

N°95

# Report August

# 20 21

## 442

**Collective  
protests**

## 12

**cases of suicide and  
attempted suicide**

## 3904

**Migrants**

**Feminist protest in the mining towns**

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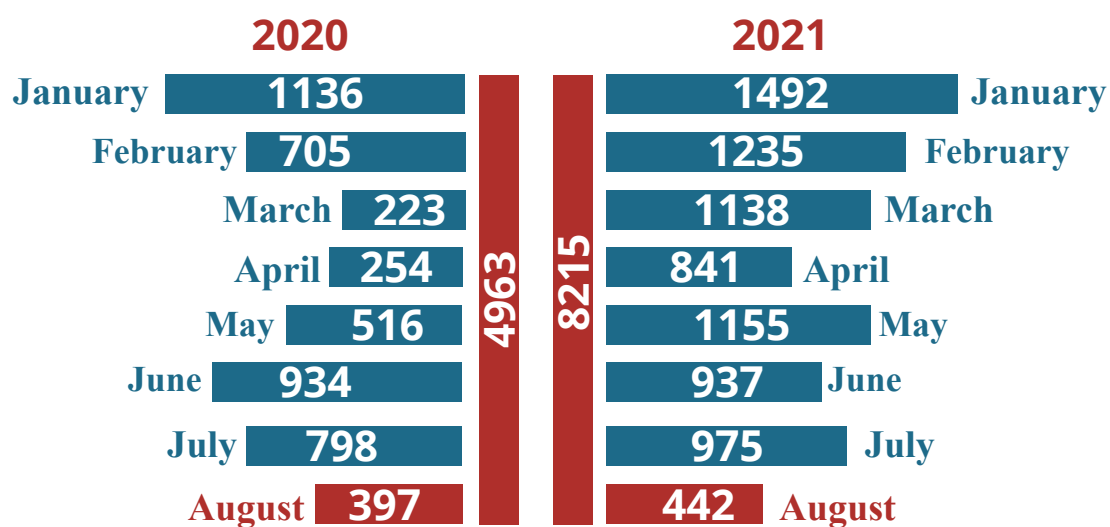
**FRIEDRICH  
EBERT  
STIFTUNG**



**TERRE  
SOLIDAIRE**  
Signes les forces du changement

## Introduction

Social mobilization has experienced further evolution over the eighth month of the year 2021, without any significant difference in its economic and social characteristics as compared to the previous months. Rather, the crisis has worsened, the economic growth rate has remained below zero, the unemployment rate has stabilized at a high level, and a record increase in violence has occurred. This crisis was exacerbated as a result of political developments in the country, violence in Parliament and alliances based on partisan interests, leading to the application of Article 80 of the Constitution on July 25 and the suspension of Parliament and the head of government. Indeed, this date has become a new momentum for social mobilization since expectations were raised.



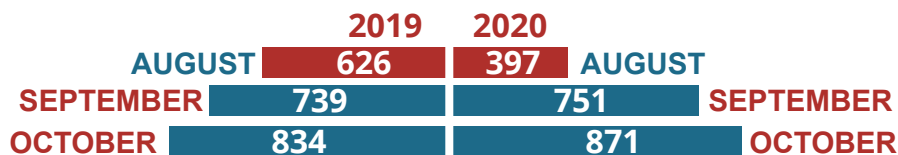
## The Protests

## The August Protests

The rise in the ceiling of expectations has been reflected in numerous opinion polls, which have indicated that the rate of optimism has increased among Tunisians after the adoption of these exceptional measures related to Article 80. This was evidenced by the notable drop in protest movements during the month of August since the monitoring team of the Tunisian Social Observatory has recorded a decline in the number of demonstrations during the month of August of about 45% compared to the previous July (442 protest movements against 975 protest movements in July 2021). It can be said that the political developments have allowed a truce in the activity of the social and protest movements while waiting or hoping for the possibility of dealing with their claims and their fulfillment.



