

While research has been carried out in Libya on migrant aspirations and destinations,¹ limited data are available on people on the move in Tunisia. To fill this gap, the Mixed Migration Centre rolled out its flagship primary data collection project '4Mi' in Tunisia – in Tunis, Sfax and Medenine – in December 2019. This snapshot provides the first analysis of 4Mi data, with a focus on the intended destinations and migrations aspirations of refugees and migrants moving to and through Tunisia.

Profiles

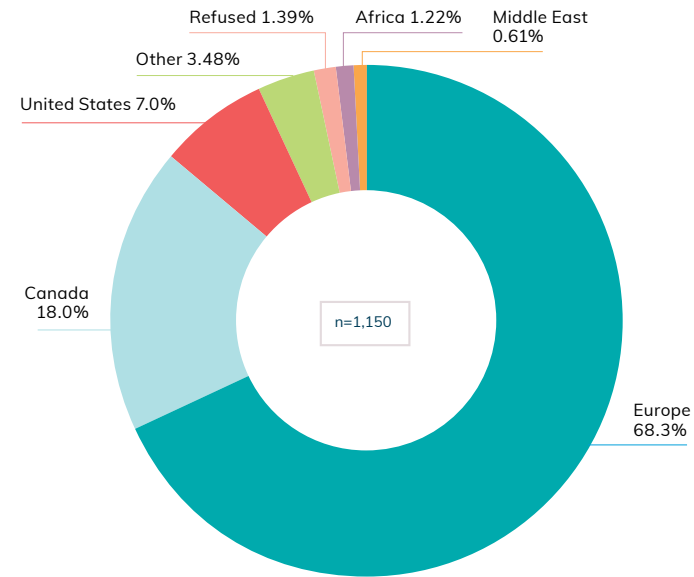
This snapshot draws upon 1,150 4Mi surveys of refugees and migrants conducted in Tunisia between December 2019 and March 2020. Respondents are chiefly from Côte d'Ivoire (n=305; 27%), Sudan (n=109; 9%), Eritrea (n=105; 9%), and Somalia (n=97; 7.5%). Other nationalities represented in the sample include Cameroonians, Congolese, Guineans, Malians, and Libyans. Of those surveyed, 66.3% are men and 33.7% are women. Most respondents are not married (84%) and do not have children (62.7%). The distribution of the religion of respondents is balanced, with 47.4% of Muslim faith and 46.7% of Christian faith, and the remainder of other faiths. Furthermore, the sample is relatively highly educated, 36.8% having completed secondary school, 20.1% university, and 6.4% vocational/technical school. Some 9% did not have any education.

Very few interviewed refugees and migrants consider Tunisia to be their final destination

When asked if respondents wanted to return to their home country, almost all (99.5%; n=1,145) reported their desire not to return.² Moreover, 92% of sampled refugees and migrants cited that they had not reached the end of their journey (n=1,061); just 2% felt that Tunisia was their final destination (n=24), and 65 respondents (5.6%) said they were unsure whether Tunisia was their final destination. Of those who said that they had not reached the end of their journey at the time of the interview, most cited a European country as their intended final destination (68.3%), followed by Canada (18%) and the United States (7%). Countries in Europe and North America were reported by 93.3% of these respondents. While the majority of respondents had said their intended destination had not changed since the beginning of their journey (89%), just over 10% had changed their intended destination along the route.

1 See our previous snapshot: MMC (2019) [What drives migrants to and through Libya?](#)
2 The remaining 5 respondents refused answer to this question.

Figure 1. What is your intended destination?

