

**Number 83**

## Report of the month August 2020

Social movements, Suicides, Violence and Migration

397 collective protests, 17 cases of suicide and attempted suicide and 2235 Migrants



# Introduction

The country was supposed to be moving towards the recovery of the economic situation after the first wave of the COVID 19 virus, during which economic life was suspended for six weeks and which resulted in a decrease in Gross Domestic Product of 21.6% and an increase in the unemployment rate from 3% to 18%. Subsequently, the second step would have been the development of a strategic plan to deal with an expected second wave of this pandemic in order to protect public health and prevent a further economic collapse.

The country once again stopped on the threshold of a political debate, overthrowing the government and installing a new government in the midst of a tense general political climate and multiplying the complexities of the economic and social crisis that the country is going through.

Once again, therefore, efforts were once again directed towards political debate instead of implementing alternatives in order to protect the vulnerable and impoverished classes, to guarantee the return of production and economic life and to protect jobs in companies.

Once again, the vulnerable and impoverished groups and all those who dream of social justice are forced to wait for a time when the will to end corruption and to carry out the necessary reforms can be realized with respect for the rights set out in the 2014 Constitution, especially economic and social rights.

The 64th anniversary of Women's Day (corresponding to August 13 of each year) confirmed that everyone is convinced that the real challenge today is that people first enjoy their economic and social rights and according to this viewpoint the President of the Republic visited women workers in the agricultural field in Jendouba on August 13.

However, this visit did not change the lives of the women workers in the agricultural sector as it was only a protocol step and was not accompanied by any legislative achievements. The agricultural sector female workers are still there in the Jendouba valleys as well as in the regions of Kairouan, Sidi Bouzid, Mahdia and other agricultural production areas in various parts of the country deprived of social security coverage, earning a salary below the value of their efforts and traveling to their workplaces in a precarious manner.

end to their daily suffering, so that this economic violence continued against them facing an official inability to organize their work and make it more respectful of their dignity and citizenship. Women workers in the agricultural sector remain the most vulnerable workforce in terms of employment formulas and working conditions.

The political tension that the country experienced throughout the month of August, coupled with the climate of negotiations to form the new government and the general atmosphere to celebrate Women's Day, increased the degree of uncertainty among citizens on three levels: health, economics and social welfare.

Regarding health and during the month of August, new episodes of local COVID 19 infection began to be recorded in a number of regions and with the increase in these cases, the debate prevailed over the hypothesis of a postponement of the start of the school year and consequently blurring the scene for students and their parents as to the return date.

On the economic and social level and given the lack of a clear strategy to restore the economic situation after the first wave of COVID 19, which resulted in 21.6% of Gross Domestic Product, concerns and the search for individual alternative solutions have increased, one of the most striking of which is the continued flow of unregulated migration despite the Tunisian-Italian mobilization throughout the month of August to limit these infiltrations to the Italian coast. Despite the drop in the number of arrivals in Italy compared to July, the arrival of more than two thousand migrants in Italy from Tunisia remains a striking and significant figure.

The deterioration of the economic and social situation may also contribute to an additional wave of school dropouts, as evidenced by a 19 year old in a private radio station at the end of August, considered an excellent student with an average of more than 15 out of 20 who was forced to drop out of school and not pass the baccalaureate exam due to the inability of his family to provide for his schooling. It may be the tree that hides the forest since the child often pays the price for his family's economic and social situation and may be forced to drop out of school and enter the economic cycle.



## The mapping of Social Movements

The number of protests recorded throughout the month of August 2020 reached 397 protests (a daily average of 12 protests), which is a decrease of about 50% compared to the month of July.

Several logical explanations can be found for the decrease in the number of these demonstrations since the month of August represented a near truce while waiting for the political and school return because it coincided with the parliamentary vacations, i.e. the decrease in the intensity of the political debate. It was also the month following Eid al-Adha, a vacation period for many as well as a month that experienced successive waves of high heat.

Thirst was the main driver of the protests throughout the month of August in various parts of the country, especially during the period of Eid al-Adha. Road closures were also the most widespread form of protest.