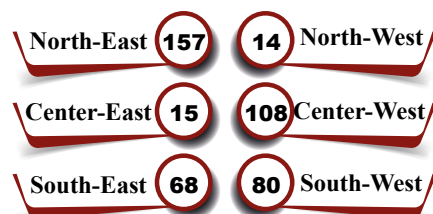
This progress could also be explained by the pressure drop during the month of August, the decision of the authorities to relax the restrictions imposed on the movement of people and vehicles as part of the pandemic prevention plan of Covid has allowed a semblance of return to normal life for people and also for many economic activities, including services such as cafes and restaurants. All these factors have ensured a sort of truce in social movement throughout the month of August, but it seems to be a pre-storm truce, as the month of August is opening up to thundery months for the seasons of protests.



Among the changes that were observed in the protest scene during the month of August was the mapping of the most contesting areas, where the Northeast emerged as the center of the protests' gravity.

This can be explained by the demonstrators' choice to protest wherever the center of decision-making is, that is, in the Capital region, in an effort to make their voices heard against the policy of exhaustion and non-interaction that has been going on for years. The North-East region recorded 35.5% of the total demonstrations in August, followed by the Center-West region (Kasserine, Sidi-Bouzyd and Kairouan) with 24% and the South-West region with 80 movements (the governorates of Gafsa, Kebili and Tozeur), then 68 protest movements in the governorates of Gabès, Tataouine and Medenine. The social movements were limited in the governorates of the Center-East and North-West regions, to 15 and 14 protest movements, according to the monitoring results.

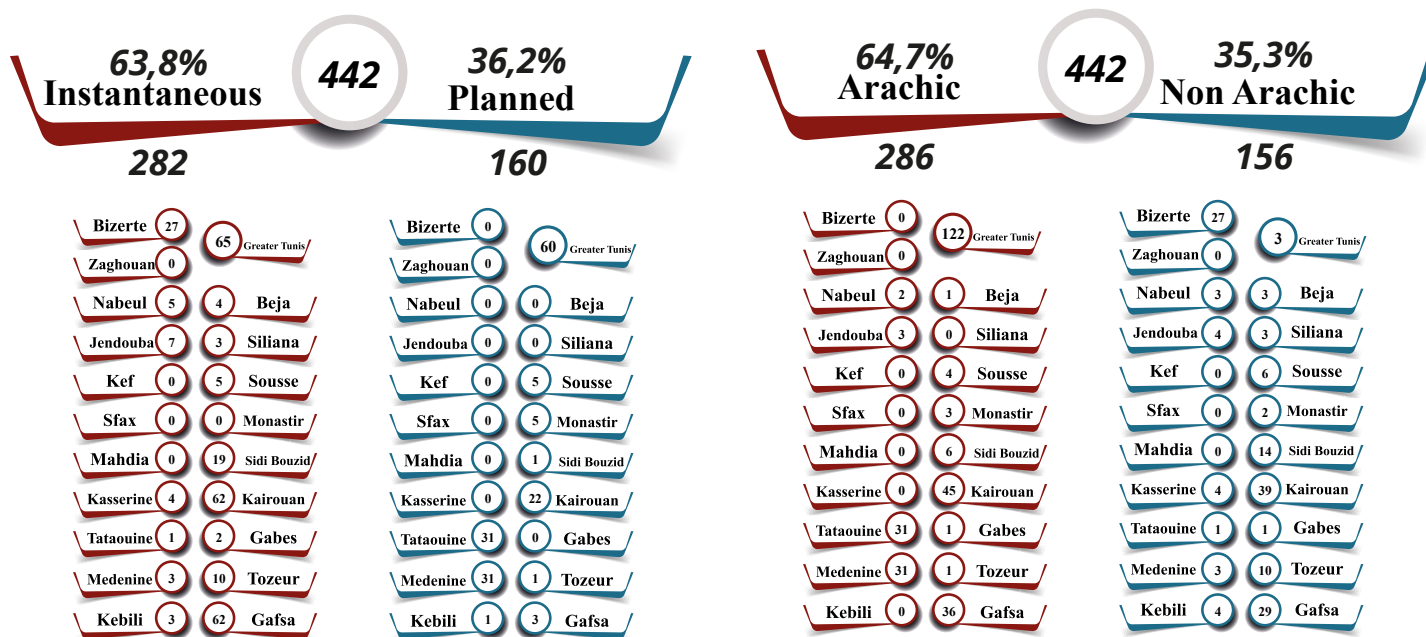
Most of these protests were spontaneous, i. e. about 63%.



