



**MMC North Africa**

**QUARTER 2 2023**

A photograph of two men on a boat. The man in the foreground is wearing a white t-shirt and has his hand to his face, looking distressed. The man in the background is also wearing a white t-shirt and has his hands clasped near his face, looking out at the sea. The background shows a vast blue ocean under a clear sky.

# Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: North Africa

This Quarterly Mixed Migration Update (QMMU) covers the North Africa (NA) region. The core countries of focus for this region are Algeria, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia. Depending on the quarterly trends and migration-related updates, more attention may be given to some of the countries over the rest.

The QMMUs offer a quarterly update on new trends and dynamics related to mixed migration and relevant policy developments in the region. These updates are based on a compilation of a wide range of secondary (data) sources, brought together within a regional framework and applying a mixed migration analytical lens. Similar QMMUs are available for all MMC regions.

MMC is a global network engaged in data collection, research, analysis, and policy and programmatic development on mixed migration, with regional hubs hosted in Danish Refugee Council (DRC) regional offices in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Latin America, and a global team based across Copenhagen, Geneva and Brussels. For more information on MMC, the QMMUs from other regions and contact details of regional MMC teams, visit [mixedmigration.org](https://mixedmigration.org) and follow us at [@Mixed\\_Migration](https://twitter.com/Mixed_Migration)

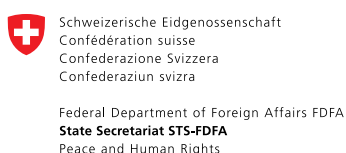
### **MMC's understanding of mixed migration**

“Mixed migration” refers to cross-border movements of people, including refugees fleeing persecution and conflict, victims of trafficking, and people seeking better lives and opportunities. Motivated to move by a multiplicity of factors, people engaged in mixed migration have a range of legal statuses as well as a variety of vulnerabilities. Although entitled to protection under international human rights law, they are exposed to multiple rights violations along their journey. Mixed migration describes refugees and migrants traveling along similar routes, using similar means of travel – often traveling irregularly, and wholly or partially, assisted by migrant smugglers.

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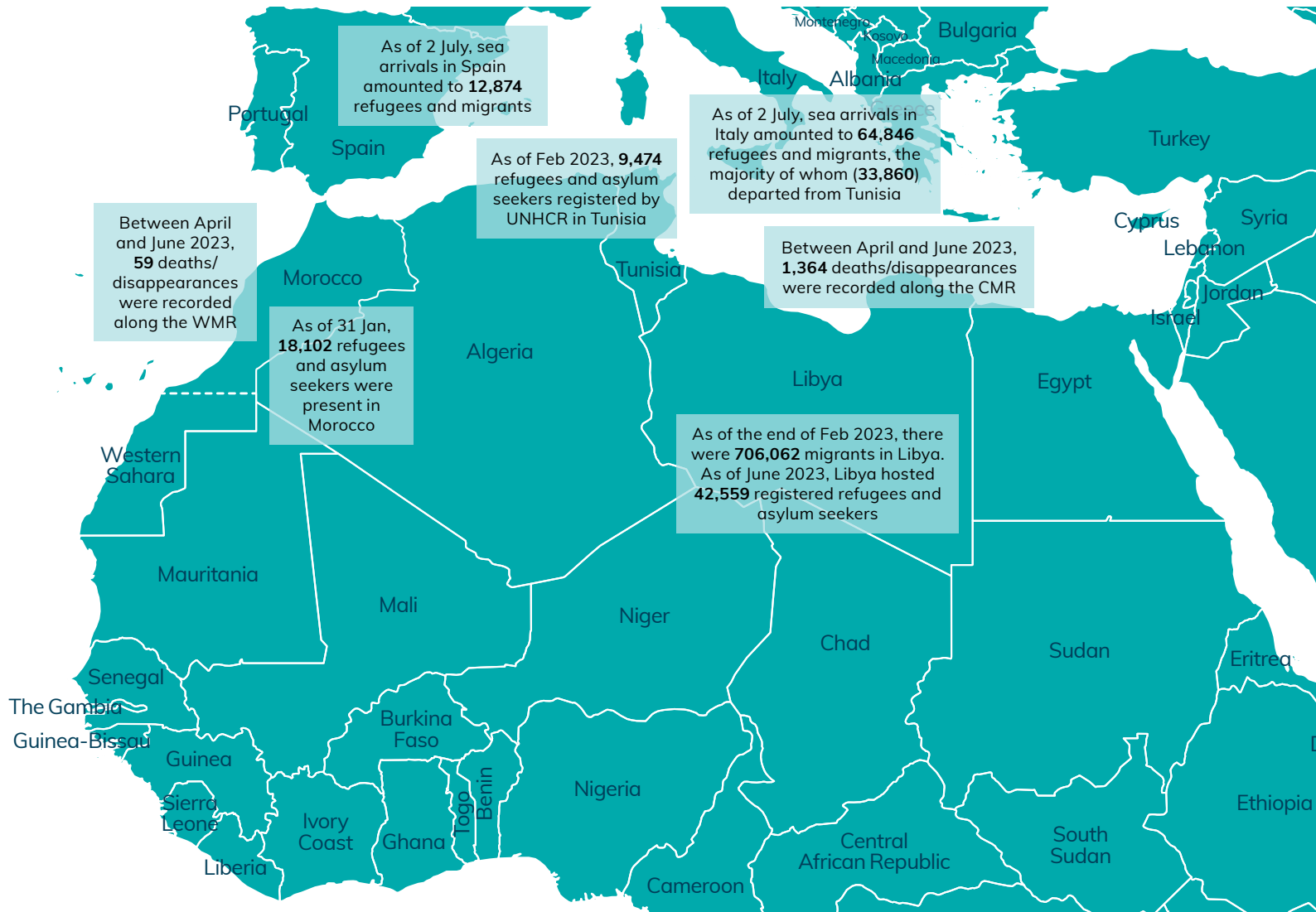
# Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: North Africa

