

Protection risks along migration routes through North Africa to Italy

This snapshot introduces the second analysis of the 4Mi data collected through interviews with refugees and migrants in Italy and focuses on migration routes starting from Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire. It identifies the major stops along these routes, the most dangerous locations as reported by migrants and refugees and what type of risks they face, with the aim to add to the evidence base for policy and programming responses. For more information about MMC's 4Mi data collection initiative, see <http://www.mixedmigration.org/4mi/>

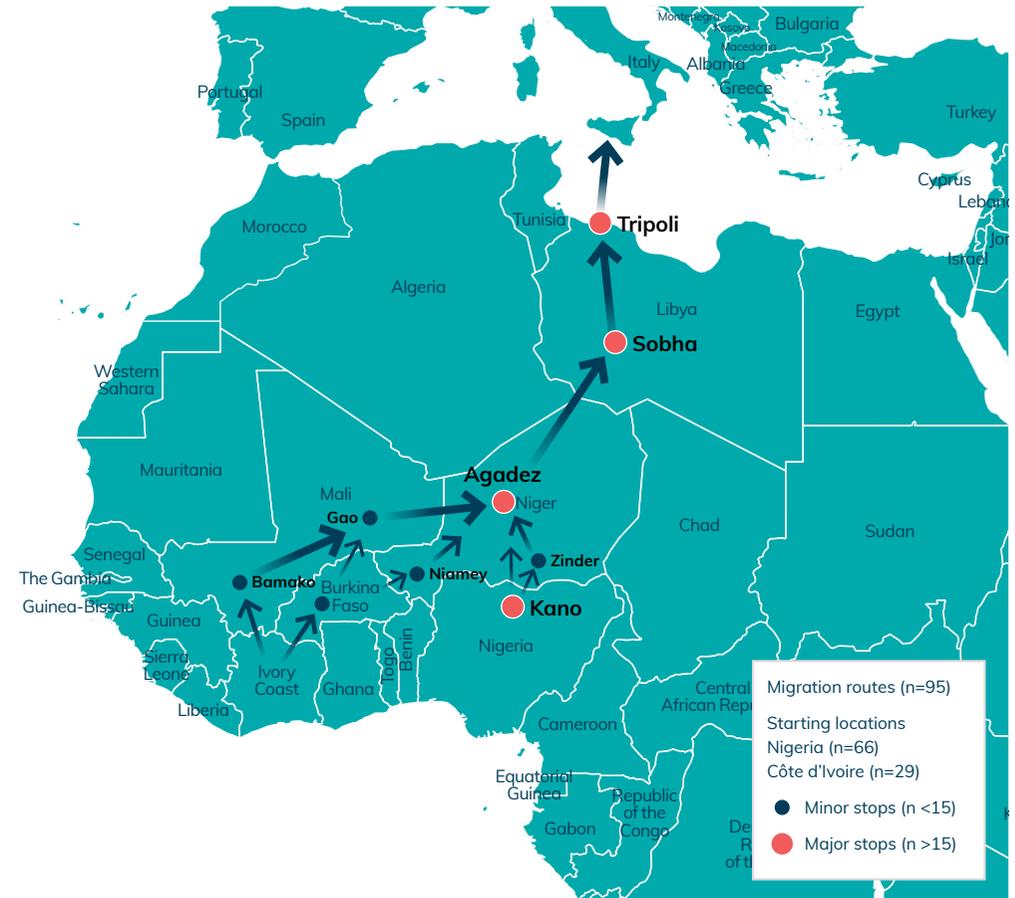
Conditions for refugees and migrants and the COVID-19 pandemic

This snapshot provides information on journeys that occurred before COVID-19 was declared a pandemic. MMC's research since the pandemic indicates that the situation and risks migrants and refugees face along these routes are likely to have [worsened](#) as border closures and movement restrictions result in use of more risky routes and further exposure to abuse and exploitation. Since the pandemic, MMC has continued to collect data among refugees and migrants focusing on the impact of the COVID-19 crisis. In Italy, it has collected qualitative data. In West Africa, East Africa, North Africa, Asia and Latin America, it has conducted quantitative data collection. For more information on these reports visit the COVID-19 section on the MMC website: <http://www.mixedmigration.org/resource-type/covid-19/>

The sample used for the analysis in this report includes 95 respondents (68 men and 27 women) and data was collected between 25 November 2019 and 10 March 2020. The respondents originate from Nigeria (66) and Côte d'Ivoire (29).

