



DEATH BY RESCUE: THE LARGEST LOSS OF LIFE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

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Death by Rescue: the Largest Loss of Life in the Mediterranean

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The week commencing 12 April 2015 saw what is believed to be the largest loss of life at sea in the recent history of the Mediterranean. On 12 April, 400 people died when an overcrowded boat capsized due to its passengers' excitement at the sight of platform supply vessels approaching to rescue them. Less than a week later, on 18 April, a similar incident took an even greater toll in human lives, leading the deadliest single shipwreck recorded by the [United Nations' High Commissioner for Refugees \(UNHCR\)](#) in the Mediterranean. Over 800 people are believed to have died when a migrants' vessel sank after a mis-manoeuve led it to collide with a cargo ship that had approached to rescue its passengers. More than 1,200 lives were thus lost in a single week. As [Médecins Sans Frontiers \(MSF\)](#) commented at the time, these figures eerily resemble those of a war zone.

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