## Quarter 2 - 2023

### Key Updates

- **Thousands of migrants expelled from Libya:** In early June, authorities in Eastern Libya carried out the expulsion of thousands of migrants, predominantly [Egyptians](#). It is reported that at least [4,000 individuals](#) were forced to cross the borders into Egypt. [Local](#) and [international](#) NGOs have voiced their concerns regarding the treatment of these individuals, including [deprivation](#) of food and water when crossing into Egypt in the heat of the day.
- **Continued EU support to Tunisia:** The EU has continued to engage in talks about support to Tunisia. This quarter saw multiple visits from heads of government and other key political leaders. In a trilateral visit alongside the Italian and Dutch Prime Ministers, the President of the European Commission [announced](#) the EU's preparedness to provide more than 1 billion euros in aid. An [additional](#) 100 million euros could be provided for anti-smuggling activities and border management.
- **Surge in anti-migrant violence in Sfax, Tunisia:** Since the last quarter, [Sfax](#) has witnessed an upsurge in public xenophobia and violence against sub-Saharan African individuals. One incident involved an [attack](#) on a house inhabited by sub-Saharan African individuals, resulting in the death of one migrant. Additionally, [altercations](#) escalated between sub-Saharan African nationals and local residents following [protests](#) against the [presence](#) of irregular migrants in Sfax.
- **One year passes since Melilla incident:** this quarter saw the one-year mark since the deadly incident that unfolded in Melilla on 24 June 2022. To this day, the fate of [76 people](#) remains unknown, leaving their [families](#) without any answers. [Amnesty International](#) and [Human Rights Watch](#) have criticized the responses by the Spanish and Moroccan governments, deeming them inadequate. In June, five Spanish NGOs filed a [complaint](#) hoping to initiate a trial and seek justice for the victims.
- **Boat departing from Eastern Libya ends in tragedy at Pylos, Greece:** On 9 June, an [overcrowded ship](#) embarked from Libya with hundreds of individuals aboard, aiming to reach Italy. On June 14, the ship sank off the coast of Greece. The confirmed [death toll](#) has surpassed 80 people, while around 500 individuals are still missing and presumed dead. The incident occurred amidst a noticeable increase in departures from [eastern Libya](#), which began in late 2022.

## Regional Overview\*



\*Information on the map relates to selected updates and does not represent all mixed migration within and out of North Africa.

# Mixed Migration Regional Updates

## Mixed migration from North Africa to Europe

### Western Mediterranean Route & Atlantic Route (arrivals to Spain)

In line with what was observed in the [first quarter](#), irregular arrivals in Spain on the Western Mediterranean and Atlantic Routes are still down on last year. According to [UNHCR](#), 12,874 land and sea arrivals had been noted from 1 January to 2 July 2023, a decrease of 12% compared with the same period in 2022. However, the overall rate of decline compared to 2022 was smaller as of the end of the second quarter as compared to the end of the [first quarter](#), when it stood at 51%. [Frontex](#) attributed the decrease in arrivals as of the end of May to prolonged periods of adverse weather conditions, which increased the risks associated with irregular migration crossings. On the other hand, the [EU Commissioner for Home Affairs](#), credits this decrease to effective cooperation between the EU, particularly Spain, and key partner countries, mainly Morocco.

According to [UNHCR](#) figures, during the second quarter of the year 3,403 people arrived irregularly in Spain by land or sea along the Western Mediterranean Route, an increase of 58% over the [first quarter](#). As of 2 July, arrivals along this route in the first two quarters of the year were [on par](#) with the same period in 2022. The top [countries of origin](#) of individuals who crossed through the Western Mediterranean route this year as of the end of May were Morocco, Algeria, and Syria.

Irregular sea arrivals on the Atlantic Route to the Canary Islands tallied [5,000](#) during the second quarter, as reported by UNHCR, more than doubling the total of the [first quarter](#). As of 2 July, this route showed a [19% decrease](#) in arrivals in the first half of the year as compared to 2022; a much smaller year-to-date decline than was seen at the end of the [first quarter](#) (64%). The [top three countries of origin](#) of arrivals in the Canary Islands were Morocco, Senegal, and Côte d'Ivoire.

### Central Mediterranean Route

The Central Mediterranean continues to be the main [sea route](#) for irregular migration into the EU, with about half of the irregular entries. According to [UNHCR](#), from 1 January to 2 July, Italy experienced an increase in arrivals of 130% compared to the same period last year, with 64,846 sea arrivals compared to 28,251 in 2022.

Arrivals in the [second quarter](#) stood at some 36,970, a 77% increase over the same period in 2022. Consistent with a [trend](#) observed in the previous quarter, Tunisia continues to be the main country of [departure](#) (33,860 year to date), followed by Libya (27,863), Turkey (2,521), and Algeria (279). The top ten most common countries of origin represented in arrivals from January to May 2023 were Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Guinea, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Tunisia, Syria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, and Mali.

