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The European Warden; Reasons and Effects of Immigration Through Libya.

Anas Mustada Buhayh

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Story

In 2009, 250,000 people applied for asylum in the 27 EU member states, with most people immigrating through Libya. In 2010, the Libyan dictator Moammar Gaddafi offered to stop the illegal immigration if the European Union paid him five billion euros. The deal did not go through. Traynor (2010).

The security vacuum followed the fall of Gaddafi's regime in 2011, causing thousands of migrants and refugees to reach the Italian beaches to apply for asylum in different EU countries. Searcy and Barry (2017).

Reason

Economic concerns are the number one reason for immigration from Africa. In a survey by 4Mi where 3,095 refugees and migrants were interviewed, 93% of migrants were driven to flee their countries for economic reasons, and only 6% for the lack of security. MMC North Africa (2019).

Reasons vary from one region to another; In Central Africa, which is considered a conflict area, many people leave their countries for security reasons. In East Africa, however, the reasons are mostly economic. MMC North Africa (2019).

Journey

In order to reach to the coast and be on one of the boats sailing to Europe, migrants can spend months and even years on the way. Searcy and Barry (2017).

The Sahara has become a center for human smuggling. Migrants are handed from one point to another and face different kinds of horrors on their way to the coast.

Residence

Libya is not a member of the 1951 UN Refugee Convention. People asking for asylum are detained for long period of time in very hard conditions. Vandvik (2010). By April 2019, there were 57,192 registered refugees. UNHCR (2019)

Migrants deal with different kinds of discrimination. The ones whom are detained face bigger issues like being beaten and sexually abused. BBC (2017).

Humanitarian Response

UN Agencies have adopted programs like resettlements to Europe and voluntary returns. By the end of 2018, UNHCR had evacuated 2,069 and the International Organization of Migration (IOM) had assisted over 30,000 returns. Human Rights Watch (2019)

Other programs are implemented to support communities inside and outside the detention centers. For example, cash assistance, protection services, and non-food items are such programs.

Death Boats

In 2017, more than 132,000 immigrants and refugees have crossed the Mediterranean Sea to reach Europe. More than 2,300 drowned or went missing. Searcy and Barry (2017).

Currently, the EU is providing Libya with all the support to keep the migrants in Libya. This has increased the number of detainees to almost 20,000 men, women, and children from different countries. BBC (2017).

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- Figure 3. Ben Romdhane, Wissam (June 2019). Mixed Migration Routes and Dynamics in Libya in 2018. UNHCR
- Figure 4. Al Jawashi, Taha (2017). Libyan coast guards failing a migration attempt. AFP

