

Selected Distress at Sea Incidents involving Refugees and Migrants in 2011

The following provides an overview of selected distress at sea incidents involving persons of concern to UNHCR in several regions between 1 January 2011 and 31 October 2011. It is based on desk research of publicly available media sources conducted between August and October 2011. It is not exhaustive, nor has UNHCR verified the information. The objective of the table is to indicate the nature and scale of distress at sea incidents across the world. The disproportionately high number of incidents in the Mediterranean reflected in the table is partly due to the humanitarian emergency in Libya and a high number of resulting departures in the first half of 2011. In addition, it seems that information on rescue at sea incidents in the Mediterranean region is more accessible than in other regions. The table is focused on distress at sea situations, and does not include interception cases or general irregular arrivals by sea.

Region	Approx. Date of Distress Incident	Vessels' Place of Departure	Presumed/ Declared Destination	Location of Distress Incident	Approx. No. Passengers	Nationality, Age and Sex (where known)	Outcome	Approx. No. Missing/ Dead
Americas	01.02.2011	Unknown	Unknown	Northwest of Mona Island, Puerto Rico	22	2 Dominican Republic, 20 Cuba	2 Dominican alleged smugglers were intercepted and transferred for further investigations. The 20 additional Cubans were picked up in Puerto Rico with rescue coordination operations on the way.	None
	16.05.2011	Cuba	Unknown	North of Cuba	9	9 Cuba	A Royal Caribbean cruise ship spotted a raft of the northern coast of Cuba. They took persons aboard treated them and later they handed them over to Coastguard officials.	None
	24.05.2011	Haiti	Unknown	North of Haiti	50	50 Haiti	The Coastguard rescued 50 Haitians found North of Haiti on an overcrowded vessel. The Coastguard repatriated all of the individuals found to Cap Hatien, Haiti.	None

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	14.06.2011	Jamaica	United States	East of Florida	12	12 Jamaica	Coastguard responded to a capsized vessel off the coast of Palm Beach, Florida. They rescued 11 of 12 individuals.	1 drowned
	03.07.2011	Cuba	United States	South of Florida	7	7 Cuba	A Royal Caribbean cruise ship picked up 7 Cuban rafters at sea and were brought on board. Later they were given to the coastguard and held in custody.	None
	13.09.2011	Haiti	Unknown	Off coast of Turks and Caicos	10	10 Haiti	10 passengers drowned while being transferred to shore by a small dinghy, which had illegally entered the waters of Turks and Caicos.	10 dead
Asia-Pacific	01.06.2011	Malaysia	Indonesia	Off the coast of southern Malaysia	30	Indonesia (residing in Malaysia)	Boat capsized. 17 persons rescued by the coastguards of Malaysia and Singapore.	13 missing
	20.07.2011	Malaysia	Indonesia	In the waters between Indonesia and Malaysia	46	Indonesia (residing in Malaysia)	Rescued by Malaysian officials after receiving a distress signal. Rescuees were detained by Malaysian authorities.	None
	01.11.2011	Indonesia	Christmas Island, Australia	Pangadaran (1,200 from Java Island)	70-80	Reportedly Afghanistan; some children	Vessel capsized. 47 rescued by Indonesian navy.	10 dead, remaining missing
Gulf of Aden	03.01.2011	Unknown	Yemen	Off the coast of Yemen	45	Mainly Ethiopia, three Somalia	Vessel capsized.	42 dead
	03.01.2011	Unknown	Yemen	Off the coast of Yemen	30-40	Ethiopia	Vessel capsized.	Unknown
	20.02.2011	Northern Somalia	Yemen	4 nautical miles from the coast of Yemen	58	Somalia	Vessel capsized.	57 dead (including 3 smugglers)

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	06.07.2011	Sudan, 150 km south of Port Sudan, near the border with Eritrea	Saudi Arabia	Off the coast of Sudan	Approx. 200	Believed to be Somalia	Boat sank after catching fire. 3 people rescued. The cause of the fire is unknown.	Approx. 200 drowned
	11.08.2011	Unknown	Saudi Arabia	Off the coast of Sudan (Port Sudan)	187	Sudan, Cameroon, Niger, Central African Republic	Boat was in distress, ran aground and caught fire. 56 survivors (40 Sudanese and the remaining from Cameroon, Nigeria and CAR).	126 reportedly dead, 7 bodies recovered
Mediterranean	18.01.2011	Greece	Italy	Off Corfu Island, Greece	More than 250	Mainly Afghanistan (who had been living in Greece)	Passengers claimed that their vessel had been hit by a cargo ship. 230 survivors transferred to Corfu Island.	Approx. 33 dead
	15.03.2011	Libya	Italy or Malta	International waters en route to Italy	1,800	Mainly Morocco	Vessel provided with fuel and food by Italian authorities, but only in international waters. Vessel eventually taken to Morocco.	None
	22.03.2011	Igouminitsa, Greece	Italy	28 nautical miles west of Paxoi Island, Greece	113	Unknown	People traveling on an unseaworthy vessel towards Italy issued distress calls. A search and rescue team was immediately dispatched to the area. 3 passengers fell into the sea during the rescue operation.	3 missing
	25.03.2011	Tripoli, Libya	Italy	Off the coast of Libya	72	47 Ethiopia, 7 Nigeria, 7 Eritrea, 6 Ghana, 5 Sudan; 50 men, 20 women, 2 children	Vessel came into distress shortly after departure but allegedly was unassisted despite SOS signals. It washed up on a western Libyan beach on 10 March, where survivors were arrested by Libyan authorities.	61 dead