## Interceptions and rescue operations in the Mediterranean<sup>1</sup>

From April to 30 June 2023, the [Tunisian Forum for Social and Economic Rights](#) (FTDES) reported that the Tunisian coastguards intercepted a total of 12,333 refugees and migrants, both Tunisians and non-Tunisians, who were attempting to cross to Italy. This represents a decrease from the first three months of 2023, when 14,963 people were reported to have been [intercepted](#). According to figures from IOM Libya, 4,599<sup>2</sup> refugees and migrants were intercepted and returned to Libya when trying to cross the Central Mediterranean to Europe from 26 March 2023 until 1 July 2023.

A [report](#) published on 26 June by the Frontex Consultative Forum reveals that around 50% of sightings of boats in distress by Frontex in the Central Mediterranean international waters are [intercepted](#) by the Libyan Coast Guard and sent back to Libya. The [report](#) itself raises concerns regarding the legality of such actions, suggesting that returning individuals to Libya may violate the principle of non-refoulement. It also emphasizes that once in Libya, intercepted individuals are at risk of facing violations of their basic human rights, including enslavement, arbitrary detention, ill-treatment, human trafficking, enforced disappearance, sexual violence, and murder.

## Dead or missing refugees and migrants<sup>3</sup>

As of 6 July 2023, IOM's [Missing Migrants Project](#) reported that at least 27,633 refugees and migrants had been recorded as dead or missing in the Mediterranean since 2014, including 1,364 between April and 2 July 2023. This represents an almost threefold increase compared to the [same period](#) in 2022 (458), outstripping the increase in [second quarter sea arrivals](#) to Europe from 2022 to 2023 (61%). From [April through June 2023](#), 59 deaths and disappearances were recorded along the Western Mediterranean Route, while 1,293 were recorded along the Central Mediterranean Route.

In May, the collective Caminando Fronteras [announced](#) that 11,522 individuals have lost their lives while trying to cross to Spain in the last five years, including [499](#) between April and June 2023. On the Atlantic Route specifically, Caminando Fronteras estimates that in the first half of the year, at least 778 people have died en route to the Canary Islands. This figure is [on par](#) with the same period in 2022, despite the fact that overall arrivals have declined.

## Boat departure from Libya ends in Greek shipwreck tragedy

On 9 June an [overcrowded ship](#) carrying hundreds of [individuals](#), predominantly from Egypt, Syria, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, set sail from eastern Libya en route to Italy. On 14 June, approximately 80 km off the coast of Greece, the ship sank. Accounts and interpretations of the [ship's final hours](#) at sea differ, but as of [23 June](#) more than 80 people were confirmed dead, and an estimated 500 more people are missing

1 Note that information on interceptions and rescue operations as well as shipwrecks and other situations of distress at sea are not intended to provide a comprehensive overview of these phenomena.

2 Numbers in this section are based on MMC calculations made based on the following IOM Libya Maritime Updates: [3 April](#), [17 April](#), [25 April](#), [1 May](#), [8 May](#), [15 May](#), [5 June](#), [12 June](#), [20 June](#), [26 June](#), [3 July](#).

3 Numbers in this section drawing on IOM's Missing Migrants Project (MMP) are based on MMC calculations made accessing the MMP website on 6 July 2023.

and presumed dead. There were only [104](#) survivors. According to [IOM](#), this is the worst shipwreck in the Mediterranean in several years. A rise in departures from [eastern Libya](#), such as this one, had been seen starting in late 2022; time spent at sea in these crossings is typically longer than for crossings attempted from western Libya, and they are often undertaken in large, old fishing boats.

In [Pakistan](#), the country of origin of many who were on the ship, the Prime Minister declared Monday, 19 June, a day of national mourning and ordered an “immediate crackdown” on individuals involved in smuggling in persons. The Pakistani authorities confirmed the arrest of 14 individuals allegedly connected to smuggling persons from Pakistan to Libya and Europe. Meanwhile, in Greece, nine [Egyptian](#) men, out of the 43 Egyptians who [survived](#) the shipwreck, were also accused of human smuggling. In court, they pleaded not guilty, with one of the defendants' lawyers stating that his client had been a passenger on the vessel, not a smuggler.

IOM and UNHCR issued a [joint statement](#) urging immediate and decisive measures to prevent further loss of life at sea. They emphasized that search and rescue operations are both a legal obligation and a humanitarian necessity. The [Danish Refugee Council](#) (DRC), alongside other organizations, have urged the European Union and its Member States to establish state-led and proactive search-and-rescue missions in the Mediterranean Sea.

## Mixed migration in Libya

### Latest figures on refugees and migrants in Libya

There are no updated figures available on the number of migrants in Libya as of Q2 of 2023. As of the end of February, the number stood at [706,062](#). This represents a slight increase compared to last year (694,398 migrants as of 31 December 2022). The majority (53%) were located in the west of the country, followed by 34% in the east and 13% in the south. The top five countries of origin were Niger (24%), Egypt (23%), Sudan (19%), Chad (12%) and Nigeria (4%).

As of 20 June 2023, UNHCR figures showed Libya hosting [42,559](#) registered refugees and asylum seekers, primarily from Sudan, Syria and Eritrea. This was a slight decrease over the previous quarter's figure of [42,821](#) refugees and asylum seekers.

