



**MIXED MIGRATION
MONTHLY SUMMARY**

**APRIL
2017**

MIDDLE EAST

This summary is produced by the Mixed Migration Platform (MMP) and covers inter- and intra-regional displacement and displacement-induced mobility, drawing widely from available sources.

Given the complexity of current migration trends in the Middle East, this summary gives a consolidated snapshot of mixed migration in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey. Current mixed migration issues in Israel/oPt fall within the remit of the Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMMS).

A note on terminology: Throughout the report the term 'refugees and other migrants' is used to include all persons in mixed migration flows (this may include asylum seekers, trafficked persons, refugees, migrants, and other people on the move). Any reference to specific groups is consistent with the original source.

Cover photo: A mother bakes bread for her children in an lformal Tented Settlement in Zahle, Lebanon. Credit: Dara Al-Masri / Danish Refugee Council, Jan 2017.

To be added to MMP's monthly migration summary mailing list, please contact admin@mixedmigrationplatform.org

Visit our website at: <http://www.mixedmigrationplatform.org/>

INTRODUCTION

April was marked by changing dynamics in the internal displacement situations in both Syria and Iraq. Displacement in Syria's Al-Raqqa governorate surged, with over 66,000 people displaced during the month due to the intensification of fighting around Tabqqa, close to Al-Raqqa city. In Iraq, heavy fighting continued in west Mosul, inducing large-scale displacement to camps in the north and west of the city. Although the trend of people returning from camps to east Mosul was interrupted towards the end of April with a spike in new camp arrivals, this movement continued, including from neighbouring countries. In April, a group of around 250 Iraqis were assisted to return from Turkey to east Mosul, the first such movement since the Iraqi security forces launched their operation to recapture Mosul in October 2016. In Turkey, the government continues to emphasise its progress towards the completion of its border wall with Syria, completing the 556 kilometre first phase of construc-

tion. Syrians and others, however, continue to move through and from Turkey to Greece, facing high risks along the journey: 24 deaths-at-sea were recorded in April, 16 of them in a single incident on 24 April off the coast of Lesbos. In Jordan, the situation at the berm, where an estimated 85,000 Syrians live in dire conditions, remains precarious. After an April car bomb attack that left three people dead near the border at Rukban, it is unlikely that access to the displaced population there will improve quickly, despite their urgent need for humanitarian assistance.

The following sections of this report describe monthly developments related to mixed migration by country, including reported arrivals, departures, internal displacement relevant to cross-border movement, and discussion of relevant policy changes.