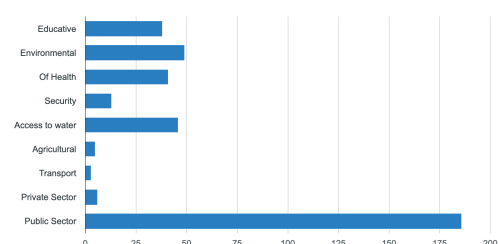
397 movements			
Ariana	1	Ben Arous	0
Bizerte	5	Tunis	35
Zaghouan	2	Manouba	8
Nabeul	5	Beja	4
Jendouba	5	Siliana	2
Le Kef	34	Sousse	5
Sfax	40	Monastir	0
Mahdia	0	Sidi Bouzid	3
Kasserine	32	Kairouan	68
Tataouine	18	Gabes	12
Medenine	2	Tozeur	5
Kebili	4	Gafsa	107



The mapping of demonstrations against thirst was as follows:

- The inhabitants of the El-Nasr district in Mornaguia have blocked the Beja Tunis highway, the national road number 5 and the regional road number 527 connecting Jdaida and Sidi Ali El-Hattab and the regional road number 576, connecting El Mornaguia and Sidi Hassine to demand the improvement of the quality of drinking water ;

Sector	Percentage
Educative	10 %
Environmental	13 %
Of Health	11 %
Security	4 %
Access to water	12 %
Agricultural	2 %
Transport	1 %
Private Sector	2 %
Public Sector	49 %



- In the southern region of Bizerte, inhabitants protested because of the continuous cutting off of drinking water for two months;
- The inhabitants of Ouadi Ghazala in Fernana in the governorate of Jendouba blocked National Road 17 connecting Jendouba and Tabarka to demand the supply of drinking water;
- Fernana, Jendouba governorate: A demonstration due to the cutoff of drinking water resulted in arrests and an additional demonstration that went to the pumping point of the Berbera barrage in protest;
- Residents of the villages of El-Shebla, El-Farayjya and Sayed El-Rymani in El-Oueslatia in the governorate of Kairouan protested against thirst;
- in Jomna, in the south of Kebili, demonstrators blocked the national road number 16 linking Douz and Kebili with burnt tires at the level of Oued El-Melah, to demand the drilling of two wells planned 3 years ago related to the oasis of El-Atilek and which includes 350 farmers;
- In Nefza, in the governorate of Beja, a protest movement against thirst has been noted;
- The inhabitants of Haj Ammar in Hafouz Kairouan governorate blocked the national road number 12 connecting El Kef and Kairouan to claim drinking water
- Residents of Kasr Aouled Boubacar and Habhab in Bir Lahmer de Tataouine blocked regional road number 19 connecting Medenine and Tataouine refusing to continue to be thirsty for more than a month due to the interruption of drinking water;
- Several demonstrations against thirst in Téboursoyk in the Beja governorate;
- Several protests against thirst took place in the governorate of Manouba;
- Several movements in the region of Quadran, delegation of Bir Ali ben Khalifa of Sfax took place;
- Several others took place in the villages of Zafarana, Al-Qouassim, Ramadhania, El-Brahmia and El-Qouirat in the south of Kairouan, demanding the supply of drinking water;
- Residents of Aouled Hlel, El-Chrichia region of the Hafouz delegation in the governorate of Kairouan blocked the national road number 12 connecting Hafouz and Kairouan in denial of the continuous thirst for the past two months;

- Residents of the region of Maali in Jendouba (which includes more than 5000 inhabitants) have cut the road between Jendouba and the El-Aitha and Sidi El-Hmissi area in demand of drinking water;
- The neighborhoods of Mnejla and Marssil, Oueslatia in Kairouan blocked the national road 46 connecting Hafouz and Oueslatia, due to the arrest of the treasurer of the water group, Mourad Fettiti ;
- A demonstration in the El-Hlefa neighborhood of El Hancha in Sfax due to thirst was noted;
- A demonstration in the El-Kordia neighborhood of Hafouz (Kairouan) refusing thirst was recorded;
- A demonstration in the neighborhoods of Aouled Nasr and Moujehidines in Chebika with the blocking of the national road number 3 linking Hajeb El-Ayoun and Kairouan in the region of El-Kriin took place;
- A demonstration by farmers of the El-Abebsa region in the delegation of El Friouet from Ain Boumerra to El-Sbikha was noted; and
- A demonstration by the inhabitants of El-Kouadria in Chbika to denounce thirst was also observed.