### Libya, Italy and the EU: continued cooperation and condemnation

During the quarter, the Italian Prime Minister held separate meetings with the Prime Minister of the [Government of National Unity](#) (GNU) and the head of the [Libyan National Army](#) (LNA). Both discussions included the topic of migration. The Italian PM highlighted that [four times as many migrants](#) have arrived in Italy in the first four months of 2023 as compared to 2022, [underlining](#) that a key priority for her government is preventing migrant departures. During the meeting with the Prime Minister, several agreements were signed in relation to security cooperation, energy and telecommunications.

Cooperation between Libya, Italy, and the EU more generally has continued to generate criticism both within the [EU](#) and in [Libya](#). [MSF](#) has cited [forceful interceptions](#) by the Libyan coast guard, [criminalization](#) of civilian

search and rescue missions, and the return of migrants to [harsh detention conditions](#) as consequences of the EU's approach. As reported by [The Libya Update](#), the head of Libya's Interior Committee of the House of Representatives has voiced his frustration with the EU migration response, expressing that the interception and return of migrants to Libya is not a solution.

## Expulsions from Libya

In early June authorities and security services in Eastern Libya expelled thousands of migrants – mostly [Egyptians](#) – from Libya. This follows operations which the Libyan [Deputy Interior Minister](#) characterized as a liberation operation targeting human and drug traffickers. The expelled migrants were detained during [raids](#) on trafficking warehouses in the border town of Musaid and other areas in eastern Libya, as reported by an activist from Belaady quoted by [AP News](#). According to [Refugees Platform in Egypt](#) (RPE), other individuals, including Syrians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, and other African nationalities, have been transferred to detention centers in Libya such as that in Bab Al Zaytoun, Tobruk.

Local migrant assistance groups estimated that more than [6,000 people](#) had been amassed at the border to await expulsion. While varying [figures](#) are in circulation, it appears that some [4,000 people](#) were forced to cross from Libya into Egypt, with both Egyptian and Libyan security sources agreeing on this figure. According to an Egyptian security source, as quoted in [Reuters](#), only 2,200 of these individuals were in an irregular situation at the time of their arrests. Activists from [local](#) and [international](#) NGOs expressed concern at the treatment of these individuals. A representative of the local migrant rights organization [al-Abreen](#) explained that the border area where migrants were being held “is not equipped,” stating that “the situation is bad and tragic.” Reporting from [Mada Masr](#) alleges that these migrants were not given food or water when being forced to walk to the border in the heat of the day. Raids were also ongoing in western Libya, with a UNHCR report obtained by [AP](#) indicating that around 1,800 migrants had been detained in May, the majority in government detention centres.

## Rights groups criticize UN Human Rights Council resolution on Libya

In early April, the UN Human Rights Council [adopted](#) Resolution A/HRC/52/L.33 titled "Technical assistance and capacity-building to improve human rights in Libya." This [resolution](#) called on the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to provide technical assistance and capacity-building to Libya, specifically to assist the country in implementing its international obligations and commitments to human rights. The resolution was criticized by NGOs and civil society organizations, including the International Federation for Human Rights ([FIDH](#)) and the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies ([CIHRS](#)), for not sufficiently addressing the findings of the UN Fact-Finding Mission, whose final [report](#) raised serious concern about the plight of refugees and migrants in the country.

The Fact-Finding Mission found evidence suggesting that [crimes against humanity](#) had been committed against refugees and migrants in the country and detailed numerous cases of “arbitrary detention, rape, torture, murder, enslavement, and enforced disappearance.” Following the adoption of this resolution, human rights organizations [advocated](#) for the establishment of an independent international investigation



mechanism to ensure impartial investigations, as well as the establishment of independent monitoring, reporting, and evidence preservation systems. They also urged the creation of a vetting process to ensure that those involved in serious human rights violations and abuses do not benefit from technical assistance.

## Mixed migration in Tunisia

### Latest figures on refugees and migrants in Tunisia

According to the most recent [UNHCR data](#), in February 2023, there were a total of 9,474 refugees and asylum seekers in Tunisia. The primary [nationalities](#) were Ivorian, Syrian, Sudanese, Cameroonian, Guinean, Libyan, and Eritrean. The governorates with the largest populations of refugees and asylum seekers continue to be Grand Tunis (5,563), Sfax (1,539), and Medenine (657).

### Continued Italian engagement on migration

In line with Italy's continued interest to address migration "[at its roots](#)," and building on [previous dialogue and commitments](#), the Italian government has continued to engage with the government of Tunisia on the topic of migration, with multiple high-level visits occurring between the two countries during the quarter.<sup>4</sup> The Italian Interior Minister [announced](#) plans to carry out joint patrols of Tunisia's coasts alongside the Government of Tunisia to curb migration to Italy. Italy promised to continue advocating for Tunisia in [negotiations](#) with the IMF over a loan to stabilize Tunisia's current economic crisis. It has also cited plans to train 4,000 Tunisians for jobs in Italy.

For its part, the Tunisian government has expressed its willingness to cooperate but says it needs more assistance. According to Tunisia's Foreign Minister, as quoted in [la Repubblica](#), "we are on the front line to help Italy manage the flows of migrants. But we need more resources." He went on to say, "we are in a difficult period for public finances. We would like to collaborate with the Italian government to create real development here." These efforts at cooperation have been met with [critiques](#) from local civil society, with the Forum Tunisien pour les Droits Économiques et Sociaux calling for a [protest](#) in response to the visit of the Italian Prime Minister. They have also raised external condemnation; for instance, [Amnesty International](#) has criticized the fact that in its efforts to deter migration, Italy has offered assistance to the Tunisian government without conditioning it upon greater respect for human rights.