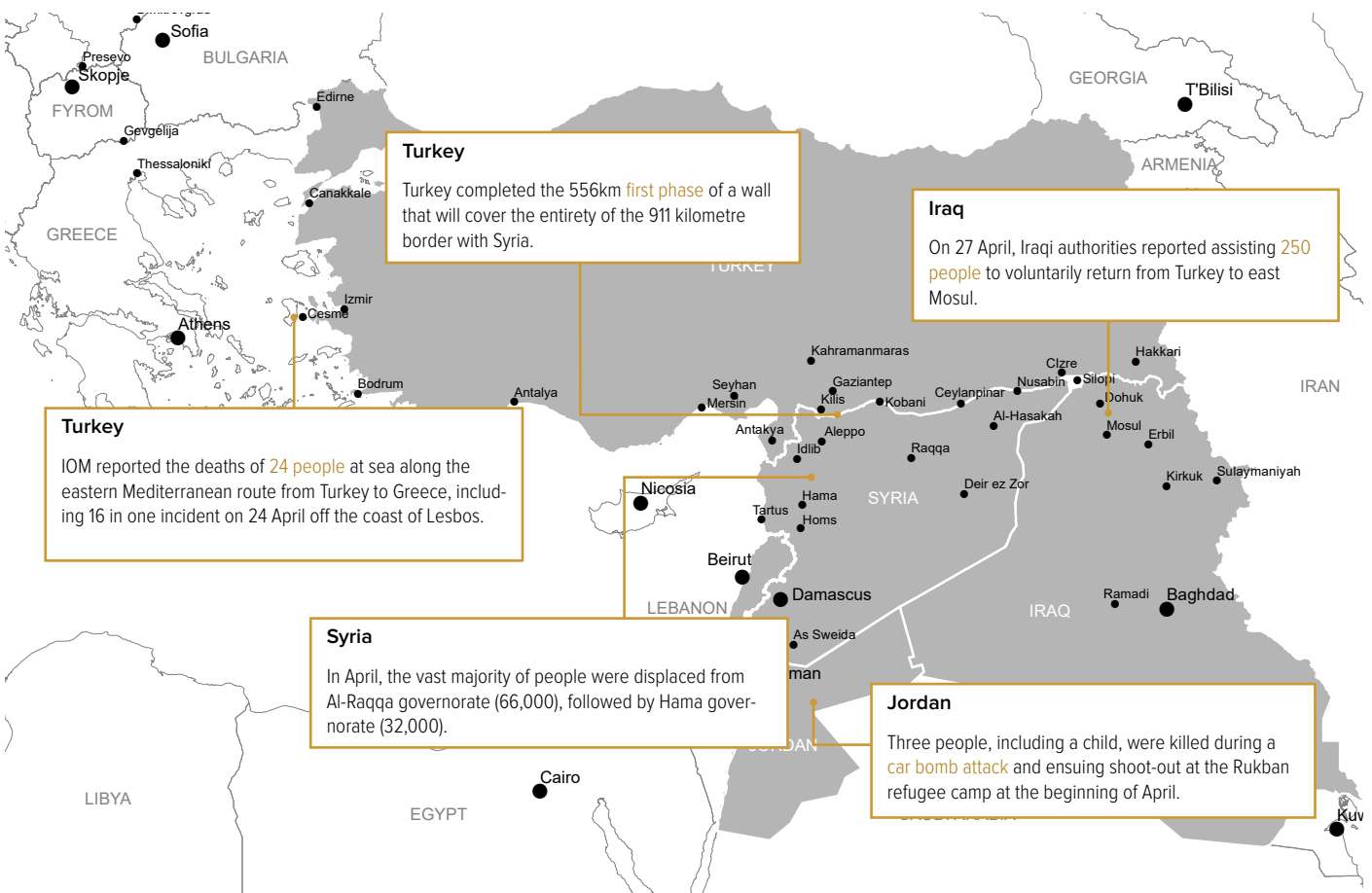


Figure 1: Overview of key developments across the Middle East (April 2017)

IRAQ

Arrivals: Although the overall number of refugees and other migrants arriving in Iraq in April was not reported, there are indications that Iraqis are returning home, not only from Europe as previously reported, but now also from Turkey. On 27 April, Iraqi authorities reported assisting 250 people to voluntarily return from Turkey to east Mosul. Overall Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) figures of Iraqis from Europe were not reported in April. IOM Finland reported that 539 persons returned from Finland to Iraq in 2017 under its AVRR programme, including 114 in April.

Departures: Although security forces report recapturing some 60% of the territory previously held by the so-called Islamic State, ongoing fighting in Mosul and other regions of Iraq continued to displace thousands of people both within Iraq (see Internal Displacement below) and internationally throughout April. As of 30 April, 15,411 Iraqis had been received at Al-Hol camp in Syria since October 2016. Growth in the camp population at Al-Hol continues, though it has slowed in

recent months, from approximately 3,700 new arrivals in February to 941 in March, and 700 in April.

Turkish Land Forces apprehended 87 Iraqis at land borders in April, a sharp decrease from the figure of 1,355 in March, though continuing a trend of monthly variations: there were 1,577 apprehensions in February, 234 in January, and 114 in December. Though these figures do not indicate where specific apprehensions were made, Silopi and Çukurca are the main entry points from Iraq to Turkey. No explanations of variations in the number of apprehensions per month have been published. Elsewhere in Turkey, authorities carried out widespread arrests in the week following the April referendum.

As of 30 April, UNHCR reported that neighbouring countries in the region host 253,992 Iraqi refugees, an increase of 3,040 since 2 March. No update was available for the number of Iraqi refugee and asylum seekers in Turkey at the time of reporting, but recent months have seen a steady increase, which likely continued in April.

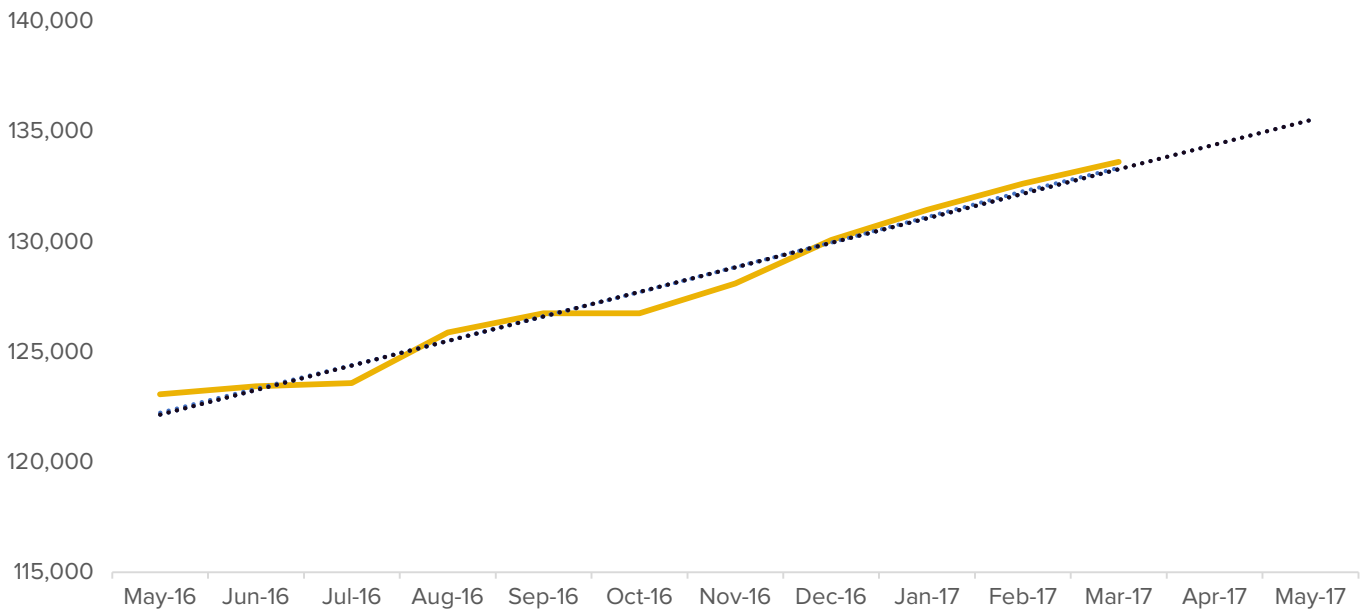


Figure 2: Trendline of estimated figures for Iraqi refugees and asylum seekers in Turkey in April (source: IOM Migrant Presence Monitoring UNHCR)