Main migration routes from Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire

Figure 1. Migration routes starting from Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire



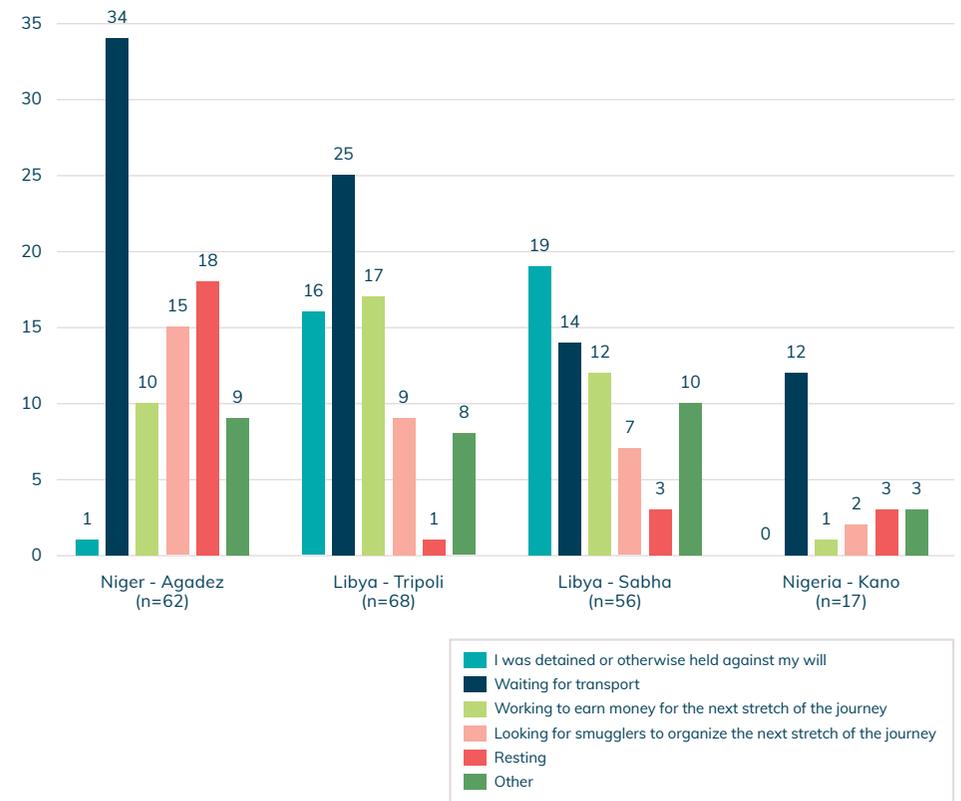
Respondents who started from Nigeria all followed a similar route, as seen in Figure 1. For 42 out of 66 Nigerians interviewed, the first major stop outside of Nigeria was Agadez in Niger. A smaller group reported stopping in the town of Zinder in Niger (n=10) before reaching Agadez. People then stop in Sabha, in the Sahara in Libya (n=38). From Sabha the route continues north to the Libyan ports of Sabratha (n=11) or Tripoli (n=42), where migrants and refugees embark on boats to cross the Mediterranean Sea and reach Italy.

The data on journeys starting from Côte d'Ivoire (n=29) support [existing literature](#) and point to two major routes to reach Agadez, from where people follow the same path towards the north of Libya. On the way to Agadez, some pass-through Burkina Faso, with a first stop in Ouagadougou (n=13) and then make Niamey (n=12) before reaching Agadez. A second group of respondents passed through Mali (n=9), stopping in Bamako and then in Gao, from where they crossed the Mali-Niger frontier in order to reach Agadez¹.