### Continued EU migration diplomacy

The EU has continued to engage in talks about support to the government of Tunisia, as [economic and political challenges](#) in the country could result in more migrants attempting to reach Europe. Emphasizing the importance European leaders place on this issue, the quarter saw multiple visits from heads of government and other key political leaders, including the [EU Commissioner for Home Affairs](#), a [delegation](#) comprising the

<sup>4</sup> [15 May](#) visit by the Italian Interior Minister; [6 June](#) visit by the Italian Prime Minister; [11 June](#) visit by the Italian Prime Minister, the President of the European Commission, and the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Prime Ministers of Italy and the Netherlands and the President of the European Commission, and [another delegation](#) including the Interior Ministers of France and Germany. After meeting with the Tunisian President, the French Interior Minister [announced](#) that 25.8 million euros in bilateral aid – earmarked for migration – would be sent to Tunisia with the objective of curbing the flow of migrants and encouraging returns.

During her visit to Tunis with the Italian and Dutch prime ministers, the President of the European Commission [announced](#) the EU's readiness to provide more than 1 billion euros in aid pending an agreement still to be articulated. The proposed partnership package encompasses various areas, including strengthening economic and trade ties, a sustainable energy partnership, people-to-people contacts, and migration. Regarding migration cooperation, the [EU press statement](#) emphasized the shared priority of combating irregular migration to and from Tunisia and underscored the importance of strengthening border management. The EU also offered [100 million euros](#) specifically for anti-smuggling activities and border management. During the visit, the Italian Prime minister, as quoted in [InfoMigrants](#) emphasized that “Tunisia is a priority, its destabilization would have serious repercussions on the stability of all Northern Africa, and those repercussions inevitably arrive here [Italy].” Similarly, the Prime Minister of the Netherlands, as quoted in [Politico](#), spoke in favour of expanding cooperation on migration as it is “at this moment, one of the most important issues facing all of us.”

The proposed Partnership Plan has sparked [criticisms](#) at home and abroad. Observers [fear](#) that such a plan could worsen conditions for migrants and future returnees. According to the spokesperson of the Forum Tunisien pour les Droits Économiques et Sociaux, quoted by [DeutscheWelle](#), the proposal trades “halting irregular immigration for money and aid to Tunisia.” Further, such plans have been critiqued as linking governance in Tunisia to [adherence](#) to European migration policy. Following the visit of the President of the European Commission and Dutch and Italian Prime Ministers, the Tunisian President himself, as quoted in [Le Monde](#), stated that: “Tunisia only guarantees its own borders.” The drafting and endorsement of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the partnership package was [originally](#) intended to be completed by the end of June. While the European Council has [acknowledged](#) the “work done on developing a mutually beneficial package with Tunisia,” the partnership is [still](#) being discussed.

## People on the move protest in front of UNHCR in Tunis

On 11 April, the Tunisian police used tear gas to disperse a group of sub-Saharan African refugees and migrants who had established an informal camp outside the UNHCR premises in Tunis. Some of these individuals had [sought refuge](#) in these camps following the escalation of the racist violence and targeting they had witnessed and faced during the [last quarter](#). According to [AfricaNews](#), the police arrested approximately 80 individuals and around 30 were taken into custody.

The 11 April events followed a multiple-week [sit-in](#) led by around 200 refugees and migrants. According to [UNHCR](#), the situation escalated on 30 March when some protesters obstructed access to the primary entrance and denied other individuals access to the services. For technical reasons, UNHCR had previously [announced](#) the suspension of all registration and pre-registration activities from 31 March to 17 April. Following the 11 April events, UNHCR released a [statement](#) calling for constructive dialogue.

## Escalation of anti-migrant violence in Sfax

During the second quarter of 2023, the governorate of Sfax, located in Central-Eastern Tunisia, witnessed an [increase](#) in outward migration of both Tunisians and non-Tunisians. There have also been [reports](#) that the [hospital morgue](#) was [overwhelmed](#) by the number of dead bodies following a [series](#) of [shipwrecks](#). Within this context, on 10 June, the Tunisian President paid the governorate an unexpected [visit](#), during which he met with [sub-Saharan African individuals](#) working in the informal sector. The president claimed that Tunisia [safeguards](#) the rights of people on the move, provided that they abide by Tunisian laws. Later in the month, however, a [statement](#) published on the Tunisian presidency's Facebook page implied that sub-Saharan Africans in Sfax "brandish weapons" and "terrorize Tunisian citizens".

On the same day as the President's visit, the Tunisian media outlet La Presse published an anti-Black letter [addressed](#) to the President himself from a self-identified group of academics and journalists from Sfax. The newspaper has since issued an [apology](#) and the original publication was removed. Additionally, some individuals have come forward to [deny its claims](#) and the local university has [denied](#) any endorsement of the letter's content. Since the last quarter, Sfax has witnessed an increase in public xenophobia and [violence](#) against sub-Saharan African individuals.