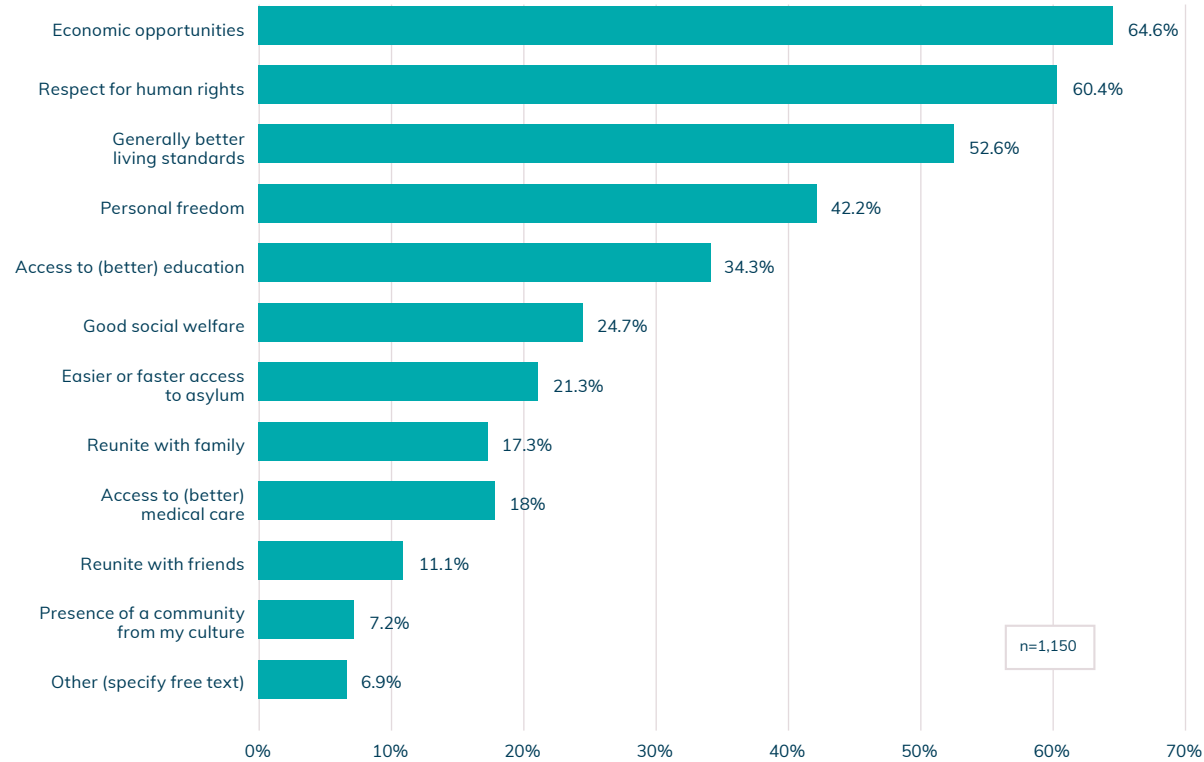


These findings vary substantially from a recent study by the Forum Tunisien pour les Droits Economiques et Sociaux (FTDES) based on interviews with 962 migrants in Tunisia, which found that 65% of respondents had Tunisia as a 'chosen' destination.³ The MMC and FTDES samples have similar distributions of East and West African respondents, so variation likely stems from question formulation. It is possible that Tunisia is perceived as an intended destination along the route in the FTDES study, as the question does not specify 'final destination'. In contrast, the 4Mi questionnaire asks about the country to where respondents ultimately want to settle, which may skew responses towards more aspirational destinations. 4Mi findings also differ from those of a 2018 Reach qualitative study which argued that Tunisia was the intended destination for most of its 62 refugee and migrant respondents at the time they left their origin countries.⁴ Given the different sampling approaches, it is difficult to compare 4Mi data with the REACH study findings.

3 [From sub-Saharan states to Tunisia: A quantitative study on the situation of migrants in Tunisia: general aspects, pathways and aspirations](#). Tunisia Forum for Economic and Social Rights. 2019
4 REACH (2018) [Tunisia, country of destination and transit for sub-Saharan African migrants](#)

Respondents' intended destinations were most often shaped by factors related to livelihoods and human rights