The main reason for stopping is to wait for transport

As indicated in Figure 1, the four major stops during the migration routes from Nigeria or Côte d'Ivoire are: Kano (Nigeria), Agadez (Niger), Sabha (Libya) and Tripoli (Libya). People largely stop at these locations for logistical reasons. Most people who stopped in Kano (12), Agadez (34) and Tripoli (25) did so in order to wait for transport, see Figure 2. In Agadez people look for transport to cross the Sahara. In Tripoli refugees and migrants wait to embark on boats to cross the Mediterranean Sea. For Libya, the data also shows that people to a larger extent stop in Tripoli (16) and Sabha (19) because they are either detained or otherwise held against their will.

Figure 2. Main reasons for stopping along the route



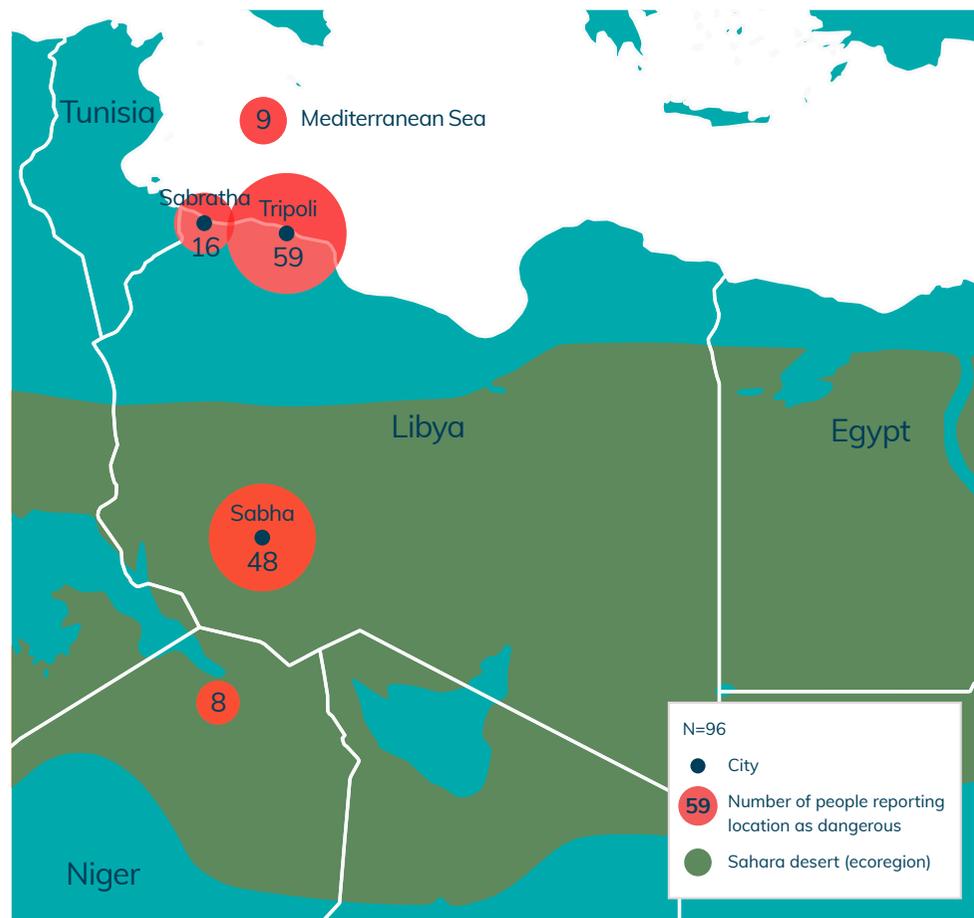
Note: The data comes from a multiple-choice question in the 4Mi survey. The 'n' represents the total number of people that reported stopping in each location.

¹ A smaller amount of people (n=4) travelled from Mali through Algeria to reach the Mediterranean Sea.