In May, a house inhabited by sub-Saharan refugees and migrants was [attacked](#), resulting in the violent death of one migrant and injuries of five others. June also witnessed ongoing [altercations](#) between sub-Saharan African individuals and residents of Sfax in a context of a series of [protests](#) against the [presence](#) of irregular migrants. Similarly, at the beginning of July, there were [reports](#) of clashes between the locals and sub-Saharan African refugees and migrants. According to [Kapitalis](#), 34 sub-Saharan African individuals have been taken into custody and an [official investigation](#) into the altercations has been launched. Commenting on the situation in Sfax, the [spokesperson](#) of the Forum Tunisien pour les Droits Économiques et Sociaux stated: "in the absence of the state, certain groups take advantage of the situation to try to drive migrants out from their homes, using force and violence [...] certain security units have taken advantage of the situation to transport migrants to the Libyan [border](#), which is prohibited by the conventions signed by the Tunisian state."

## Mixed migration in Morocco

### Morocco remains a key partner in the EU's new Action Plan

The EU is set to allocate more funding to Western African countries, including Morocco, as part of its new [Action Plan for the Western Mediterranean and Atlantic migration routes](#). The [EU Commissioner for Home Affairs](#) presented the new Action Plan on 6 June, emphasizing the need to enhance cooperation with African States to address migration challenges and combat human trafficking. Morocco is a "[key partner](#)" for this new plan, following its "[intense efforts](#)" alongside [Spain](#) in curbing irregular maritime departures. The EU Commissioner for Home Affairs [praised](#) the cooperation between Spain and Moroccan authorities in bringing "[the situation under control](#)" after an increase in the number of migrants attempting to reach the EU via the Western Mediterranean and Atlantic Routes to Spain in [recent years](#).

The [Action Plan](#) outlines various key areas of focus, including combating migrant smuggling and human trafficking, strengthening border management capacities in partner countries, supporting return and readmission, and promoting labour migration and talent partnerships. In this regard, priority is given to operationalizing the Talent Partnership with [Morocco](#), while the possibility of launching similar initiatives with other West African countries is also being assessed. The Action Plan also emphasizes the implementation of the Anti-Smuggling Operational Partnership (ASOP) with Morocco. This partnership is set to include, among other points, the provision of targeted financial assistance to support Morocco against human trafficking and migrant smuggling, as well as further promotion of cooperation between Europol and Morocco. Furthermore, there is a commitment to awareness raising and information campaigns on the risks of irregular migration and legal channels of migration in Morocco. This comes after the [first ASOP](#) with Morocco was [launched](#) in July 2022 following the renewal of the [EU action plan against migrant smuggling 2021-2025](#).

## One year passes since Melilla mass casualty incident

This quarter saw the one-year mark since the deadly incident that unfolded in [Melilla](#) on 24 June 2022. Some 2,000 migrants and asylum seekers attempted to enter the Spanish enclave and were violently repressed by the authorities, resulting in the death of at least 23 (and up to 37) individuals.

To date, [76 people](#) are still unaccounted for and their families have been unable to obtain any [answers](#) as to their fate. Human rights organizations such as [Amnesty International](#) and [Human Rights Watch](#) consider the responses of the countries involved to be inadequate. The [Spanish Prosecutor's Office](#) closed its investigation after six months, exonerating “the security forces, the Civil Guard, and the agents who were present that day,” while the [Moroccan National Human Rights Council](#) (CNDH) concluded that the deaths had been caused by “mechanical asphyxia”, jostling and falling from the top of the fence. Morocco refuted the allegations of insufficient medical care and lethal use of force. [Amnesty International](#) accused Spain and Morocco of evading accountability for the deaths and disappearances and obstructing efforts to uncover the truth. NGOs are still calling for a credible and independent inquiry. In June, five Spanish NGOs filed a [complaint](#) in Melilla in the hope that a trial will be opened.

The commemoration of the Melilla tragedy was an important agenda item on the [Forum Social Maghrébin des Migrations](#) (FSMM) at its 5th gathering in Nador on June 23-25. Representatives of NGOs, activists, researchers, and movements representing the families of the missing migrants gathered to discuss the 24 June events, EU and Moroccan migration policies, as well as the rise of racism and xenophobia in the Maghreb. At the end of the Forum, [recommendations](#) were formulated condemning the securitized approach to migration and the repression and criminalization of migrants, urging action for greater protection measures for people on the move.

## Mixed migration in Algeria

### Humanitarian emergency for stranded migrants in northern Niger

While expulsions from Algeria to northern Niger have occurred [consistently](#) in recent years (with known figures averaging around 25,000 Nigeriens and non-Nigeriens annually)<sup>5</sup> according to figures from local CSO Alarme Phone Sahara, a variety of [local](#) and [international](#) aid organizations have been expressing deep concern over the humanitarian situation of expelled migrants in northern Niger since the beginning of the year. The first few months of the year saw a spike in expulsions that [overwhelmed](#) the humanitarian infrastructure to receive these migrants in the northern Nigerien desert town of Assamaka.

MSF has called the situation '[unprecedented](#),' and testimonies of migrants captured by [journalists](#) and [CSOs](#) underscore the extremely challenging conditions migrants face, including insufficient food, scarce shelter, empty water tanks, and lack of clothing and shoes, all within conditions of extreme heat. A joint [report](#) by IOM and OCHA, dated 22 June, indicates that since the beginning of the year, some 9,192 migrants were stranded and in a vulnerable situation in Assamaka. Despite the ongoing Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) operations that have assisted 3,320 people to return during the second quarter, some 2,000 migrants remain stranded outside of IOM's transit center and apparently outside of other temporary assistance structures. While local and international actors have worked to ramp up [assistance](#), according to the IOM/OCHA [report](#), it is still deemed necessary to "improve and broaden the response."

