Between 1 January and 30 November 2016, 173,008 persons arrived to Italy by sea, compared to 144,205 sea arrivals in the first eleven months of 2015. This represents a 20% increase compared to last year.

November arrivals this year (13,581) are higher than numbers recorded over the same period of 2015 (3,218). While arrival trends in the first nine months of 2016 have been consistent with previous years, with a surge from spring onwards and a peak in the summer months, increasing arrivals in October and a consistent number of persons crossing the sea in November represent a new development. Fluctuations on a monthly basis may be linked to various factors including favourable weather and sea conditions as well as the situation in the country of departure and the capacity of smugglers to organize departures.

Sea arrivals: top 5 nationalities by month

Sea arrivals originate mainly from sub-Saharan Africa. Between January and November 2016, 21% of all arrivals originated from Nigeria, followed by Eritrea (12%), Guinea, Côte d’Ivoire and The Gambia (each accounting for 7% of the total). The arrival figure of Syrians (0.6%) remains low.

The charts are based on figures from the Italian Ministry of Interior and UNHCR estimates. All figures are provisional and subject to change.
New arrivals are predominantly male. Like in previous years, women represent 13% of new arrivals so far this year, while accompanied children account for 1.3% of the total. Significantly more women have arrived this year from Nigeria, Somalia, Cameroon, Ethiopia and Eritrea (29%, 25%, 25%, 24% and 22% of arrivals from each country respectively).

An increasing number of Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASC) arrived this year: 14% of new arrivals between January and November 2016 are UASC, as opposed to 7% in 2015. So far, UASC most commonly originate from Eritrea, The Gambia and Nigeria. While no Eritrean UASC arrived in November 2015, 145 reached Italian shores this month. So far this year, Eritrean UASC account for 18% of all Eritrean sea arrivals, up from last year’s 8%. Gambian UASC are 27% of all Gambian sea arrivals, while Nigerian UASC account for 8% of the all Nigerians arrived so far this year. More detailed information on UASC can be found on the Italy UASC dashboard.

Libya remains the primary departure country for sea arrivals to Italy: 88% of individuals arrived in the first eleven months of 2016 crossed from Libya: this is consistent with trends observed in 2015. Approximately 6% of those arrived by sea so far this year travelled instead from Egypt: this is a slight decrease compared to the departures from Egypt in the first ten months of 2015 (7.2 %), but the trend remains comparable to last year. New arrivals continue to report instances of abuse, including kidnapping and torture, which occurred en-route through the Sahara desert and in Libya.