The number of Iraqis registered in Jordan continued to grow, but only by around 400 people, in line with the rates seen in recent months. As of 30 April, 62,830 Iraqis were registered in Jordan, compared to 62,445 at the end of March. 28,260 Iraqi refugees were registered in Iran as of early 2016, but updates are infrequently reported. The total number of Iraqi

refugees registered in Syria was 24,970 according to figures from the December 2016 Humanitarian Needs Overview. However, the number is expected to have grown as displacement from Iraq to Syria's Al-Hol camp continues.

As of 30 April, at least 1,007 Iraqis have arrived in Europe via the Mediterranean Sea this year. Iraqi arrivals

by sea to Greece increased slightly in April, from **163** to **185**, representing 16% of total arrivals of all nationalities for the month. In contrast to recent trends, the number of Iraqi arrivals grew, while overall arrivals decreased, resulting in a higher proportion of Iraqis among the overall flow. Although at least **275 Iraqis** arrived to Italy by sea in the first two months of 2017, data on arrivals only presents the top ten nationalities, which excludes Iraqis. Key **drivers** for people leaving **Iraq** include security concerns, lack of social justice, political and economic instability, the threat of the so-called Islamic State, and the risk of kidnapping by both state and non-state actors.

Refugees and Other Migrants in Iraq: As of 30 April, **239,639** Syrian refugees were registered in Iraq, mostly in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I), compared with 236,772 at the end of March (an increase of 1.2%). The number of Syrian refugees in Iraq has been increasing steadily since September 2016, but remains below the peak population of 251,690 recorded in July 2015. In a recent study by **Ground Truth Solutions**, 74% of Syrian refugees surveyed said their most important needs were not met, highlighting in particular a shortage of cash, healthcare and food/nutrition. Although refugees feel safe, they lack a means of income generation and fear that they may not be able to live without aid in the future.

Between January and April, the numbers of non-Syrian refugees in Iraq also grew slightly, from **42,548** to **43,303**. The number of stateless people in Iraq reported in April was **48,500**. **Media reports** continued to raise concerns that children born in areas under the control of the so-called Islamic State have not been registered and therefore risk becoming stateless. The NGO **Qandil** estimates that there are at least 3,000 unresolved cases of insufficient birth documentation among the displaced population near Mosul.

Internal Displacement: Although civilian casualties in April were fewer than in March, which had been the deadliest month for civilians in Iraq since Novem-

ber 2016, there were still **317** civilians killed and 403 injured. Just **38%** of casualties occurred in Ninewa province in April, compared to **65%** in March. Despite the slight reduction and diffusion of violence, displacement due to the Mosul offensive remained significant. As of 30 April, IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix had identified **339,558** people displaced due to the Mosul offensive, a 10.4% increase on end of March figures.

Although the displaced population continues to grow overall, there is significant **movement both into and back from IDP camps** surrounding Mosul. As of end April, most new arrivals were reported in camps south and west of Mosul, while arrivals to camps in the north slowed. Returns outpaced new arrivals to camps east of Mosul for most of the month, although the arrival of 3,067 individuals between 26 and 27 April reversed that trend. In total, **580,384** people have been displaced since 17 October 2016, including 419,000 from western Mosul alone. Over **141,000** people have been able to return, particularly to the east of the city. However, as Iraqi security forces prepare to open a new front in the northwest of the city in early May, the continued presence of **hundreds of thousands** of stranded civilians in the city is of humanitarian concern. Flooding from mid to late April compounded the situation of those stranded in the city, cutting off escape routes from, and aid supplies to, west Mosul.

In the second half of April and early May, new displacement was reported in the remote areas of western Anbar province, due to skirmishes west of Haditha. Over **4,000** people from Ana, Qa'im and Ru'ua districts were reported to have been displaced, and up to 70,000 could follow in the worst-case scenario.

Overall displacement numbers in Iraq have hovered around 3,060,000 since March. A total of 3,065,502 IDPs were reported at the beginning of May. Throughout April, the number of returnees grew by 8.4% to **1,776,822** individuals; in March it grew by only 4% on the previous month.

JORDAN

Arrivals: Security issues persist at the Rukban border crossing, where the informal settlement at the berm has been a consistent target for attacks by militants, leading to the closure of the crossing in **June 2016** and a **limiting of new arrivals**. Three people, including a child, were killed during a **car bomb attack** and an ensuing shoot-out at the Rukban refugee camp at

the beginning of April. Border closures continue to prevent Syrians from entering Jordan at this crossing, with the exception of vulnerable medical cases identified by health workers at the **UN clinic** on the Jordanian side of the border.