The governorate of Kairouan is at the forefront of the thirstiest regions and the thirst is almost equally distributed among its different regions and villages.

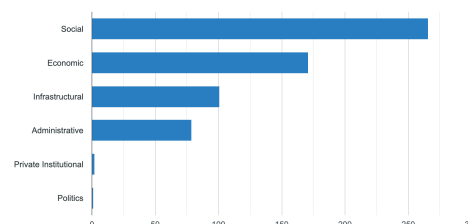
The northwestern regions of the country come in second place in terms of thirst protests even though these areas hold about 70% of the surface water wealth.

The initiating social actors movements	
Unemployed	45 %
Unemployed graduates	20 %
Workers	17 %
Inhabitants	16 %
Citizens	13 %
Construction workers	9 %
Youth	5 %
Farmers	2%

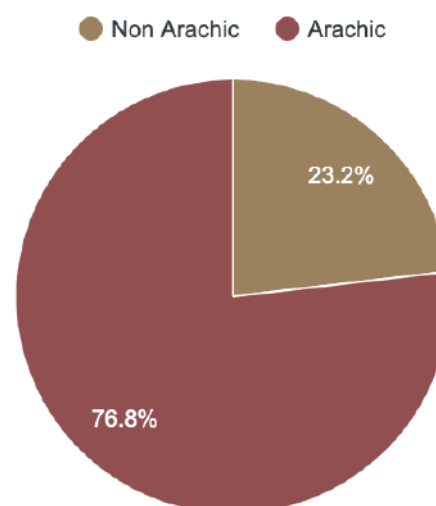
El Mornaguia's movement to improve the quality of drinking water has also seen many developments leading to the prosecution of some demonstrators.

In addition to thirst, the Agureb solid waste landfill was the second most important cause of the events observed throughout the month of August. Local residents, supported by human rights activists, staged a sit-in, rejecting the decision of the El-Guenna dump and demanding the activation of Chapter 45 of the Constitution.

Typologie	Percentage
Social	43 %
Economic	28 %
Infrastructural	17 %
Administrative	13 %
Private Institutional	1 %
Politics	1 %



The demand for employment was not absent from the August demonstrations in the mining areas and in Tozeur, despite the difficult economic situation in the country. What is striking about the demonstrations during the month of August is that 76.8% of the demonstrations were anarchic, that is to say, outside of any form of supervision and could therefore turn violent.



Demands with economic and social connotations represented 71% of the total number of protests.

214 instantaneous movements			
Ariana	1	Ben Arous	0
Bizerte	5	Tunis	2
Zaghouan	2	Manouba	5
Nabeul	5	Beja	4
Jendouba	5	Siliana	2
Le Kef	3	Sousse	5
Sfax	10	Monastir	0
Mahdia	0	Sidi Bouzid	3
Kasserine	32	Kairouan	68
Tataouine	2	Gabes	10
Medenine	2	Tozeur	3
Kebili	4	Gafsa	41



183 planned movements			
Ariana	0	Ben Arous	0
Bizerte	0	Tunis	33
Zaghouan	0	Manouba	3
Nabeul	0	Beja	0
Jendouba	0	Siliana	0
Le Kef	31	Sousse	0
Sfax	30	Monastir	0
Mahdia	0	Sidi Bouzid	0
Kasserine	0	Kairouan	0
Tataouine	16	Gabes	2
Medenine	0	Tozeur	2
Kebili	0	Gafsa	66



The governorate of Gafsa came first in terms of the number of protests throughout the month of August with 107 protests, 95 of which were anarchic, followed by the governorate of Kairouan with 68 protests, including 49 anarchic, then the governorate of Sfax (40 protest movements, 31 of which were anarchic actions) and the governorate of Tunis (35 movements, 33 of which were anarchic), El Kef (34 movements, 32 of which were anarchic), and Kasserine where 32 protest movements were mostly anarchic.