### Renewed debate on the 1968 Agreement between Algeria and France

A [debate](#) has emerged in France regarding the [1968 agreement](#) between France and Algeria on the movement, employment, and residence of Algerian nationals and their families. According to a recently published [paper](#), authored by a [former French diplomat and ambassador to Algeria](#), the agreement gives Algerian citizens preferential treatment over citizens of other states. Among the privileges granted under the agreement is expedited access to a ten-year residence permit compared to other foreign nationals. Algerian spouses of French citizens can obtain a [ten-year residency](#) after only one year of marriage, whereas individuals of other nationalities need three years of cohabitation before being eligible.

Some [voices](#) in French politics have expressed [praise](#) for the former Ambassador's recommendations. As reported in [Africa News](#), a resolution was introduced in the French assembly calling for a "denunciation" of the Franco-Algerian agreement. According to the same [source](#), the authors of the resolution also criticized the Algerian authority's unwillingness "to cooperate effectively with France on the expulsions by issuing [consular passes](#)." According to the [Middle East Eye](#), however, perceived advantages of the 1968 agreement such as the 10-year residency are often contingent upon the administration's judgment. Speaking to [Le Figaro](#) in December 2022, the Algerian president [expressed](#) his feeling that "There is a specificity concerning Algeria compared to other Maghreb countries. It was negotiated and should be respected."

5 [25,396 in 2021](#) according to Alarm Phone Sahara post of 17 January 2022; and [25,300 in 2022](#) is based on MMC calculations based on Alarm Phone Sahara figures available in the Quarter 4 2022 QMMU.

# Highlighted New Research and Reports



## [Rings in the Water: Felt Externalisation in the Extended EU borderlands](#)

### Geopolitics | April 2023

This academic article investigates how the externalization of EU borders is experienced in everyday life in the Tunisian coastal town of Zarzis. The article examines the ripple effects of these policies through local fishermen, marine life, and migrant cemeteries. Specifically, the article zooms in on the direct violent conflicts between fishermen and the Libyan coast guard; the environmental

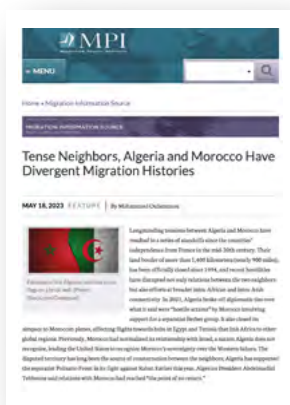
degradation in key fishing areas in the Mediterranean; and the migrant deaths and bodies found at sea and its impact on cemeteries. The article focuses on local actors as the subjects of European border policies and examines how human rights abuses and environmental crises become intertwined in one town. In doing so, the author draws attention to the damaging consequences of EU externalization policies.



## [Girls on the Move in North Africa](#)

### Save the Children International | May 2023

This qualitative study focuses on the case of girls and young women on the move, a migrant population that is overall understudied. Data collection in Italy, Spain, Morocco and Tunisia resulted in 68 interviews with girls and young women and 24 interviews with boys and young men (aged 9 to 24) of mainly sub-Saharan origin. The analysis deals with young women's experience of several crucial themes in the migratory journey, such as decision-making, protection risks and coping measures, as well as the challenges encountered at the place of arrival. The report concludes with recommendations for key actors in countries of origin, transit and destination.

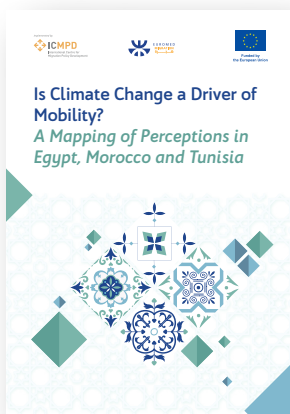


## Tense Neighbors, Algeria and Morocco Have Divergent Migration Histories

### **MPI | May 2023**

The article examines why, despite strong similarities, Algeria and Morocco have responded to migration from sub-Saharan Africa differently since the 1990s. The article highlights that while both countries seek to limit this migration, Morocco's response is more rooted in EU pressure and economic concerns, while Algeria's response is embedded primarily in domestic concerns, such as national security. This is attributed to Algeria's better financial situation, which enables its government to oppose collaborating with the EU and forfeit potential

aid. In comparison, the historically smaller economy of Morocco has made its officials more amenable to cooperating with the EU. The low-grade conflict between the two countries has also impacted migration policy, with both countries attempting to funnel sub-Saharan migrants towards the other. With additional roots in the countries' different experiences with colonialism and Morocco's shared land border with the EU, the two countries have also treated their diaspora differently – with Algeria approaching theirs with greater suspicion. As a result, Morocco has benefited from greater remittance flows as a percentage of its GDP compared to Algeria. With strong economic, colonial, and geographic roots, the two countries' migration policies continue to diverge and continue to impact relations between the two countries.