## Anarchic protests

One of the protest variables that were also noted during the month of August was the decrease of the proportion of anarchic demonstrations, i.e. those that tend to violence or blocking of activities, as record rates of anarchic demonstrations were recorded during the first months of this year (stabilized at the level of over 80%). This percentage was about 64.7% during the month of August 2021.

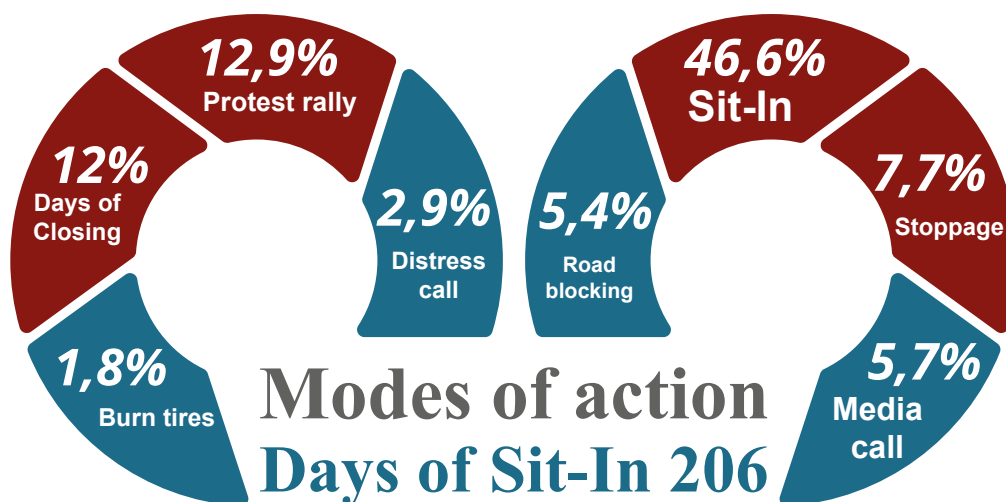
As for the mapping of anarchic demonstrations, the governorates of Tataouine, Medenine, Tunis and Gafsa, represented poles of unruly protests, since the four regions have recorded 49.7% of the total number of anarchic protests noted at national level. To explain this concentration in the anarchic protest movement, it should be noted that the governorate of Tunis is the central seat of sovereignty, to which the movements are oriented. Protesting in front of a seat of Sovereignty and in front of ministries is a form that protesters have adopted for years. As for the governorate of Gafsa, it is traditionally an area of protest in which the lawlessness is associated with the shutdown of the headquarters of the railway transport of phosphate and the disruption of the activities of the Phosphates Gafsa company in demand for employment.



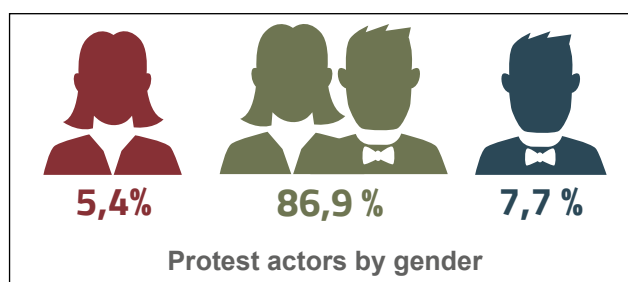
## Forms and Actors of protest

The sit-in remains the most chosen form of protest for the actors of the social movements as this form comes first with respect to the demonstrations in August, with a rate of 46.6% or 206 days for various protest movements and social movements.