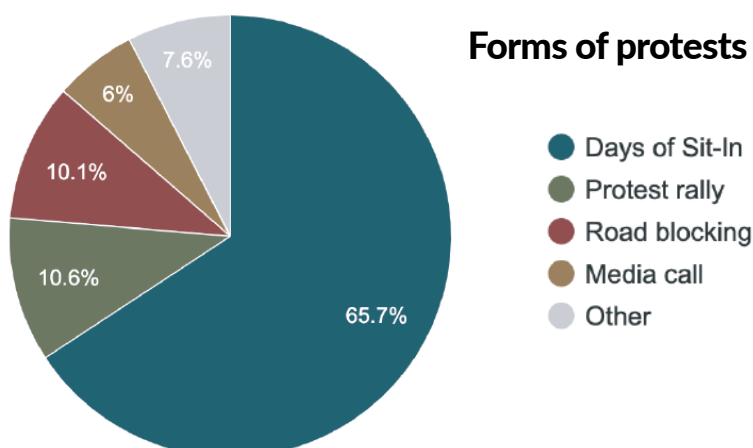


At the regional level, the Western regions are still the most active in terms of protest, the South-West being the first with 116 protest movements, followed by the Center-West with 103 protest movements

397 movements			
North-East	56	North-West	45
Center-East	45	Center-West	103
South-East	32	South-West	116

On the other hand, roadblocks, sit-ins and the organization of protest rallies were the most important forms of protest used by the demonstrators.

Protest spaces	
Routes	28 %
Public buildings	18 %
Administrative offices	16 %
Headquarters of Delegations	12 %
Headquarters of ministries	10 %
Media	9 %
Workspaces	8 %
Governorate headquarters	4 %





## Irregular Migration during of August 2020

Non-regulatory migration flows continued during the month of August despite strict security measures on coastal areas by land and sea as 2,235 Tunisian migrants reached the Italian coast during August 2020 compared to 445 during July of the same year. In comparison with the years 2018 and 2019, the increase is continuous and has reached record levels.

### Comparative data for the months of August – 2018 2020 – 2019

	2018	2019	2020
Arrivals on the Italian coasts	625	489	2235
Interception Operations	39	28	191
Intercepted arrivals	422	515	1621

Irregular migration flows continued during the month of August 2020, calling into question all forms of the security measures taken to prove these approaches alone are not the most effective solution since 7890 Tunisian irregular migrants arrived on the Italian coast compared to 1347 during the same period in 2019 and 3351 in 2018.

### Comparative data for the period from January 1 to August 31, 2020

	2018	2019	2020
Arrivals on the Italian coasts	3351	1347	7890
Interception Operations	265	157	672
Intercepted arrivals	3534	2338	8516

The Maritime Guard has intensified its efforts due to internal and external pressures, it has recorded figures that were not previously recorded; it has countered in 8 months, 672 crossing operations and prevented 8,516 migrants from crossing.

### Monthly Arrivals on Italian Coasts in 2020

January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Total
68	26	60	37	498	821	4145	2235	7890

The month of July 2020 represented the peak of migratory flows not only this year but since 2011.

Despite the decline during the month of August, the number of migrants continues to be the highest in years and the chronology proves that migration flows have gradually increased since the beginning of total containment.

The period of containment and the accompanying fears about the economic and social consequences represented an opportune time for many groups to begin implementing and planning their migration project.

### Distribution of Arrivals to Italy during the period from January 1 to August 31

Males	Females	Accompanied Minors	Non accompanied Minors	Total
6710	209	255	716	7890
85%	2.5%	3.2%	9%	

**Minors Migration :** The data on school dropout and its continued hemorrhaging has been repeatedly restated, and the role of educational institutions such as schools and child welfare institutions has regressed, leaving thousands of children facing a societal legacy of disappointment, disparity and exclusion. These social groups of networks, informal trade, violence, crime and migrant smuggling that are the primary actors seeking to attract these groups of children.