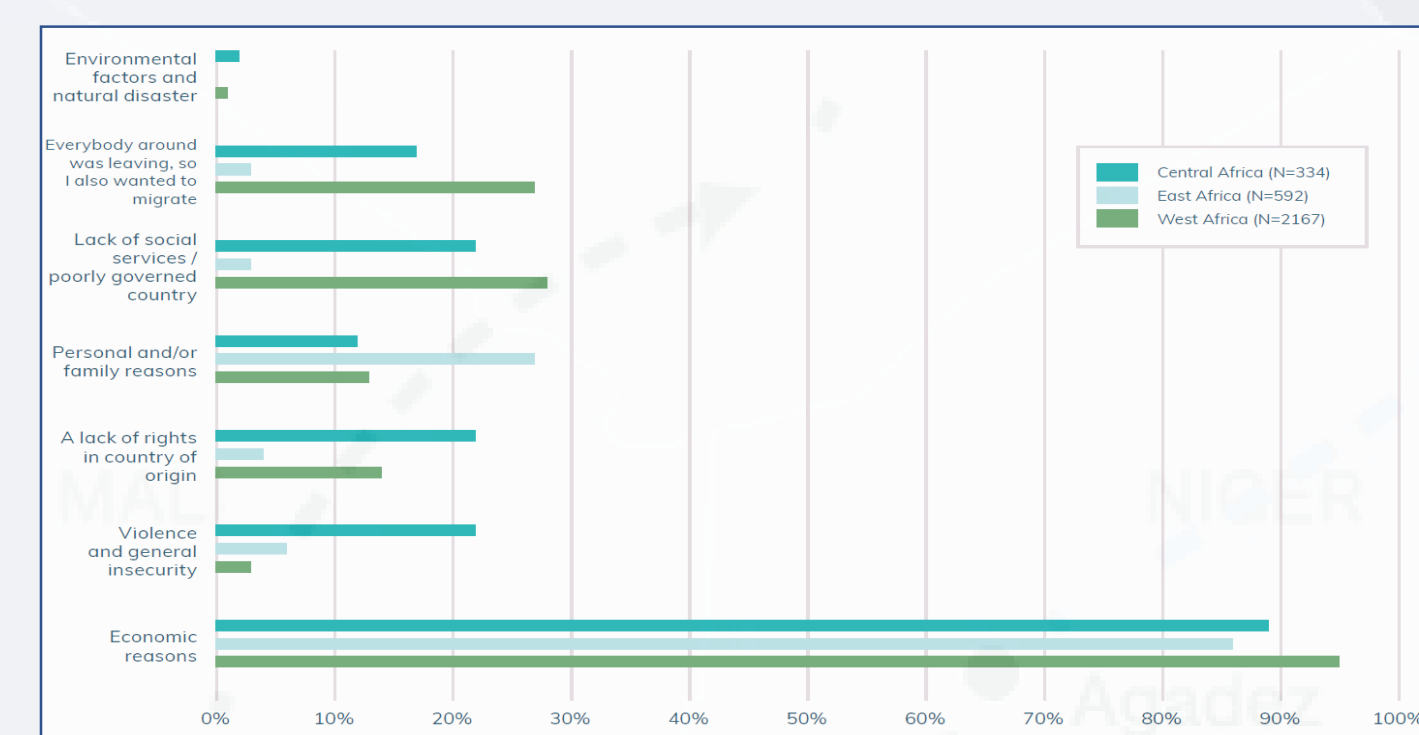


Figure 2. "Chart explains the reasons for the African migration." Retrieved from the Mixed Migration Center Report (2019)



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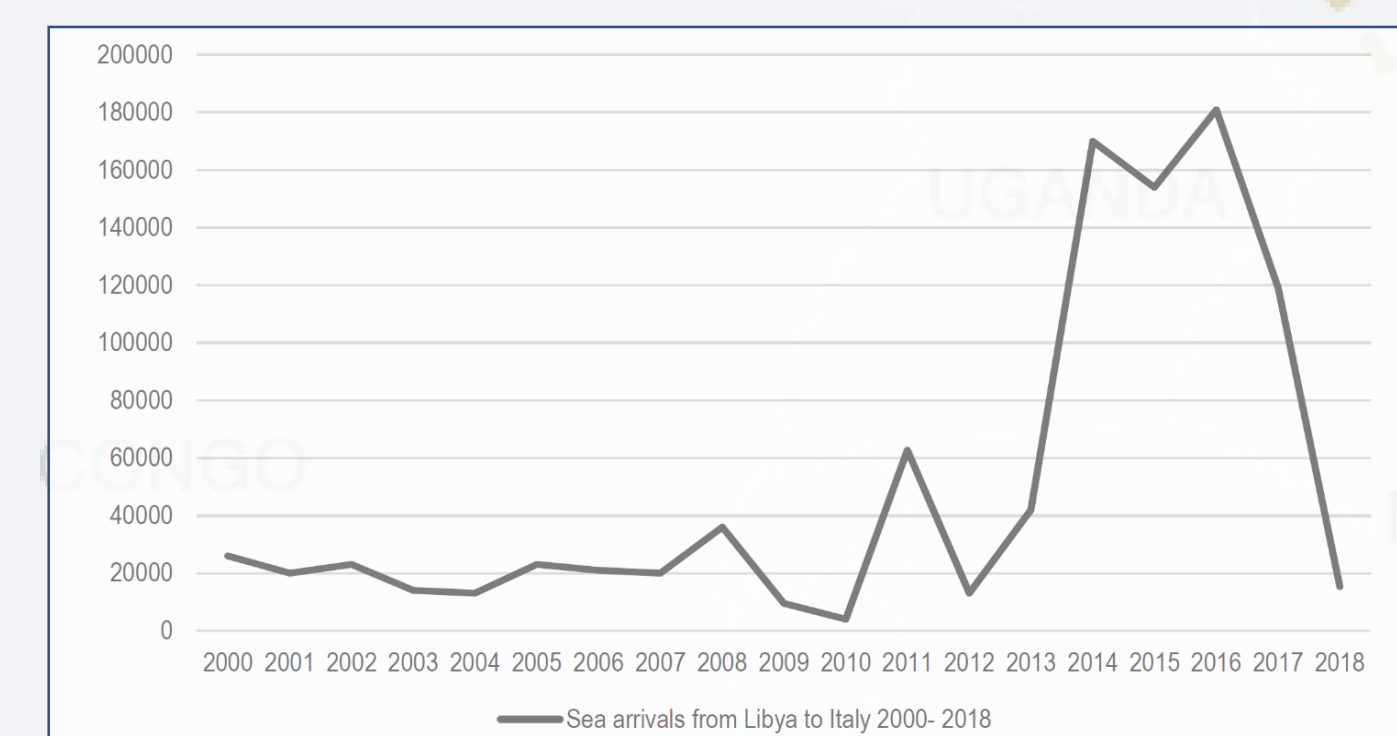


Figure 3. "Sea arrivals from Libya to Italy." Created by Wassim Ben Romdhane (2019)



Figure 4. "Libyan coast guards failing a migration attempt." Taken by Taha Al Jawashi / AFP (2017)

Anas Buhayh - Libya

Reasons and Effects of Immigration Through Libya.