Protest rallies came second with 12.9%. In addition, during the month of August, peaceful marching to the Capital was a mode of action that has returned to the forefront, with a rate of 12%, as women seeking employment departed from the area of Al-Bareka, Om Laarayes, on foot on the occasion of August 13, asking to meet the President of the Republic and to make their voices heard. Strikes ranked third in terms of the observed forms of protest with a rate of 7.7%, followed by media appeals, then road blockades, wheel burnings, business blockages and hunger strikes.



As for the actors, women represented 7.7% of the total number of protest actors during the month of August 2021, while men represented 5.4% of these movements. The proportion of protest movements initiated by men and women in a mixed proportion was 86.9%.



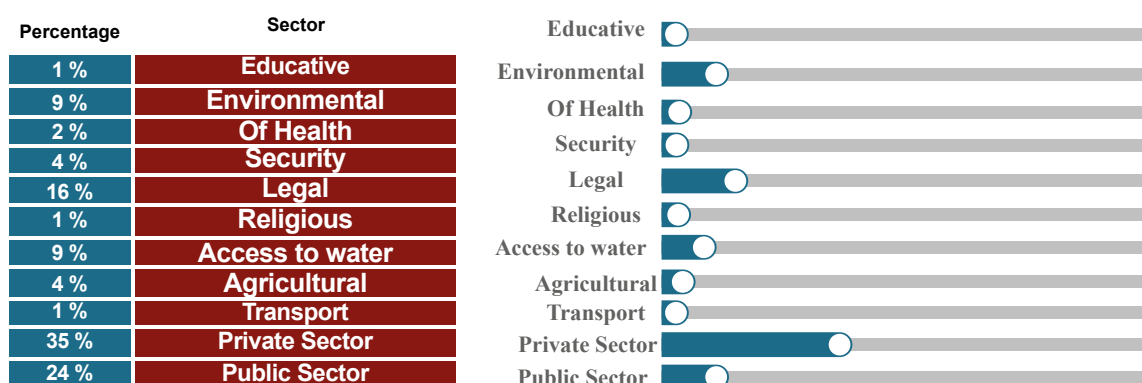
As for the perpetrators, they were mainly blue-collar workers (30% of total social actors), office workers (17%), unemployed (24%), farmers, journalists, activists, civil servants, drivers, domestic workers and migrants at close rates.

The initiating social actors movements		Protest spaces	
30 %	workers	37 %	Roads
19 %	inhabitants	19 %	Ministry headqua
17 %	Employees	19 %	Work spaces
15 %	other Citizens	15 %	Medias
12 %	Unemployed	9 %	Governorate head
12%	Unemployed gradu	8 %	Social Media
4 %	farmers	5 %	Public buildings
3 %	Journalists	2 %	Municipality
2 %	Parents	2 %	Hospitals
2 %	Activists	2 %	Delegations

### Claims and spaces of protest:

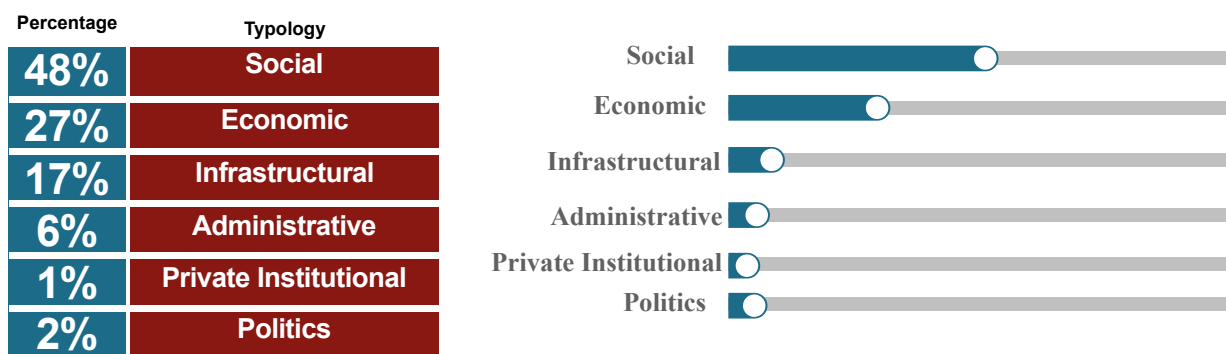
The economic and social context accounted for 75% of the total demands of the protests in August 2021. These claims were related to the creation of jobs, the improvement of working conditions and the fight against labor rights violations.

