



Ad-Hoc Query on illegal migration in the Mediterranean Sea Basin

Requested by PL EMN NCP on 23th March 2010 (from Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain only)

Compilation produced on 26th May 2010

Responses from: France, Italy, Malta and Spain (4 in Total)

Disclaimer: The following responses have been provided primarily for the purpose of information exchange among EMN NCPs in the framework of the EMN. The contributing EMN NCPs have provided, to the best of their knowledge, information that is up-to-date, objective and reliable. Note, however, that the information provided does not necessarily represent the official policy of an EMN NCPs' Member State.

1. Background Information





Migration Policy Department of the Ministry of the Interior and Administration was asked to carry out an analysis on illegal migration in the Mediterranean Sea Basin.


It would be appreciated if you could provide your response to the following questions:

- 1. What is an approximate number of illegal migrants apprehended while attempting to cross the EU sea border illegally?**
- 2. Citizens of which countries dominate among the above mentioned apprehended immigrants?**
- 3. We would also ask you to present a short opinion (assessment) on future development of illegal migration in the Mediterranean Sea Basin.**

It would be very much appreciated if you could provide your responses by **6th April 2010**.

2. RESPONSES¹




		Wider Dissemination? ²	1. What is an approximate number of illegal migrants detained on Mediterranean Sea border?
	France	Yes	See Q.2
	Italy	Yes	Regarding illegal immigration it's known exactly only the number of persons intercepted: about 37.000 in 2008, about 10.000 in 2009 and a few thousand in 2010 as a result of rejections made in international waters to Libya.
	Malta	Yes	Since 2002 some 13000 illegal immigrants were brought to Maltese shores.
	Spain	Yes	According to the 2009 Balance of the Ministry of the Interior, in 2008 the Mediterranean coastline received 4,244 immigrants, and the Canary Islands 9,181 (TOTAL of 13,425). In 2009, 5,039 immigrants reached the Mediterranean by sea (on boat), while 2,246 arrived to the Canary Islands (TOTAL of 7,285).




		Wider Dissemination? ³	2. Citizens of which countries dominate among the detained immigrants?
	France	Yes	<p>Q1 & Q2. Illegal immigration through the Mediterranean is a recent phenomenon in France that affects us less than neighbouring countries. However, it may become an important issue in the years to come.</p> <p>There has been a recent example of illegal immigrants who have reached the Mediterranean coast: 123 Kurds landed in southern Corsica (French island in the Mediterranean Sea) on January 22, 2010.</p> <p>Although it is not directly related to your question, it is important to indicate that 84 persons were not admitted to the maritime borders in the south of France in 2009, including 37 Moroccans, 26 Algerians and 8 Tunisians.</p>

¹ If possible at time of making the request, the Requesting EMN NCP should add their response(s) to the query. Otherwise, this should be done at the time of making the compilation.


² A default "Yes" is given for your response to be circulated further (e.g. to other EMN NCPs and their national network members). A "No" should be added here if you do not wish your response to be disseminated beyond other EMN NCPs. In case of "No" and wider dissemination beyond other EMN NCPs, then for the Compilation for Wider Dissemination the response should be removed and the following statement should be added in the relevant response box: "This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that it is not disseminated further."

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	Italy	Yes	The countries most represented in the persons that are landed, apart from bordering third countries of the North Africa, are Sudan, the Horn of Africa, countries of Central and Western Africa.
	Malta	Yes	Since 2002 some 13000 illegal immigrants were brought to Maltese shores. Most of these claimed to be coming from Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Somalia, and Sudan (alphabetical order) although quite a number of other claimed nationalities are also found among boat arrivals.
	Spain	Yes	It is worth highlighting that migrants that use irregular immigration routes by sea are generally Moroccans, Algerians and nationals of several sub-Saharan African countries.

