is often a feeling that, while the journey will be difficult, once one arrives in their destination their life will change completely. Yet many of the migrants interviewed in Libya and Europe expressed that their host country had not offered what they had expected and that they had been left quite disappointed. Moreover, they had spent large sums of money on the journey, which could have been spent more wisely to address the underlying problems that initially pushed them out of their home country. This information usually does not reach potential migrants back home as most of the migrants in Libya and Europe are too ashamed to admit that their migratory experience is problematic, so they instead create a false image of their lives in destination. It is possible that in such a landscape strategic communication campaigns in

countries of origin could address these mixed messages and potentially influence the decision to leave in the first place.

Moreover, given the fact that migrants are receiving information about the risks of the journey but still make the decision to undertake it anyway, it is not clear what kind of information would actually stop migrants from putting themselves at risk. Furthermore, if migrants are determined to undertake the journey in any case, information could perhaps be used to help migrants undertake it in a safer manner and avoid serious harm. This, however, gives rise to the question, what is the balance between protection and facilitation of the journey?

### 3.5 THE NEED FOR CONSTANT MONITORING OF STRATEGIES

Migration flows have proved dynamic in the face of obstacles with migrants and smugglers re-routing in response to bottlenecks and finding new ways to achieve the same purpose. This was demonstrated, for example, by the new routes that were created to avoid clashes in the Kufra region post-revolution. In practical terms, this means that any attempts to manage or mitigate migration flows have the potential to simply move the problem elsewhere. Thus, in order to comprehensively manage the issue, any solutions or strategies need to be monitored regularly to ensure that the risks and vulnerabilities are not relocated.

# XI. ANNEX 1: LISTS OF FIGURES

## Figures

Figure 1: Research approach.....	15
Figure 2: Country of origin of migrants interviewed, across the sample .....	28
Figure 3: Distribution of age of migrants, across the sample .....	28
Figure 4: Distribution of gender of migrants, across the sample .....	28
Figure 5: The dynamics of smuggling .....	53
Figure 6: The circulation of information.....	62
Figure 7: Push and pull factors for migration to and out of Libya.....	71
Figure 8: Propensity to settle in Libya according to employment and integration levels .....	74
Figure 9: Types of migrants in Libya .....	77
Figure 10: The spectrum of experiences for asylum seekers in Libya .....	90
Figure 11: Boat arrivals in Malta 2003-2012.....	116
Figure 12: Outcomes of applications for asylum, Malta 2012 .....	116
Figure 13: Protection granted according to nationality in Malta, 2012 .....	117
Figure 14: Arrivals by boat at Lampedusa, 2003-2012 .....	122
Figure 15: Assisted voluntary return provided by IOM Italy (IOM) .....	124
Figure 16: AVR from Libya to home country, 2006-3 Nov 2013 (IOM) .....	126
Figure 17: AVR from Libya to home country, Jan-30 Oct 2013 (IOM) .....	127
Figure 18: Main nationalities of AVR in Libya Jan-Oct 2013 (IOM) .....	127
Figure 19: Main nationalities of AVR in Libya, 2006-3 Nov 2013 (IOM) .....	127
Figure 20: Main changes in Libyan migration since the revolution .....	134
Figure 21: Mixed Migration: A variety of motivations and means along the same routes .....	137
Figure 22: Management of mixed migration - spectrum of actors, risks, opportunities .....	140
Figure 23: A roadmap for comprehensive management of mixed migration.....	141

## Tables

Table 1: List of literature reviewed.....	18
Table 2: List of KIIs conducted at the national level in Libya .....	19
Table 3: List of hotspots for Libyan fieldwork .....	21
Table 4: Number of IDIs with migrants in Libya per location .....	22
Table 5: List of KIIs conducted in Libya .....	23
Table 6: KIIs conducted in Sudan .....	24
Table 7: KIIs conducted in Ethiopia .....	24
Table 8: KIIs conducted in Somaliland .....	25
Table 9: KIIs conducted in Niger .....	25
Table 10: KIIs conducted in Malta .....	26
Table 11: KIIs conducted in Italy.....	26
Table 12: Total number of interviews completed .....	27
Table 13: Main communities of migrants in Libya .....	30
Table 14: Communities of migrants in Libya interviewed for this study .....	30
Table 15: Refugees and asylum seekers registered with UNHCR Libya as of Nov 30, 2013 .....	86
Table 16: Libyan border crossings studied .....	95
Table 17: Air and sea entry points, Libya.....	95