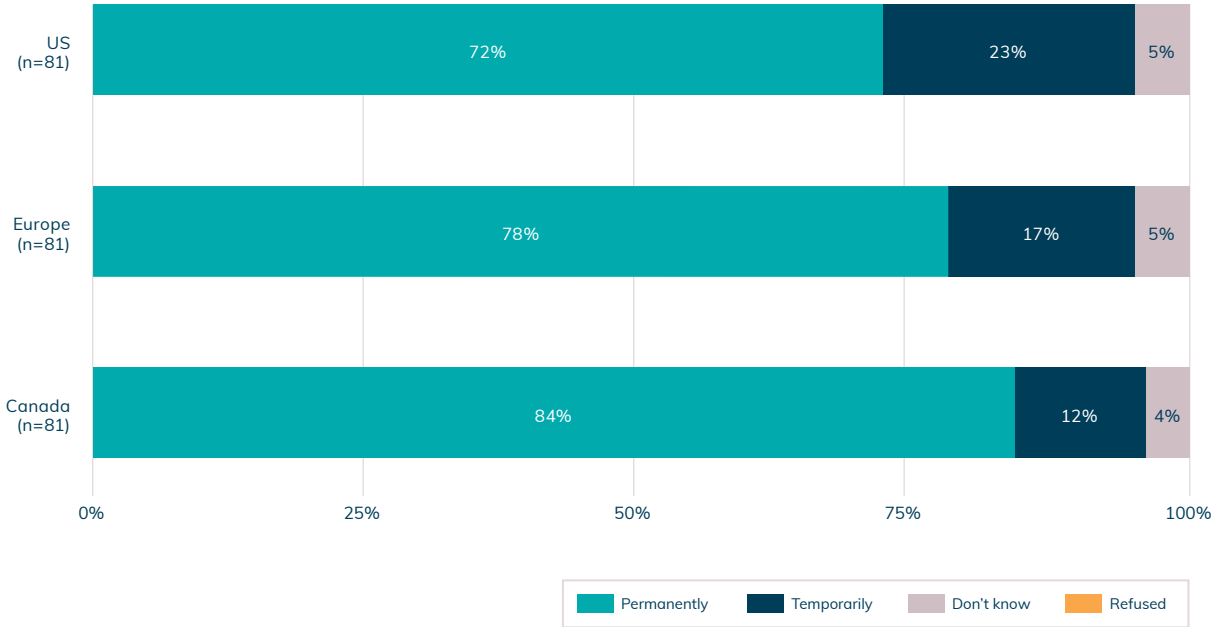
Figure 2. Why did you select your intended destination?



Over 95% of respondents selected two or more factors as impacting upon their choice of destination. Overall, for all surveyed refugees and migrants in Tunisia, regardless of intended destination, economic and livelihood opportunities as well as factors related to human rights played the largest role in shaping their destination intention. This underscores that while people may have little choice in remaining in their home countries, refugees and migrants do have aspirations related to where they want to go, based upon their perceptions of which countries enable them to rebuild their lives. The respect for improved living standards and personal freedoms also featured highly in destination considerations, further underlining that the search for protection and safety exists alongside the search for livelihoods.

Refugees and migrants surveyed in Tunisia seek to settle in their intended destinations

