



P I C U M

PLATFORM FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON
UNDOCUMENTED MIGRANTS

**7th Annual International Symposium on
Human Trafficking and Migrant
Smuggling**

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What is PICUM

- NGO with a network of **156 organisations** in **31 countries**, primarily in Europe
 - Aims to promote **respect for the human rights of undocumented migrants**, human rights based approach
 - Secretariat in Brussels focusing on advocacy work at EU and international levels; cooperation with members working at the grassroots level.
 - Monitoring, research, advocacy, awareness raising and capacity-building activities
 - Bringing undocumented migrants to **policy agendas** (at national and at EU level) through **evidence based advocacy**
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Why undocumented or irregular and never ,illegal' migrant:

The term ,illegal' migrant:

- ... implies criminality. A person can never be 'illegal'. Migration is not a crime.
- ... is discriminatory. 'Illegality' as a status is only applied to migrants and used to deny them their rights.
- ... has real impacts on policy and public perception. Inaccurate language leads society to accept that people should be prosecuted and punished.

**WORDS!
MATTER!**

Migrant deaths:

(Source: Missing Migrants Project, International Organization for Migration as of 9 May 2017:
<https://missingmigrants.iom.int/>)



Latest data ⤴

1,316 migrant deaths
in the Mediterranean in 2017

1,905 deaths
recorded worldwide in 2017

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Latest Downloads:

- Latest [Mediterranean Update](#)
- [Latest data briefing](#) on 2016 data
- Missing Migrants Project's [2016 annual report](#)
- Back issues of Mediterranean Update available [here](#)
- [Download data-set with estimated coordinates](#) [here](#)



MEDITERRANEAN UPDATE
 MIGRATION FLOWS EUROPE ARRIVALS AND FATALITIES



The main determinant of human smuggling is...

... that for many migrants and refugees there are no legal migration channels.

This means:

- there are few work visas, especially for the low skilled
 - Limited possibilities for family reunification
 - Lack of humanitarian visa
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“Repressive policies and the lack of responses to push and pull factors of migration only serve to create the perfect conditions for underground labour markets and smuggling rings to flourish...

States must move from a zero-tolerance attitude to one of harm reduction, thereby undercutting the criminal organizations responsible for migrant smuggling, addressing the security concerns of States and, ultimately, reducing human suffering and saving lives.

If States want to regain control over their borders, migrants should be provided with regular, safe, affordable and accessible mobility channels.”

Risks for Migrants and Refugees

- The higher the fines and risks for smugglers, the more hazardous the measures they may take to avoid detection.
- Migrants and refugees have to rely on payments and trust
- They have little information about routes and procedures and are often exposed to unscrupulous methods
- Migrants and refugees themselves take higher risks.
Example of a boy who was smuggled in a suitcase for purposes of family reunification.



Risks for NGOs and other citizens providing assistance



NGO rescues off Libya encourage traffickers, says EU borders chief

Head of Frontex calls for rescue operations in Med to be re-evaluated and says NGOs work ineffectively with security agencies



Source: The Guardian.

To effectively break down the business of smugglers:

- **Establish regular channels for migrants to come and work in Europe:**
 - Labour market demand exists, especially in low wage occupations across the EU.
 - Many European countries' populations are ageing. According to Eurostat, 83 % of the first time asylum seekers in the EU-28 in 2016 were younger than 35 years old.
 - Reduce undeclared work and irregular migration by strengthening the residence status of third country migrant workers by uncoupling residence and work permits so that loss of employment would not automatically lead to loss of residence status.
 - **Facilitate family reunification**
 - **Citizens and NGOs assisting migrants (no financial gain, for humanitarian reasons) should not face punishment**
 - **Victims of violence and exploitation should be able to safely report without fearing to be immediately detained and deported.**
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Thank you for your attention!

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