The only current access to the berm is for the purpos-

es of humanitarian aid **distribution**, limiting the ability of humanitarian responders to assess the scale of needs and response. **Satellite images** from 29 April illustrate a 23% increase in shelters at the Rukban border crossing since 17 February, with an estimated 8,382 shelters constructed. There are also indications that shelters are sprawling further away from the border, suggesting increased arrivals. Media report the total estimated population to be at least **85,000**. At Hadalat crossing, a **satellite map** published by UNO-SAT on 4 May illustrates a 10% decrease in shelters (now estimated at 1,396) from the previous image taken on 4 March. This could be indicative of departures from the Hadalat camp, given the lack of opportunities for regular entry to Jordan.

Departures: A total of **104** ‘spontaneous departures’ to Syria were reported from Jordan between 7 March and 4 April, 39 of whom were residing in Za’atari camp and 65 in urban areas. The majority returned to Dara’a. The main **explanation** given for departure was family reunification. The latest figure for the Za’atari camp population is **79,693** residents, with a 50% split between men and women.

Deportations of Syrians were increasingly **reported** on throughout April, with as many as “one-third of several thousand” returns to Syria since January reported as deportations by an official source. A major reason is the recent spike in penalisation of Syrians without documentation living outside of government-regulated camps. Many of the over **90%** of Syrians residing outside of these camps lack documentation, particularly since Jordan’s **cessation** of the regular ‘bailout’

procedure in 2014, leaving them at risk of deportation and facing challenges accessing services and safety.

Refugees and other Migrants in Jordan: As of April, Jordan is hosting **733,210** Persons of Concern to UNHCR, a **growth** of **2,743** from March figures. **659,089** Syrians were registered with UNHCR as of 30 April, yet the government **estimates** the number of Syrians to be closer to 1.3 million. Latest available data states that by mid-April, **62,830** Iraqi asylum seekers were officially registered in Jordan, up by 385 from March (62,445). The majority of Iraqis in Jordan were living in Amman (**88.4%**), followed by Zarqa, where **4.1%** are registered. Additionally, **145** Yemenis were registered between 4 April and the middle of the month, raising the total number of Yemenis registered by UNHCR in Jordan to 7,856. There were a total of **3,466** registered Sudanese as of mid-April, while the number of registered Somalis increased by **four** to 791 (17 of whom arrived in 2017). However, as many internationally displaced persons in Jordan lack documentation, the actual numbers of refugees and other migrants living in Jordan are expected to be higher. These groups are often sidelined from humanitarian protection and support – see MMP’s Displaced Minorities feature article **Parts I and II** for further information on the experiences and needs of Somali, Sudanese and Yemeni refugees and other migrants in Jordan. It should be noted that there remains some discrepancy between the latest figures of registered refugees collated from various sources for the month of April. This should be taken into consideration when examining the above totals.

Refugees and other migrants in Jordan

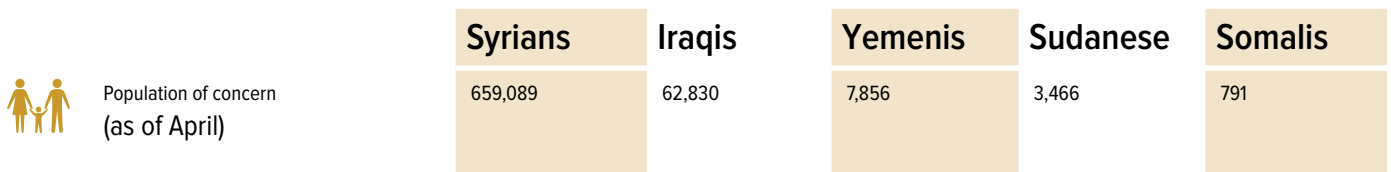


Figure 3: Refugees and other migrants in Jordan (source: UNHCR)

LEBANON

Arrivals: The Lebanese government imposed **visa restrictions** in January 2015, limiting the number of Syrians coming to Lebanon. Since then, data on new arrivals has been unavailable. Although some visa restrictions were **withdrawn** in February 2017,

up-to-date data on new arrivals has not yet been made available. **Reports from Lebanese local media**, however, indicate that Syrians continue to enter the country informally.

Departures: An Italian joint-initiative of religious

associations has established ‘humanitarian corridors’, facilitating the movement of people between Lebanon and Italy since February, and providing refugees with humanitarian visas and the possibility to apply for asylum after arrival. The programme plans to relocate 200 refugees from Lebanon (and potentially Morocco) to Italy between April and December 2017.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported in April the **detention and deportation** of migrant domestic workers who have given birth in Lebanon. According to HRW, since the second half of 2016 at least 21 migrant domestic workers who have had children in Lebanon have been deported with no formal justification.

Refugees and Other Migrants in Lebanon: As of April, OCHA estimates that a total of **1,500,000** registered and non-registered refugees are hosted in Lebanon. With 173 refugees per every thousand inhabitants, Lebanon hosts the most refugees per capita in the world. Although the latest available data dates from December 2016, it shows **1,011,366** Syrian refugees were registered with UNHCR. OCHA’s figures from April estimate **277,985** Palestine Refugees from Lebanon and 32,000 Palestine Refugees from Syria are living in the country. The latest available figures from March indicate that **6,000** Iraqis are registered with UNHCR in Lebanon, a decrease of **800** persons from mid-2016.