Table 18: Sizing the number of migrants in Libya: estimates and gaps in data .....	101
Table 19: List of detention centres under DCIM as of 09/05/2013 .....	106
Table 20: Departures at sea, Libya 2012 (UNHCR) .....	114
Table 21: Accommodation facilities in Malta .....	119

## Maps

Map 1: Total number of interviews conducted according to location .....	20
Map 2: Map of fieldwork hotspots in Libya .....	22
Map 3: All migration routes into Libya .....	31
Map 4: Routes from East Africa into Libya .....	32
Map 5: Routes through Niger .....	36
Map 6: Routes within Libya .....	42
Map 7: Routes from Libya to Europe .....	44
Map 8: Main forms of transportation per route .....	50
Map 9: Cost of main smuggling routes .....	57
Map 10: Entry points into Libya .....	96
Map 11: Routes from Libya to Europe .....	114

## Focus Boxes

Focus box 1: Definition of mixed migration .....	30
Focus box 2: Human trafficking at law .....	48
Focus box 3: Focus on Agadez, Niger .....	67
Focus box 4: The hawala system .....	69
Focus box 5: The Libyan legal framework for asylum at a glance .....	90
Focus box 6: The Dublin II Regulation .....	113

## Case Studies

Case Study 1: Ethiopian Migrant Detained in Libya .....	34
Case Study 2: Cameroonian Migrant Stranded in Niger .....	37
Case study 3: The route of a Somalilander (visual) .....	38
Case study 4: The route of a Senegalese (visual) .....	40
Case Study 5: Nigerian Migrant in Libya .....	41
Case Study 6: Somali Refugee in Malta .....	45
Case Study 7: Sudanese Returnee from Libya .....	58
Case Study 8: Female Eritrean Migrant in Libya .....	97
Case Study 9: Female Malian Migrant in Detention in Libya .....	128

## Images

Image 1: Tuareg in Dirj, Libya (Altai Consulting) .....	54
Image 2: Office of the Commission for Refugees; Khartoum, Sudan (Altai Consulting) .....	58
Image 3: Migrants in Tripoli's old city (Altai Consulting) .....	72
Image 4: Somali migrants in a temporary shelter in Tripoli (Altai Consulting) .....	75
Image 5: Chadian migrant in Tripoli (Altai Consulting) .....	78
Image 6: African garbage collectors, Tripoli (Altai Consulting) .....	78

Image 7: Migrants waiting at a roundabout in Tripoli (Altai Consulting) .....	80
Image 8: Female African migrants, Tripoli (Altai Consulting) .....	85
Image 9: Somali asylum seeker, Tripoli (Altai Consulting) .....	87
Image 10: Somali asylum seeker, Tripoli (Altai Consulting) .....	87
Image 11: Somali asylum seeker showing wounds from journey, Tripoli (Altai) .....	89
Image 12: Somali migrants in Abu Salim and the streets of Abu Salim (Altai) .....	92
Image 13: Somali asylum seeker, Tripoli (Altai Consulting) .....	94
Image 14: An African migrant flogs his wares at a market in Tripoli (Altai Consulting) .....	98
Image 15: Egyptian migrants waiting for work in Fashloum and working (Altai) .....	99
Image 16: Somali asylum seeker, Tripoli (Altai Consulting) .....	107
Image 17: Boat of migrants arriving at Lampedusa, April 2011 (Giorgos Moutafis) .....	109
Image 18: Beninese migrant at Hal Far Tent Village, Malta (Altai Consulting) .....	118
Image 19: African migrant working as garbage collector, Malta (Altai Consulting).....	120
Image 20: African migrant in Tripoli's old city (Altai).....	125