

Update on Mediterranean migrant search and rescue

Since 2018, some EU national authorities restrict civil society rescue operations.

Civil society tries to save migrants and asylum seekers in distress at sea, floundering in overcrowded or unseaworthy boats, often provided by smugglers and traffickers.

According to the [latest FRA update](#) on NGO search and rescue in the Mediterranean, there are 15 NGO ships and planes involved. But of these, only two are carrying out rescue operations. Three are involved in reconnaissance.

The remainder are in port, pending legal hearings or under mandatory maintenance.

The update also provides an overview of legal developments, including open and closed proceedings, since 2017 until 15 December 2020.

It notes that EU countries increasingly use administrative rather than criminal measures to prevent rescues. It also shows that there are fewer cases against crew or NGO staff.

Since the June 2020 update, EU countries have started nine new administrative proceedings.

This brings the total number of legal proceedings since 2018 to around 50.