Vulnerability and Protection: On 7 April, **clashes** between security forces and armed groups broke out in the Palestine refugee camp of Ain al-Hilweh

in southern Lebanon: at least eight people were killed. **Violence spilled over** to Sidon, where the main government hospital was hit by a rocket. At least **40 people** were injured as a result.

Reports indicate that in the first weeks of April, some **3,000** Syrian refugees were evicted from makeshift settlements in Bekaa Valley following **eviction orders** issued by the Lebanese army in late March. Some of the evicted Syrian families were reportedly forced to move multiple times, and now **lack adequate shelter** as a result. A UNHCR spokesperson affirmed that the eviction orders could affect up to **10,000** Syrians living in Lebanon.

Lebanese authorities have grown progressively more hostile to Syrian refugees since February, as increasing **government evictions** have **forcibly displaced** Syrians across the country. An article by the New Arab reports that the mayor of Miniara declared in April that he plans to ‘**expel**’ Syrian refugees should their sponsors not cover their full cost of living. Also in April, a Syrian media organisation reported that some Syrians in Lebanon have had their **passports held** by Lebanese security services and have been threatened with immediate deportation.

According to an investigation published in April by the BBC, Syrian refugees in Lebanon are increasingly vulnerable to **organ trafficking**. The investigation highlights that selling body parts is becoming a **recurrent last resort** amongst Syrian refugees in Lebanon who do not have sufficient income.



Figure 4: A family in an Informal Tented Settlement in Zahle, Lebanon. Jan 2017. Credit: Mais Salman/DRC

SYRIA

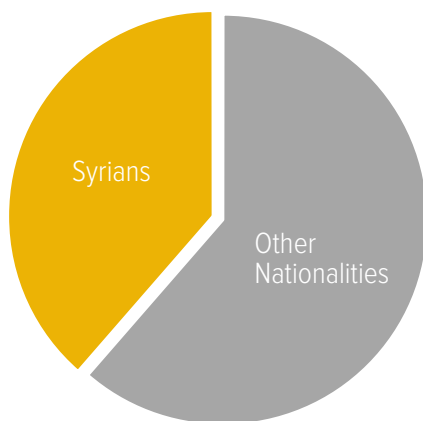
Arrivals: Ongoing conflict in and around Mosul continues to drive displacement into Syria. The number of Iraqis received in Al-Hol refugee camp in Al-Hasakah governorate increased by **700** in April. This represents a slightly slower rate than March when the number of Iraqis received grew by **941**, and a significantly slower rate compared to February when the same number increased by **3,700**. As of 30 April, **15,411** people have been received at the camp since 17 October 2016.

Syrian **returns** to Jarablus in Northern Syria from Turkey were again reported in April. The exact number of people to have returned is unclear. In April, Turkish officials are reported to have estimated that 38,000 people returned, with a daily arrival rate of around 200 people. This, however, contradicts government statements made in late March, which suggested that some **50,000** Syrians had returned to Jarablus since September 2016.

Departures: Since the beginning of 2017, the total number of Syrian refugees registered in neighbouring countries has been increasing each month. Although the overall numbers continued to grow in April, the monthly figure was lower: 28,047 Syrian refugees were newly registered in neighbouring countries in April, compared to 61,464 in March. As of 1 May, the total number of registered Syrian refugees in the region was to **5,052,283**.

In 2017, more Syrians were registered in Turkey than elsewhere in the region: this figure has increased by **177,930** since the start of the year, and by 22,898 in April alone. As of 27 April, the total number of Syrian refugees registered in Turkey was **2,992,567**. Although the borders are closed, irregular arrivals to Turkey are considered to be ongoing, although no new estimates were available in April. In Lebanon, **1,011,366** Syrians were registered by UNHCR as of 31 December 2016. A total of **659,089** Syrian refugees were registered in Jordan **as of 30 April**, marking an increase of **1,579** over the past month. In Iraq, the number of registered Syrian refugees increased by 2,876 in April, bringing the total number to **239,639**. In North Africa (Egypt, Algeria, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia), there were **152,332** registered Syrian refugees as of 30 April. This is an increase of 7,319 people since 9 February. Of the total number of Syrians registered in North Africa, 122,228 (80%) were in Egypt.

Syrians continue to take the eastern Mediterranean route to Europe, albeit in relatively small numbers: 37% of the **5,282** sea arrivals recorded in Greece in the first four months of 2017 were Syrian nationals. Almost 2,000 have arrived this year, although monthly rates have varied. In February, Syrians comprised **433** out of a total of 1,089 sea arrivals to Greece. In March, there were **1,526** sea arrivals to Greece, **671** of whom were Syrian. In April, the number of Syrian arrivals decreased again to **447** out of a total of 1,156 arrivals.