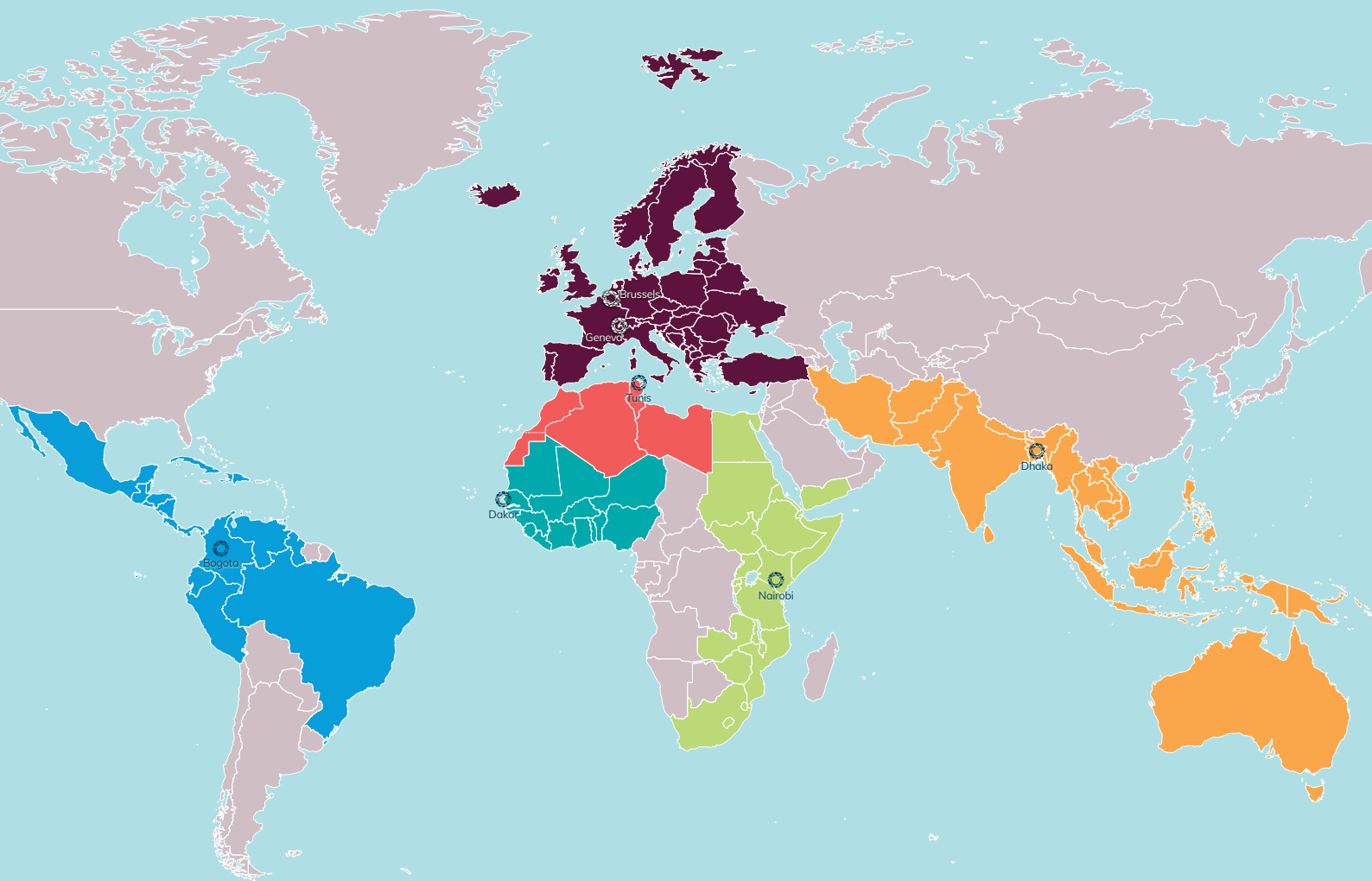


## Is Climate Change a Driver of Mobility? A Mapping of Perceptions in Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia

### **ICMPD | June 2023**

This study examines the perceptions and narratives surrounding climate mobility in Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia. Although the primary cause of migration is not commonly attributed to climate change, the report signals that this might indicate a lack of awareness of the complex relationship between the economic issues faced by individuals and the underlying environmental factors causing them. The report argues that there is a need for a better contextualization of

how environmental drivers contribute to economic challenges and subsequent migration. Moreover, formal and informal restrictions on mobility shape perceptions and have an impact on migration decision-making. Formal obstacles include the lack of financial resources, legal restrictions on international mobility, lack of regular migration channels for low-skilled labour, and individuals' lack of linguistic capital. Informal barriers to mobility include the attachment of communities, particularly rural communities, to their lands, families, and communities. Finally, the study finds that women face additional barriers mobility despite being more exposed to and sensitive to the effects of climate change.



MMC is a global network engaged in data collection, research, analysis, and policy and programmatic development on mixed migration, with regional hubs hosted in Danish Refugee Council regional offices in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Latin America, and a global team based across Copenhagen, Geneva and Brussels.

MMC is a leading source for independent and high-quality data, research, analysis and expertise. MMC aims to increase understanding of mixed migration, to positively impact global and regional migration policies, to inform evidence-based protection responses for people on the move and to stimulate forward thinking in public and policy debates on mixed migration. MMC's overarching focus is on human rights and protection for all people on the move.

MMC is part of the Danish Refugee Council (DRC).

For more information visit:  
[mixedmigration.org](https://mixedmigration.org) and follow us at [@Mixed\\_Migration](https://twitter.com/Mixed_Migration)