		Wider Dissemination?⁴	Please present a short opinion (assessment) on future development of illegal migration in the Mediterranean Sea Basin.
	France	Yes	Developments of this phenomenon in the Mediterranean in the short and mid-terms are difficult to predict since they totally depend on the involvement of the transit countries of the southern arc in cooperation policies with countries of destination.
	Italy	Yes	Currently the signed readmission agreements with origin and transit African countries are playing a significant role in containment. In next years, migration pressure could rise, given the fact that the UN provides for Africa by 2050 the doubling of the population from one billion to two billion inhabitants.
	Malta	Yes	<p>Illegal migration in the Mediterranean Sea remains a very topical issue, given that the Mediterranean Member States are effectively used by large numbers of illegal migrants as a gateway towards Europe, despite the danger inherent to the numerous illegal migration routes across the Mediterranean from Africa. Migratory flows have been mixed, including both genuine asylum seekers as well as migrants who seek to enter Europe illegally for economic reasons. This is attested by the flows experienced by Malta since 2002, with almost all illegal migrants applying for international protection, and the asylum recognition rate hovering around 50% or over.</p> <p>Illegal migration has presented substantial, and disproportionate, pressures on the Maltese authorities, be it in terms of reception, asylum determination etc... Whereas these challenges have been addressed, the main points of concern for the Maltese authorities is the long-term integration of those who are recognised as beneficiaries of international protection on one hand, and the expeditious return of those who do not on the other.</p> <p>Due to its limited labour market and other constraints, particularly its small size and high population density, integration prospects in</p>

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			<p>Malta are invariably limited. Moreover, most beneficiaries of international protection in Malta clearly show no desire to integrate in Malta in the long term, Malta not having ever been their intended destination. It is in view of these considerations that Malta sought EU solidarity in this area, which has been expressed through the Pilot Project for Intra-EU resettlement for Malta. Whereas this is a commendable initiative, the pressures faced by Malta necessitate further initiatives in this regard.</p> <p>The return of those illegal immigrants who are not recognised as beneficiaries of international protection is the second major challenge being faced by the Maltese authorities, as a result of illegal migration in the Mediterranean. It is considered that more vigorous EU action in this area is required with a view to secure the cooperation of the relevant countries of origin and transit. Success in this area is essential with a view to curbing illegal migration in the region, a phenomenon which has caused loss of life at sea and which exposes illegal migrants to exploitation by smugglers at each stage of their perilous journey. Moreover, illegal migration by its very nature, hinders the EU's legal migration initiatives which would otherwise also contribute to the further development of countries of origin.</p> <p>Ultimately, the challenges related to illegal migration in the Mediterranean are challenges for the EU as a whole, and not just the Mediterranean Member States, although the latter are at the EU's southern borders and charged with their control. Ensuring continued cooperation by countries of origin and transit in border control and management is crucial in order to prevent illegal migration from Africa to Europe across the Mediterranean, as attested by the reduction in illegal immigrant arrivals as a result of enhanced border control by the Libyan authorities. However, greater cooperation among the Member States is also important, since the Mediterranean Member States manage and control the EU's southern maritime borders on behalf of all.</p> <p>Until the root causes of migration from Africa have been addressed, it is to be expected that attempts at illegal migration towards Europe via the Mediterranean route will continue. Likewise, highly organised criminal networks of smugglers will continue to exploit and abuse of those who are willing to risk life and limb in the hope of a better future. Illegal immigration in the Mediterranean therefore needs to be tackled in a comprehensive manner and within the immediate future, for the benefit of would-be illegal migrants themselves on one hand, and the Member States, their nationals and legally residing third country nationals on the other.</p>
	Spain	Yes	<p>.- Migratory pressure is expected to continue, even increase, and though arrivals to the Mediterranean and the Atlantic may decrease in comparison with those of 2006, they will continue to be relevant. Active collaboration with the countries from which immigrants depart is making possible the restraint of irregular immigrants travelling on "patera" and "cayuco" boats.</p>