Tripoli and Sabha reported as most dangerous locations

Respondents most frequently highlight locations in Libya as the most dangerous on the route they travelled: out of all 95 respondents who were in Libya, 59 report Tripoli as dangerous, and 48 report Sabha. There is a relatively low number of people reporting the Mediterranean Sea as the most dangerous location (9), as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Most dangerous locations reported along the routes

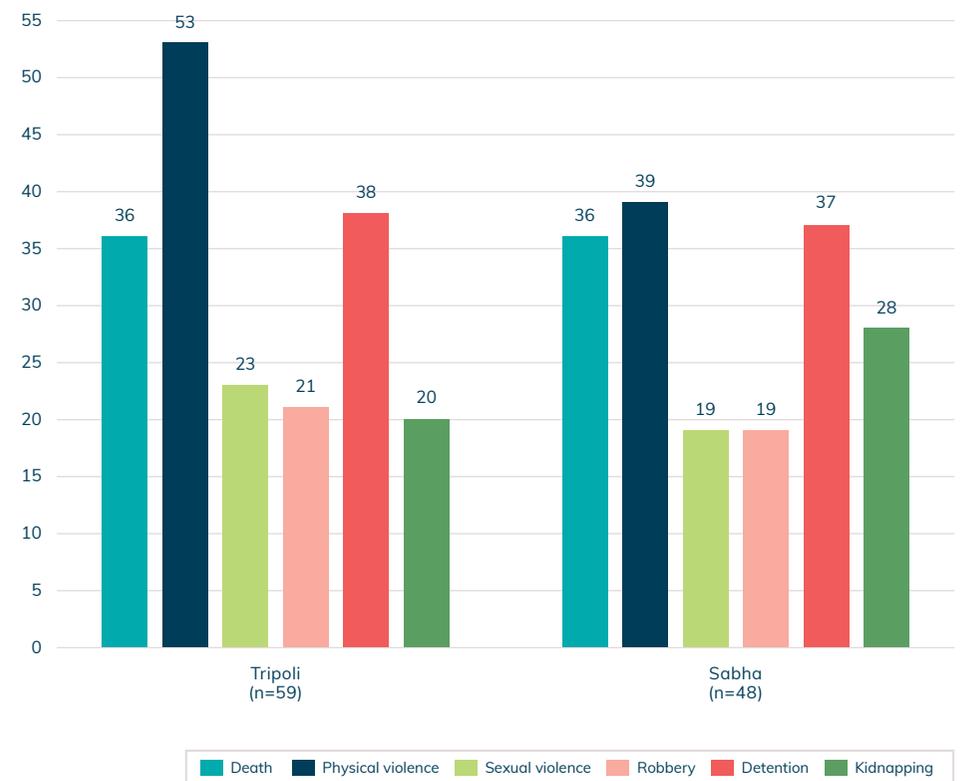


Note: Not all respondents passed through all locations.

Physical violations are reported as the main risk

Figure 4 shows that refugees and migrants consider the main risks in Tripoli and Sabha to be physical violence, supporting previous findings in the [4Mi Snapshot](#) by MMC North Africa. The risk of being detained is recorded as the second most likely risk in those same locations, while the risk of death is also high. Almost all respondents that mention either the Sahara Desert or the Mediterranean Sea as a dangerous location report that this is due to the risk of death. As of the end of June, some 136 people are known to have died during the sea journey from Libya in 2020, a number that is likely to be much higher than reported figures. 1,830 deaths at sea were recorded during 2018 and 2019.

Figure 4. Main risks reported in Tripoli and Sabha





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4Mi

The [Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism Initiative](#) (4Mi) is the Mixed Migration Centre's flagship primary data collection system, an innovative approach that helps fill knowledge gaps, and inform policy and response regarding the nature of mixed migratory movements and the protection risks for refugees and migrants on the move. 4Mi field monitors are currently collecting data through direct interviews with refugees and migrants in West Africa, East Africa and Yemen, North Africa, Asia, and Europe.

Sample sizes are clearly indicated and represent a limited section of those on the move. The findings derived from the surveyed sample should not be used to make any inferences about the total population. See more 4Mi analysis and details on methodology at www.mixedmigration.org/4mi