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## Nearly 3,000 Migrants Have Died This Year in Mediterranean: IOM

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Nearly 3,000 migrants have died in the Mediterranean in the first six months of 2016, while almost 250,000 have reached Europe, the International Organization for Migration said on Friday.

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IOM spokesman Joel Millman told Reuters that the death toll stands at an estimated 2,977, adding that the 3,000 benchmark had been reached earlier than in previous years of this four-year crisis.

"This is the earliest, it was September 2014 and October 2015," he said.

Europe has been facing an unprecedented influx of refugees who are fleeing conflict zones in Africa and the Middle East, particularly Syria. Most of the conflicts are fueled by support that some Western countries and their regional allies give to militants operating in those countries.

The European Union signed a deal with Turkey earlier this year to deport refugees from Greece. However, asylum seekers continue reaching European coasts, mainly landing in Greece and Italy. The IOM says at least 20 migrants are dying everyday in the Mediterranean.