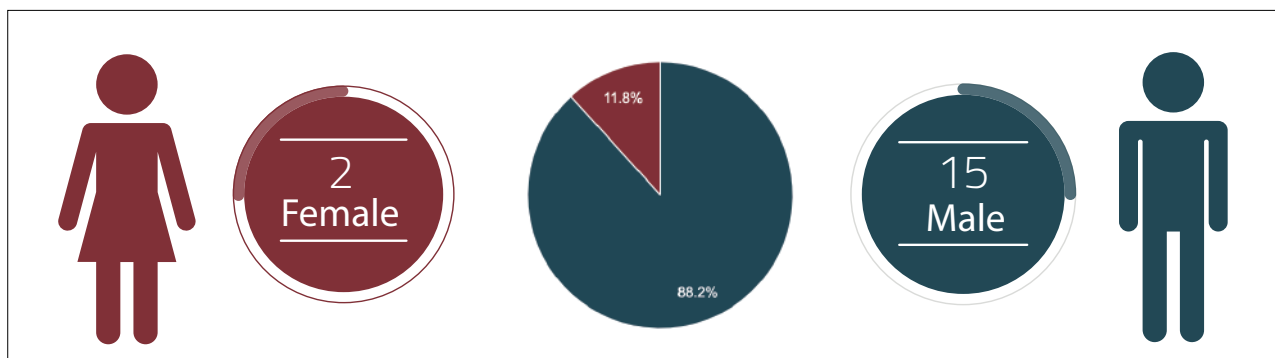
**The Role of the Families:** the family, whose duty is to guarantee the basic needs and care for the children by supporting their expenses and needs and rationalizing their decisions, has been affected by the economic and social crisis and is unable to guarantee education for its children with the additional expenses needed today to provide health care, basic needs and leisure activities

The family's resistance to their children's idea to irregularly migrate has gradually collapsed, especially with the decline of their role due to the economic situation that is worsening day by day and the uncertainty of the future. These families find themselves, therefore, under economic and social constraints and pressures from their children, involved in the non-regulatory immigration project and in many cases embark on the journey themselves.

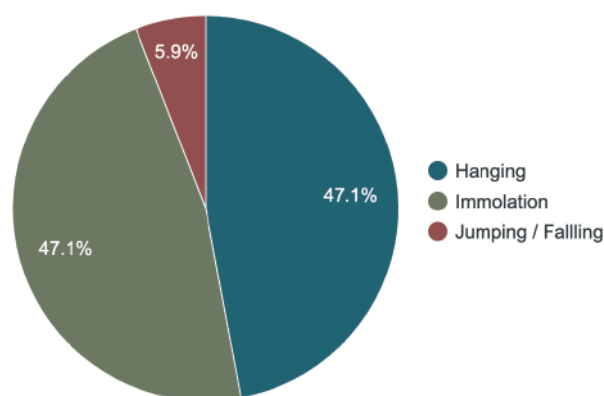
The number of families involved in the entire process of irregular migration can be estimated between 110 and 150 families.

## Suicide and suicide attempts during August 2020

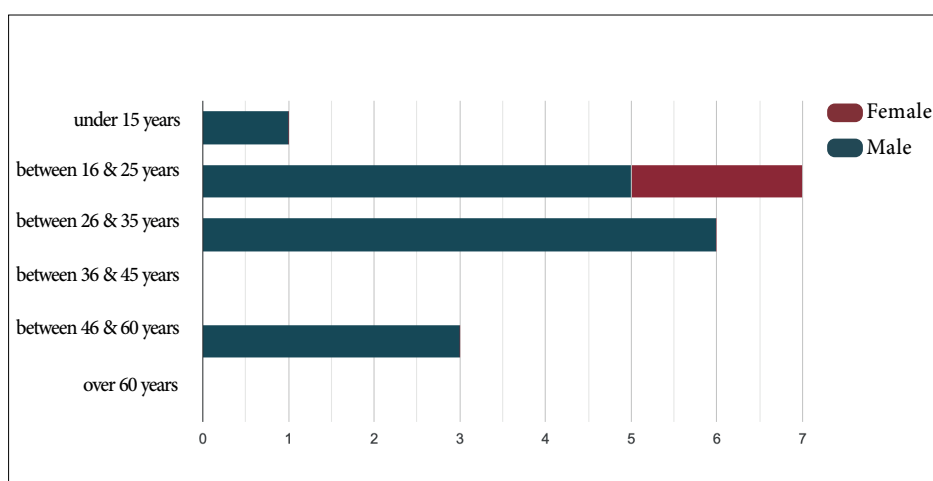
The governorate of Kairouan returns to the top in terms of the number of cases of suicide and attempted suicide during the month of August 2020, with 8 cases out of a total of 17 acts recorded throughout the month.



Of all these cases of suicide and attempted suicide, 47% were by immolation, 47% were by hanging while suicides and attempted suicides by jumping or hurrying were at 5.9%.