Approximately **40%** of new arrivals are Syrians

Figure 5: Proportion of Syrians among monthly sea arrivals to Greece in April 2017 (source: UNHCR)

Since the beginning of 2016, increased restrictions on movement have been put in place both inside Syria and in neighbouring countries – land borders are tightly controlled and there are strict visa requirements to enter Lebanon and Turkey. In April, the first section of the **border wall** between Turkey and Syria was completed. It is currently 556 kilometres in

length and three meters high. The completed wall will stretch the entire length of the 911 kilometre border; it is expected to be finished in Autumn 2017. The border with Jordan is closed, which has resulted in around **85,000** Syrians becoming stranded at the berm. An unknown number of Syrians continue to attempt to leave the country via irregular means.

Refugees and other migrants in Syria: In March, UNHCR released updated figures on the total number of refugees and asylum seekers inside Syria: there are a total of **54,176**. This is an increase on the **46,118** registered refugees at the end of 2016. As of March, the majority of refugees were in the Rural Damascus and al Hasakah governorates. Statistics for December 2016, for when the most recent numbers are available, show that at least **24,970** of the total number are Iraqi. The others are primarily from Afghanistan, Sudan, Somalia and Pakistan. An estimated **430,000** Palestinian refugees also remain in need of humanitarian assistance in Syria, 280,000 of whom have been internally displaced by conflict.

Internal Displacement: At the end of April, **751,468** people were reported to have been displaced in Syria's northern governorates: this includes 401,708 in Aleppo, 133,053 in Hama, 97,495 in Idlib, 98,263 in Al-Raqqa, 10,418 in Homs, 5,294 in Al-Hasakah and 5,237 in Deir-Ez-Zor. In April alone, **120,005** people were newly displaced, representing an increase of 42% compared to the monthly rate of displacement in March, when over **84,000** people were displaced from northern governorates. These numbers likely include secondary displacement. In April, the vast

majority of people were displaced from Al-Raqqa governorate (**66,275**). In Hama governorate, **31,995** were displaced between 1 and 25 April. This marks a change from March when most newly displaced in Syria were from **Aleppo** governorate (75,000). Increased displacement in Al-Raqqa is due to intensification of fighting in Tabqqa, close to Al-Raqqa city.

In April, **evacuations** were carried out from the besieged cities of Foah and Kefraya in Idlib governorate, and Madaya and Zabadani in Rural Damascus governorate. Around 11,800 people were evacuated in total. The evacuation was suspended in mid-April after an improvised explosive device killed over 100 people along the transit route.

The situation in southern Syria remains insecure, with ongoing fighting between government and opposition groups continuing to drive displacement. At the end of April, a total of **20,073** people were displaced in southwest Syria, including 4,646 in April alone, the vast majority of whom were displaced from Rural Damascus. At the end of April, fighting between non-state armed groups intensified in **Ghouta** in the eastern suburbs of Damascus: displacement has increased and around 400,000 people were estimated to be besieged.

TURKEY

Arrivals: In April, Turkish Land Forces reported the apprehension of **20,803** people irregularly crossing land borders into Turkey, coincidentally the same total

as **March**. Most were apprehended at the Syrian border (20,465), an increase of 1,589 from the previous month. Decreases were reported at all other borders



Figure 6: Apprehensions at Turkey's land borders, by country

with **141 people** apprehended at the Greek border (a decrease of 24), 110 apprehended at the Iranian border (a decrease of 297), and 87 apprehended at the Iraqi border (a decrease of 1,268).

In April, Turkey announced the completion of a **556 kilometre**, three-metre high **border wall** along its border with Syria – the **first phase** of a wall that will cover the entirety of the 911 kilometre border with Syria, due to be completed by Autumn. **Turkish officials** claim that the country **intends to maintain** its ‘**open door**’ policy for **emergency situations**, though border closures in **March 2015**, and the introduction of strict **visa requirements** for Syrians entering by air or sea, have made it difficult, if not impossible, to legally cross the border.

According to Greek officials, as of 6 May **1,094 refugees** and other migrants had been returned to Turkey under the **EU-Turkey Agreement**, with **150** returns occurring as part of four return ‘events’ in April. These **returns** included people from Pakistan (105), Algeria (19), Bangladesh (13), Morocco (6), Nigeria (2), Afghanistan (1), Nepal (1), Syria (1), and two others of unspecified nationality.

In April, Turkish officials **again** threatened to **suspend** the EU-Turkey Agreement if progress is not made on the implementation of visa-free travel for Turks in the **Schengen Zone**. The EU, however, has **affirmed** its commitment to the Agreement, claiming that the **€3 billion** promised to the Turkish refugee response under the agreement, should be transferred on time by the end of the year.

Departures: In April, the **Turkish Coast Guard** reported 34 ‘irregular migration incidents’ in the seas surrounding Turkey, the same number reported in March. The incidents in April, however, involved 1,551 ‘irregular migrants’, an increase of 50 people compared to March figures. The top ten countries of origin of people ‘**apprehended/rescued**’ by the Coast Guard in April included, in descending order: Syria, Pakistan, Congo, Palestine, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Mali, India, Iraq, and Bangladesh, with Palestine, Mali, India, and Bangladesh newly added to the list in April.