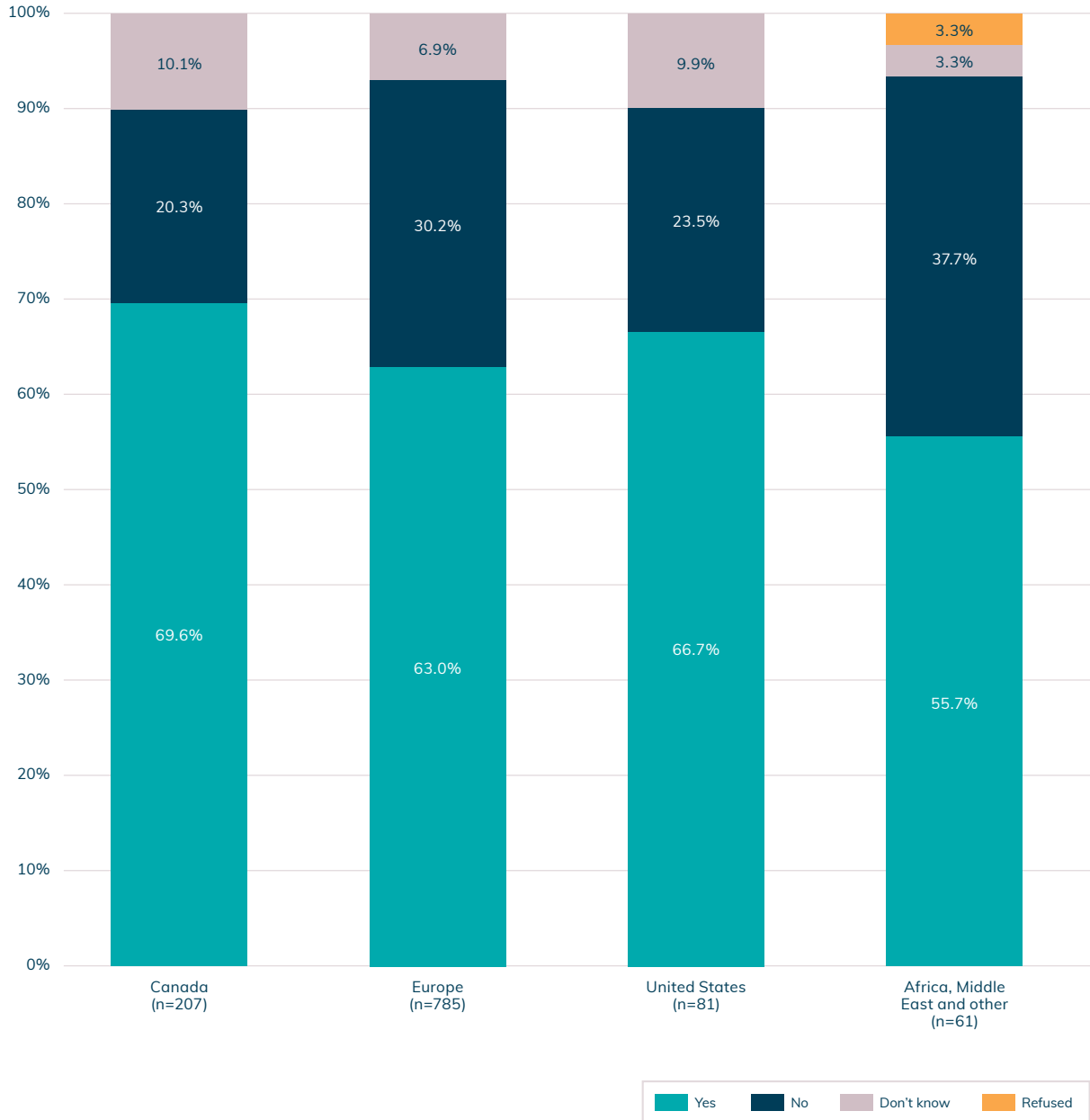
Figure 3. Do you intend to stay at your intended destination permanently?



To understand long-term mobility patterns, it is important to examine whether refugees and migrants want to move permanently to their intended destination or prefer to engage in temporary movements. When queried on their long-term migration strategies, respondents generally said that they were looking to stay permanently, regardless of intended destination (84% for those who selected Canada, 71% of those who selected the United States, and 78.6% of those who selected Europe).

Many of the respondents reported their intention to apply for asylum in their intended destination. This was found to be predominantly the case for respondents with intended destinations of Canada (69.6%) and the United States (66.7%) and may explain why so many respondents cite intended destinations outside Tunisia, as options for asylum are greater in these places. Some interviewed refugees and migrants were uncertain about whether they would apply for asylum in their intended destinations (20.3% of those who selected Canada, 23.5% of those who selected the United States, and 30.2% of those who selected Europe).

Figure 4. Do you intend to apply for asylum or have you already applied for asylum in your country of intended destination?



When analysing who intended to apply for asylum, there was not a significant difference across gender (i.e. women and men similarly expressed the intention to apply for asylum). However, there was a significant difference between those who had children and those who did not, as those with children were more likely to intend to apply for asylum (t-test: $p=0.00$).

Overall, the data reveal the impact of economic and livelihood factors alongside factors related to human rights and personal freedoms in shaping mixed migration. Not only does this highlight that refugees and migrants have multiple and multi-dimensional migration intentions but also it underscores that for people on the move along mixed migration routes, the search for livelihoods may run parallel to the search for safety.



The Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism Initiative (4Mi) is the Mixed Migration Centre’s flagship primary data collection system, an innovative approach that helps fill knowledge gaps, and inform policy and response regarding the nature of mixed migration and the protection risks for refugees and migrants. 4Mi field monitors are currently collecting data through direct interviews with refugees and migrants in West Africa, East Africa and Yemen, North Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Europe.

Sample sizes are clearly indicated and represent a limited section of those on the move. The findings derived from the surveyed sample should not be used to make any inferences about the total population. See more 4Mi analysis and details on methodology at www.mixedmigration.org/4mi