The age group 16-35 years was the one that recorded the majority of the cases with 76%. One case of suicide by hanging of an 11-year-old child was recorded in El-Haouaria in the governorate of Nabeul.



	15 ans ou moins	16-25 ans	26-35 ans	36-45 ans	46-60 ans	Plus que 60 ans
Hommes	1	5	6	0	3	0
Femmes	0	2	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1	7	6	0	3	0



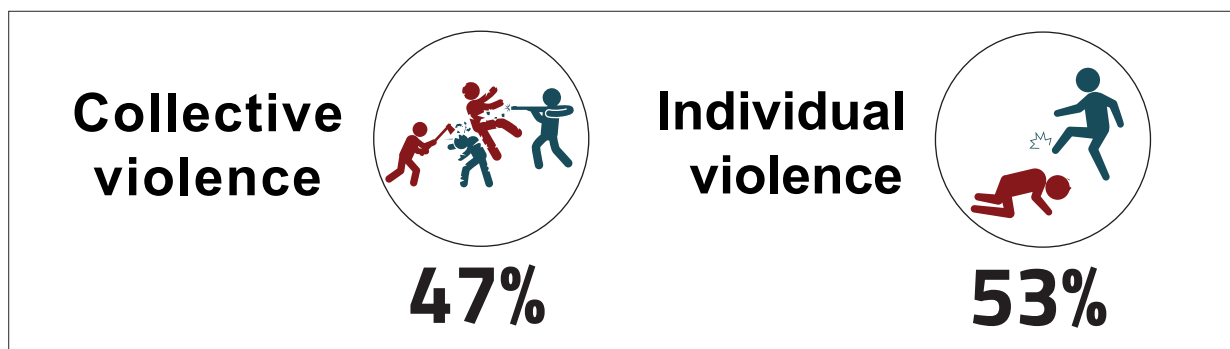
17 suicides			
L'Ariana	0	Ben Arous	0
Bizerte	0	Tunis	0
Zaghouan	2	La Manouba	0
Nabeul	2	Béja	0
Jendouba	2	Siliana	0
Le Kef	0	Sousse	1
Sfax	0	Monastir	0
Mahdia	0	Sidi Bouzid	1
Kasserine	0	Kairouan	8
Tataouine	0	Gabès	0
Medenine	0	Tozeur	1
Kebili	0	Gafsa	0



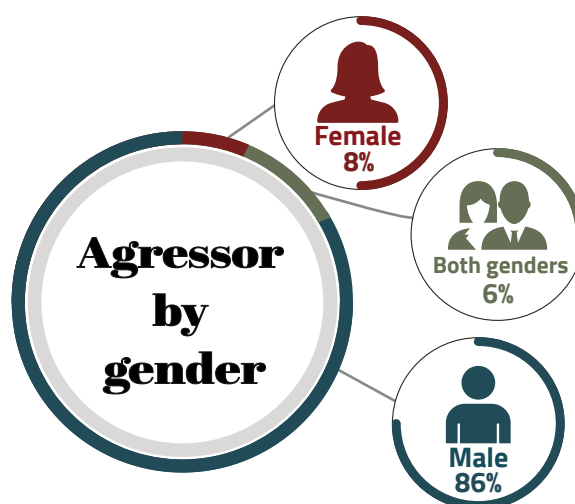
The economic and social context was one of the factors affecting the environment of the victims, as in the case of the twenty year old young man who set himself on fire and died from third-degree burns in Serja in the delegation of Hajeb El-Ayoun. This young man was the victim of deprivation and marginalization that motivated his suicide because he had submitted an application for employment in one of the factories specializing in mineral water bottling in Serja but his application was rejected.

## Violence Report of August 2020

In August, 53% of the violence in August was in the form of individual violence, while collective violence represented 47% and, as in previous months, the male gender monopolized 86% of the volume of violence that month. Women were responsible for 8% of the violence and the rest of the violence was committed by a mixed group of aggressors.



Various international organizations and sociological studies have warned of the danger of the economic repercussions of the COVID 19 pandemic and what it may leave behind in terms of domestic, social, criminal and especially economic violence. Together, they have confirmed that children will be the most affected by these repercussions.