Arrivals by sea to Greece declined in April, with **1,156** people reported by UNHCR, a decrease of 370 individuals compared to March figures. Of these arrivals, 447 were from Syria, 185 from Iraq, 77 from Afghanistan, 56 from Algeria, and 42 from the Democratic Republic of Congo, with some 349 people (30.2%) arriving from unspecified ‘other’ countries. An **IOM spokesperson** highlighted the shifting nationalities arriving in Greece in the first four months of 2017, noting that Haitians and Dominicans have been crossing

from Turkey, as well as growing numbers of people from the Congo, Algeria, Kuwait, and Cameroon. UNHCR also reported the arrival of 40 people to **Cyprus** in April, though their nationalities were not disclosed.

Reports indicate that following an **attempted coup** in July 2016, **Turkish diplomats and military officials** have been claiming asylum in EU countries. While no new figures were available for April, the death-at-sea of a **Turkish national** attempting to reach Greece was reported. Those fleeing Turkey are using the **same smuggling routes** as Syrian refugees and other migrants across the Aegean, as well as via the land border with Greece.

Refugees and other migrants also attempt to exit Turkey, in smaller numbers, via the country’s land borders. In April, **Turkish Land Forces** apprehended 1,247 people trying to depart to **Greece** via the land border at the **Evros river**, 569 fewer than the previous month. As of 28 April, the **Bulgarian Ministry of Interior** had apprehended 64 people attempting to enter irregularly via the Turkish border in April, 79 fewer than in March. **Turkish Land Forces** reported 119 apprehensions of people attempting to enter Bulgaria along the Turkish side of the border. **Turkish authorities** point to a significant decrease in apprehensions compared to 2016 as evidence that fewer refugees and other migrants are crossing through Bulgaria, a claim supported by the **EU**. **Apprehensions** of 56 people trying to exit at the Syrian border, four at the Iraqi border, and two at the Iranian border were all reported in April.

In early April, Turkey’s Foreign Minister announced that some **50,000 Syrians** have returned to areas **captured** by Turkish troops and Turkish-backed forces in northern Syria, while on 11 May a local migration official said that less than **38,000** have returned, making the exact number unclear. On 27 April, some **250 Iraqis** voluntarily returned from Turkey to East Mosul, with support from Iraqi authorities.

Refugees and Other Migrants in Turkey: The most recent figures from Turkey’s DGMM indicate that the country is hosting some **3.2 million** foreign nationals seeking international protection. As of **27 April**, this figure includes **2,992,567** Syrians granted temporary protection, an increase of 22,898 from 30 March. Figures for the number of other foreign nationals requiring international protection in Turkey, however, have not been updated since March when **133,632** Iraqis, 128,931 Afghans, 32,080 Iranians, 3,598 Somalis, and 8,550 people of other nationalities were reported.

Refugees and other migrants in Turkey

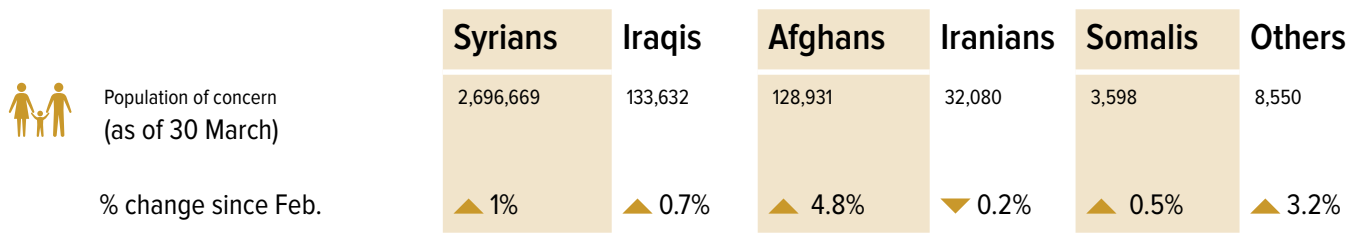


Figure 7: Refugees and other migrants in Turkey (source: DGMM / IOM)

Vulnerability and Protection: In April, IOM reported the deaths of **24 people** at sea along the eastern Mediterranean route to Greece, 13 more than the previous month, bringing the total deaths along this route in 2017 to 37. At least **16 people** died on 24 April when an inflatable boat carrying 20 to 25 people **capsized** off the coast of Lesbos. One of the reported casualties was a **Turkish national** attempting to reach Belgium.

According to IOM’s **April update** of flow monitoring surveys looking at human trafficking and other exploitative practices, of 1,221 respondents (from 47 different countries of origin) along the eastern Mediterranean route, 10% reported experiencing at least one form of exploitation, with positive responses highest among participants from Syria and Iraq. 84% of reported incidents occurred in Turkey. Indicators include being held against one’s will, working without receiving expected remuneration, forced labour, and

offers of arranged marriage. The survey also shows more than half of respondents said their journey cost between US\$2,500 and US\$5,000, with 31% reporting paying even more than this.

Internal Displacement: The most recent available figures indicate that security operations have displaced between **355,000** and **500,000** people in Turkey’s **predominantly Kurdish southeast** since December 2015. **OHCHR** has described a situation of ‘massive destruction and serious rights violations’ in the area since July 2015. Additionally, reports from late April indicate that under a controversial **urban transformation plan** in south-eastern Turkey, residents of Sur district, in the city of Diyarbakir, have been forced to **evacuate** their homes to allow for the restoration of the historic area. Evacuees feel that compensation for their relocation is inadequate.