On the other hand, 9% of the protests in the month of August 2021 were related to the right to water, 9% to the right to development and the right to compensation, denunciation of the interruption of electricity and water services, non-activation of agreements, and demands for infrastructure repair, since infrastructure-related protests accounted for 17% of the total protests during the month of August 2021.



The streets were the most common sites of protest, with a percentage of 37% and the headquarters of ministries came second with 19%, followed by the work spaces, media, then the buildings of state institutions and modern media or social networking platforms, mainly Facebook, without forgetting, in front of the seats of sovereignty (5%), the municipal headquarters (2%), hospitals (2%), headquarters of delegations and administrative, judicial, educational and security buildings (1%).

The central authority represents the main target of the demonstrators, since the share of demands addressed to the central authorities reached 63%. The rate of demands addressed to the Presidency of the Republic was 18% and the demands addressed to regional authorities amounted to 17%, while the percentage of demands addressed to delegates was 1% and to governors 8%.



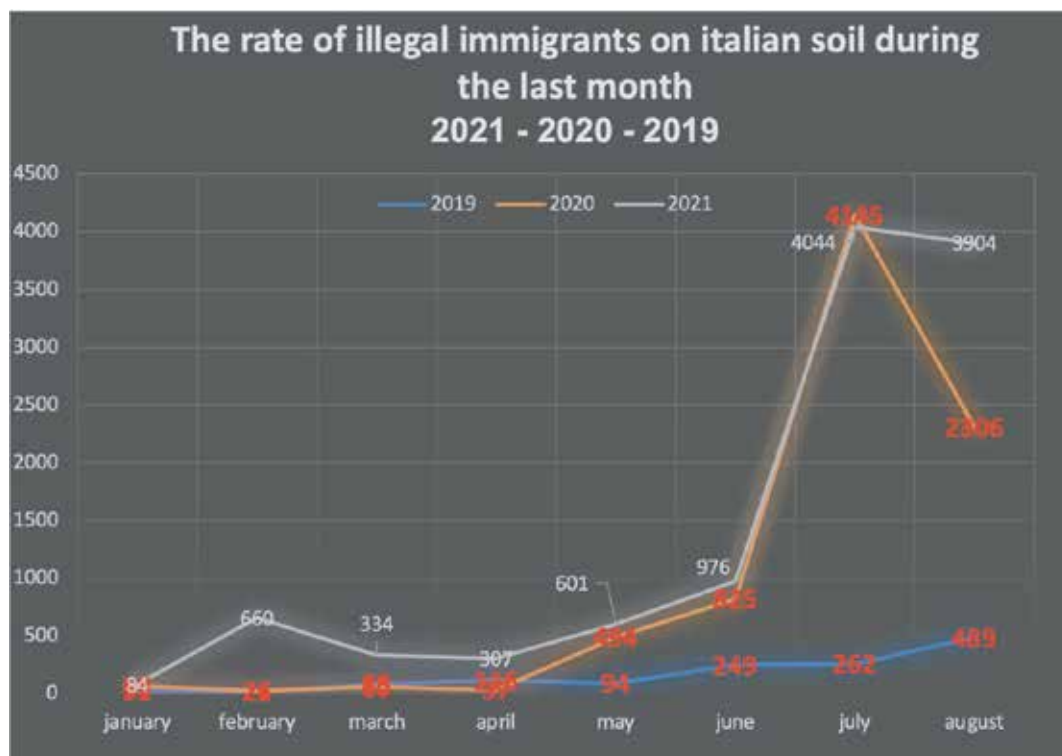
# Irregular Migration during August 2021