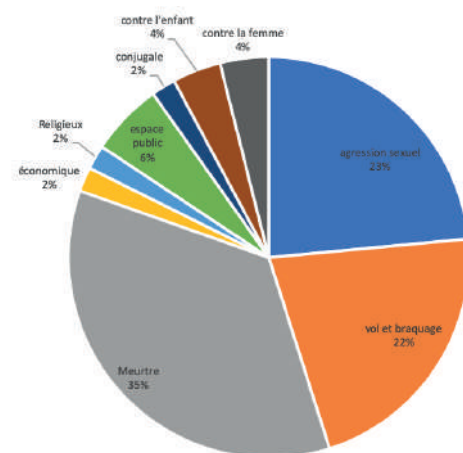


In addition to the fact that the child lived throughout the period of confinement and curfew, under the impact of certain travel restrictions imposed due to the emergence of the Corona virus, daily monitoring by civil society organizations and official state structures proved that the child was one of the actors most exposed to exploitation, abuse and domestic violence.

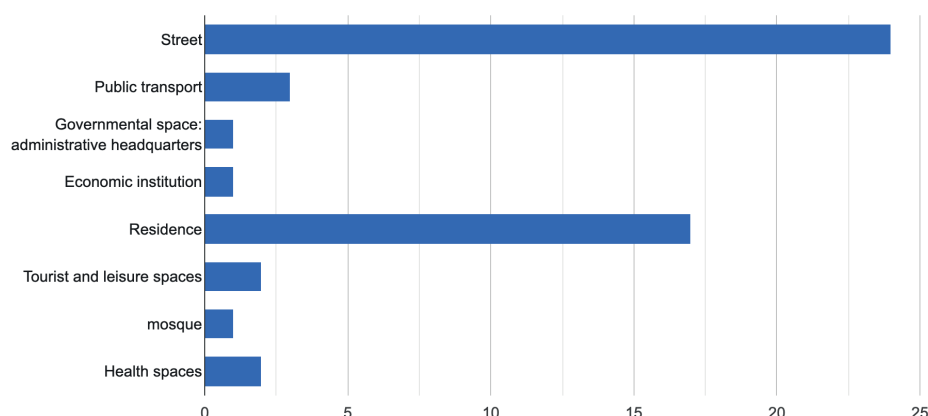
The closure of schools has put children from precarious social groups in an even more vulnerable position and has pushed a large proportion of them to join the labor market, which will have an impact on their return to school.

Today, in the face of the economic and social crisis left by the Corona virus and the difficulty for thousands of families to protect their livelihoods and sources of income, children are facing a new problem which is their ability to access education and provide their school supplies for the start of the school year. A problem that is likely to have a significant impact on the drop-out rate, exceeding the figures stated annually (100,000 out-of-school students) and representing a context that encourages economic exploitation, sexual abuse and domestic violence of children.

For reference, studies conducted by UNICEF following the Ebola epidemic in West Africa between 2014 and 2016 indicate that there has been an increase in rates of child labor and sexual exploitation and in most countries, two out of three children are victims of domestic violence.



In the same context and on the basis of the observation and monitoring of the Tunisian Social Observatory at the Tunisian Forum for Economic and Social Rights, we can say that the recent period and more specifically the month of August 2020 has seen the emergence of a qualitative manifestation of the repercussions of the economic crisis of the Corona pandemic through the exacerbation of the phenomenon of child labor and high rates of violence against children which has reached, according to the Tunisian Social Observatory, the rate of 4% of all violence observed.



During the same month, the level of violence, especially criminal violence such as robberies accounted for nearly a quarter of the violence observed, noting that criminal violence ranked first among the types of violence recorded during the month of August 2020.

On the other hand, the various other types of violence such as social, relational and sexual violence, as well as murder accounted for 41%. In addition, institutional violence was 22% and sexual violence accounted for 24% of the total violence recorded. Violence against women was 4% and economic violence was 4%.

The spaces that experienced violent demonstrations were varied and public space was the most important, divided between the public highway and public transportation, followed by family space, administrative spaces (the services of the Ministry of Health, municipalities, governorate headquarters and regional public institutions ...). Religious spaces such as mosques also witnessed incidents of violence during the month of August.