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	27.03.2011	Libya	Italy	70 nautical miles from Lampedusa, Italy	250-350	Tunisia, Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea. Approx. 10 children and 20 women.	The vessel was in distress. Passengers were initially assisted by the Canadian warship taking part in a mission by NATO. However the vessel ran into distress once again soon after this assistance was provided. Italian coastguards intercepted.	None
	29.03.2011	Libya	Malta	7 nautical miles west of Gozo, Malta	281	Eritrea; 70 women 26 children	Vessel intercepted and assisted by Maltese authorities.	None
	06.04.2011	Zuwarah, Libya	Italy	Approx 40 miles off Lampedusa, Italy, in Maltese waters	Over 200 (perhaps over 250)	Possibly Tunisia, Eritrea, Somalia	Maltese authorities led rescue operations with the assistance of the Italian coastguard. 48 individuals were rescued. 3 more survivors were rescued by private fishing boats.	Approx 130 missing, 20 drowned
	14.04.2011	Libya	Italy	Pantelleria, Italy	250	Unknown	Boat ran aground and passengers were rescued by Italian Coastguard scuba divers.	2 dead
	19.04.2011	Unknown	Italy	Lampedusa, Italy	50	Tunisia	The vessel landed in Lampedusa after being stranded for 4 days due to bad weather conditions.	None
	19.04.2011	Tripoli, Libya	Italy	Near Lampedusa, Italy	Approx. 760	Bangladesh, Mali, Nigeria and Pakistan; 62 women, 17 children.	The Italian coastguard intervened to tow the vessel to safety.	None
	05.05.2011	Nador, Morocco	Spain	Off the coast of Montril/ Adra (Almeria), Spain	Approx. 53	Sub-Saharan Africa	Approx. 30 people rescued by the Spanish coastguard.	4 dead, over 18 missing

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	06.05.2011	Tripoli, Libya	Europe	Off the coast of Libya	Approx 600-700	Unknown	This report is based on eyewitness accounts from arrivals in Lampedusa, Italy and appear unconfirmed	At least 16 dead, others missing
	08.05.2011	Libya	Reportedly Malta	Ran aground Lampedusa, Italy	528	Migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa/Asia living in Libya	Italian coastguard, some local fisherman, rescued passengers as their boat ran aground on the Lampedusa.	None
	12.05.2011	Tripoli, Libya	Italy	90 nautical miles from Lampedusa, Italy	220	Unknown	All the passengers were rescued.	None
	19.05.2011	West of Tripoli, Libya	Italy	Several miles off the coast of Italy	Approx. 500	Africa; at least 30 women.	Vessel had suspected engine problem. Persons were transferred onto Italian coastguard and custom patrol boats and brought to Lampedusa.	None
	31.05.2011	Libya	Lampedusa, Italy	20 nautical miles from Kerkennah Islands, Tunisia	700-800	West Africa, Pakistan, Bangladesh	Tunisian coast guard responded to rescue call, saving at least 580 people.	200-270 missing
	31.07.2011	Libya	Italy	1 mile from Lampedusa, Italy	296-297	Sub-Saharan Africa, including up to 50 Somalis	Italian authorities responded to the vessel in distress and escorted it to Lampedusa	25-26 dead
	04.08.2011	Unknown	Italy	90 miles south of Lampedusa, Italy	374	Unknown	Persons rescued by Italian authorities, but alleged contact by other authorities prior to rescue.	20-30 dead
	15.08.2011	Unknown	Unknown	Malta's search and rescue area, South of Lampedusa, Italy	334	Unknown	Italian Navy sought disembarkation in Malta, which was refused. Persons disembarked in Italy.	Unknown

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	16.08.2011	Unknown	Unknown	Off the coast of Kos Island, Greece	40	Unknown	Individuals disembarked in Kos, Greece, following a search-and-rescue operation.	Unknown
	22.08.2011	Tunisia	Italy	Italian waters	Approx. 100	Tunisia	The vessel in distress was intercepted by a petrol tanker that handed the passengers over to an Italian Navy ship. Seven individuals transferred to Lampedusa due to ill health, remaining returned to Tunisia.	None
	24.08.2011	Unknown	Spain	2.5 miles off the coast of Fuerteventura, Spain	28	North Africa. Approx. 1/3 of the passengers were minors.	Rescued by Spanish authorities after distress call made by individual on the boat to a friend on the mainland, who alerted the National Guard.	None
	08.10.2011	Morocco	Spain	Close to Motril/Ada, Spain	54 (2 boats)	Morocco, Sub-Saharan Africa; some minors	Vessel identified and rescued by Spanish authorities.	None
Southern Africa	02.01.2011	Unknown	South Africa	Off the coast of Northern Mozambique	Unknown	Somalia, Ethiopia	The crew of an unidentified vessel, carrying an unknown number of passengers, compelled passengers to abandon the vessel when still in deep waters.	11 dead
	05.02.2011	Somalia	South Africa	Off the coast of Northern Mozambique	129	89 Somali, 40 Ethiopia	Vessel rescued off the coast of Mozambique. The survivors were sent to a reception centre in Nampula, Mozambique.	51 dead