For an infographic update on mixed migration trends in April please see this **report** from DRC Turkey.

OTHER NEWS

Syrians stranded at Algeria-Morocco Border:

Morocco’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs has accused Algeria of forcing **54 Syrians** to irregularly cross the border into Algeria, where they were then expelled between 17 and 19 April. Algeria has denied the accusations.

Rescues and Fatalities on the Central Mediterranean Route:

According to the Italian Coast Guard more than **8,500** refugees and other migrants were rescued in 73 operations in the Central Mediterranean over the weekend of 15 and 16 April. **Frontex** reportedly rescued some 1,400 people in the same period. Nearly **13,000** arrived by sea in Italy in April, while **275 deaths** were reported along this route.

Greece Paying to Reject Appeals:

According to the **EU Observer** Greece is paying cash incentives of

€1,000 and a plane ticket home to rejected asylum seekers who agree to forego their right to appeal and leave the country. People reportedly have **five days** following the rejection of their claim to make a decision, leading humanitarian actors to label the policy as ‘complicated and quite immoral’.

Hungary-Serbia Border Fence:

According to the Hungarian Prime Minister a second **border fence** has been completed along the border with Serbia. The fence is meant to control irregular migration from Serbia and is in addition to a fence built in 2015 along the borders of Serbia and Croatia. The completion of the fence comes amid Hungary’s admission that members of its police force face charges of **physically abusing** refugees and other migrants along the border with Serbia.

Hunger Strike on Lesbos: On 21 April, **twelve Syrian men**, eleven of whom are Kurdish, began a **hunger strike** at the Moria Camp on Lesbos. The men are protesting slow asylum application procedures, unfair

conditions, a lack of rights, and the inability to move from the island to mainland Greece.

See also MHub Monthly Trend Bulletins (accessible [here](#)).

NEW RESEARCH AND REPORTS

In collaboration with **MMP**, **Ground Truth Solutions** has completed a first round of surveys with **refugees** in Lebanon, and **IDPs** and **refugees** in Northern Iraq (the full study can be found on their [Iraq country page](#)). The surveys aim to better understand the evolving perceptions of IDP and refugee communities in these countries with regards to humanitarian assistance, looking specifically at information needs, trust, awareness, respect, transparency, and levels of support.

ACAPS in collaboration with **IFRC** has released a new **scenario report**, based on workshops held in Budapest, looking at possible developments in Libya, Italy, Spain, and other countries of transit over the next six months. Four scenarios of varying likelihood were identified: a slight increase in migration via North Africa to the EU, a large increase in migration and readmissions, the enforced closure of the central Mediterranean route, and improved internal security in Libya.

An April **article** from IRIN draws on **research** conducted by **REACH** and **MMP** to highlight the ways in which restrictive European family reunification policies are separating refugee children from their families (see accompanying REACH article [here](#)). The article identifies a trend in the EU of family reunification becoming increasingly difficult, citing examples from Germany, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland.

In an **article** from **Foreign Affairs**, interviews conducted with more than 1,100 Syrians in Turkey in late 2016 explore the perceptions and desires of displaced Syrians regarding their individual and collective futures. Key findings include the desire of 90% of respondents to return to Syria, ideally within five years, and limited interest in onward movement to Europe.

The **Greek Forum of Refugees** has produced a **new guide** for asylum seekers in Greece, highlighting asylum application procedures, registration, rights, appeals, and other useful information.

A **Refugees Deeply** **article** looks at the ‘invisibility’ of refugee and migrant women along the western Balkan route to Europe. As borders close and people turn to riskier routes, women and girls are increasingly susceptible to abuse and trafficking – many of those suffering such abuse never appear in official data.

Oxfam, in collaboration with the **Belgrade Centre for Human Rights** and the **Macedonian Young Lawyers Association**, has produced a **briefing paper** entitled “A Dangerous ‘Game’: The Pushback of Migrants, including Refugees, at Europe’s Borders”. The paper looks at law enforcement abuses in western Balkan countries and the violent denial of access to asylum procedures and international protection in these countries.

Warwick University has released a **report** based on the findings of more than 250 interviews in seven Mediterranean and transit cities, looking at the impact of EU policies on recent migration trends. The report analyses how policies affect people on the move, offering case study analyses and recommendations to European policy makers.

A new **report** from the **Harvard FXB Centre for Health and Human Rights** highlights the exploitation and abuse of refugee and migrant children in Greece, in what it terms a ‘growing epidemic’. The report focuses on the conditions in camps that lead to situations of abuse and exploitation, often as a survival mechanism.

The Mixed Migration Platform (MMP) is a joint-NGO initiative providing quality mixed migration-related information for policy, programming and advocacy work, as well as critical information for people on the move. The platform was established by seven partners - ACAPS, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Ground Truth Solutions, Internews, INTERSOS, REACH & Translators Without Borders (TWB) - and acts as an information hub on mixed migration in the region. For more information visit: mixedmigrationplatform.org

To be added to MMP's monthly migration summary mailing list, please contact admin@mixedmigrationplatform.org
Visit our website and access past reports at: www.mixedmigrationplatform.org/