The governorate of Kairouan returned to the top of the regions that live on the impact of violent incidents during the month of August 2020 as it alone recorded 18% of the total violent incidents, followed by the governorate of Nabeul which experienced 14% of the violence, then Monastir, 12%, and the governorates of Sousse and Tunis with 10%.

L'Ariana	2%	Ben Arous	0%
Bizerte	6%	Tunis	10%
Zaghuan	2%	La Manouba	0%
Nabeul	14%	Béja	0%
Jendouba	0%	Siliana	0%
Le Kef	6%	Sousse	10%
Sfax	2%	Monastir	12%
Mahdia	2%	Sidi Bouzid	0%
Kasserine	6%	Kairouan	18%
Tataouine	6%	Gabès	0%
Medenine	0%	Tozeur	0%
Kebili	4%	Gafsa	2%





## Conclusion

The decline in the number of demonstrations during the month of August 2020 does not necessarily mean that the flame of protests and social movements could be extinguished in the coming months. On the contrary, the month of August was the general truce that preceded a storm of demonstrations based on a leading indicator, namely the postponement of most protest movements from escalating while waiting for the new government. We mention, as a non-exhaustive list, the sit-in of doctoral students at the Ministry of Higher Education, the "Khadamni" sit-in in Gafsa, the sit-in of the youth of Kasserine at the headquarters of the Ministry of Employment and the sit-in of Kamour, other sit-in underway in several regions for employment and development and the movement "Jendouba wants real development" which will return at the beginning of September.

All these indicators place the new government before a warm autumn and also a warm winter unless it improves its diagnosis and reading of the social and economic situation and has an urgent and strategic vision on how to respond to all these demands, which are the result of the economic and social crisis that the country has been going through for the last 9 years due to the continuation of the same failed policies and a development model incapable of creating jobs, as well as the complications that the COVID crisis has added, including the increase in layoffs and the state of economic paralysis that the country is going through.

In the absence of a national migration policy and if the same economic policies and political paths based on the struggle for positions, interests and powers that have proven their high social cost persist, the situation will intensify and the dynamics of protests will escalate due to the involvement of more young people and all bangs of society in irregular migration projects in numbers not as high as July and August but even higher and only the weather factors will curb them.

## New scientific calculation methodology:

As of March, the Tunisian Social Observatory of the Tunisian Forum for Economic and Social Rights has adopted a new methodology of scientific calculation, the bases of which are as follows:

### Definitions:

Instantaneous movements: characterized by the surprise and speed of movement resulting from the anger of the crowd and the rumble it generates but are limited in time and space. This type of movement seeks to mobilize attention and social mobilization and is characterized by its peaceful nature. However, these movements vary in the parameters of protest development, including the use of violence.

Planned movements: movements which were essentially immediate but which changed and developed mechanisms of action in time and space and were able to acquire the capacity to organize and prepare for and seek to develop counter-mobilization but remain essentially peaceful. They are distinguished by their organizational means and their capacity to ensure its continuous action and mobilization for the same reasons.

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Violent movements: these are movements that make use of counter-violence as one of their mechanisms of action and are often direct reactions employing all means for confrontation and the achievement of their objectives, but they often lack clear organisational elements, programs and means.

### The methodology of Calculation:

The uniqueness of a movement is defined by a mode of action, a place and a day.

A protest taking place in several places will be counted as several movements.

A movement taking place over several days will be counted each day.

A protest using different action modes will be counted once for each action.

## **Methodology for monitoring irregular migration**

- **Interception Operations:** The watch is based on reports from the Ministry of the Interior and statements by the National Guard representative in the various Medias. In most cases, they do not include detailed information (gender, age groups, and the immigrants' countries of origin).
- **Arrivals on European coasts:** Several structures issue digital data on arrivals to Europe, such as the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration, the Ministries of Interior of European countries and the European Coastal Surveillance Agency.
- **The figures presented remain approximate and require continuous updating** according to data published by official and civil structures, which may be edited in future reports, but which provide a reading of the evolution and change in the dynamics of irregular migration.
- **Invisible figures:** are the numbers of migrants who reach European coasts without going through local authorities or international structures and are not included in a census. These are important figures and differ according to the tactics of migrant smuggling networks. They also include departure operations from the Tunisian coasts that manage to escape strict security checkpoints or those whose passage is intercepted without issuing reports or without announcing them.