



Migrant Crisis in the Mediterranean

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EUPHA calls on Europe's governments to do more to respond to the humanitarian crisis in the Mediterranean. Human trafficking from the shores of Northern Africa to Southern Europe is not a new phenomenon and Southern European countries have been struggling to cope with the influx of migrants for the past decade. However the events of the past month where over 1700 migrants are believed to have perished in the Mediterranean have served to raise awareness of the scale and nature of the crisis. EUPHA is pleased to note that the European Union has responded by increasing the level of monitoring and support in the Mediterranean but these efforts fall far short of what is required to address this tragic phenomenon.

A strengthened presence through a coordinated professional search and rescue operation is urgently required to stop the unnecessary loss of human life as migrants attempt to cross the Mediterranean. Reliance on voluntary organisations and efforts of single countries is not the solution. Search and rescue operations should be supported effectively by the European Union acting together in a united manner. Migrants arriving on European Union territory should be treated in a responsible and dignified manner. Health systems need to be supported to respond both to their immediate health needs due to problems arising from exposure and injury as well as ensuring access to health services in the long term particularly to psychological support services. This can only be achieved if all European countries share responsibility for integrating migrants in their societies.

However it must be acknowledged that the real solution to resolve the crisis requires a coherent and strategic response to address the push factors that abound in Africa and the Middle East which have led to thousands of migrants left stranded in Libya without access to basic infrastructure and exposed to daily violence.

Today EUPHA is calling upon European Governments to demonstrate leadership in committing to meaningful sustainable development goals and development aid since this is the only manner in which desperate mass migration can be addressed in the medium to long term.

Note to editors: The European Public Health Association, or EUPHA in short, is an umbrella organisation for public health associations and institutes in Europe. EUPHA was founded in 1992. EUPHA now has 71 members from 40 countries: • 41 national associations of public health • 18 institutional members • 8 European NGOs • 4 individual members. EUPHA is an international, multidisciplinary, scientific organisation, bringing together around 14,000 public health experts for professional exchange and collaboration throughout Europe. We encourage a multidisciplinary approach to public health. Our vision is of improved health and reduced health inequalities for all Europeans. We seek to support our members to increase the impact of public health in Europe, adding value to the efforts of regions and states, national and international organisations, and individual public health experts.