## COMPARATIVE DATA DURING THE SAME PERIOD 2018-2019-2020-2021

August	2021	Total	August	2020	Total	August	2019	Total	August	2018	Total
3904	Arrivals on the Italian coasts	10911	2306	Arrivals on the Italian coasts	7961	489	Arrivals on the Italian coasts	1347	625	Arrivals on the Italian coasts	3967
317	Interception operations	974	191	Interception operations	672	28	Interception operations	157	39	Interception operations	265
5582	Migrants intercepted	16209	1621	Migrants intercepted	8516	515	Migrants intercepted	2338	422	Migrants intercepted	3534

On the same pace as July 2021, the number of arrivals on Italian shores during August reached 3904, which is a 40% increase compared to August 2020. The number of arrivals in Italy since the beginning of the year has reached 10,911, which is an increase of 27% compared to the same period in 2020. During August, 317 interception operations took place, representing an increase of 38%. The number of intercepted crossings since the beginning of the year amounted to 974, increasing by 31% compared to the same period in 2020. The number of intercepted migrants has reached 5582, representing an increase of over 70%. Since the beginning of the year, 16,209 migrants have been prevented from reaching the Italian coast, i. e. an increase of 47%.

The figures confirm that the acceptance and optimism surrounding decisions in the political context do not resonate in high flow rates. The decision seems to be more related to the economic and social context, which is not changing, to a state of mistrust of the future and to a feeling of insecurity.



## The different locations of abored illegal trips 2021 - 2020 - 2019



## The number of intercepted illegal migrants 2021 - 2020 - 2019



### DISTRIBUTION OF ARRIVALS TO ITALY IN 2021

	NON-ACCOMPANIED MINORS	ACCOMPANIED MINORS	FEMALES	MALES	THE ARRIVALS
<b>AUGUST</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>3115</b>	<b>3904</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1766</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>8402</b>	<b>10911</b>

With the improvement of climatic factors, the phenomenon of family migration has reappeared and the number of migrant families can be estimated since the beginning of the year at over 200 families. The number of minors has also exceeded 2,116 arrivals on the coast, 350 of whom were accompanied.

### Distribution of frustrating arrests by region

	Jendouba	Bizerte	Tunis	Nabeul	Sousse	Monastir	Mahdia	Sfax	Gabes	Medenine
<b>AUGUST</b>	*	1,3%	4,5%	6,8%	1,8%	2,2%	10,9%	56,6%	1,3%	14,15%
<b>AVERAGE</b>	*	2,7%	9,5%	13,9%	4,5%	6,3%	10,3%	36,09%	0,55%	6,47%

The intercepted crossings have intensified in the region of Sfax, which alone represents 56.6%. During this month of August 2021, all the Tunisian coasts have experienced intercepted crossings, which amounted to an average of more than 10 crossings per day this month.

### Distribution of frustration by territory during July

	Other nationalities	Tunisians
<b>AUGUST</b>	<b>28,5%</b>	<b>71,5%</b>
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>53,11%</b>	<b>46,88%</b>

The percentage of Tunisian migrants intercepted on the Tunisian coast reached 71.5% during the month of August 2021, which is the highest figure for this year 2021. Migrants of other nationalities mainly departed from Libyan territory but were intercepted or rescued by the Tunisian authorities.

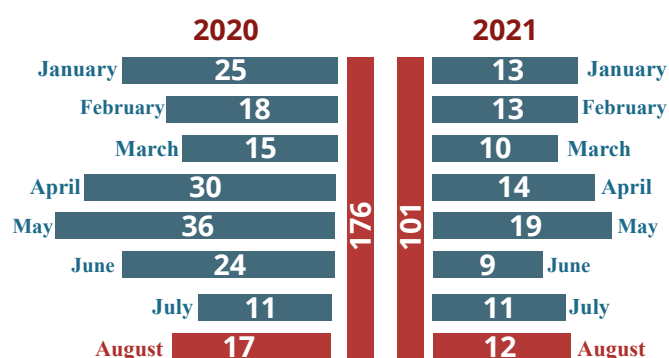
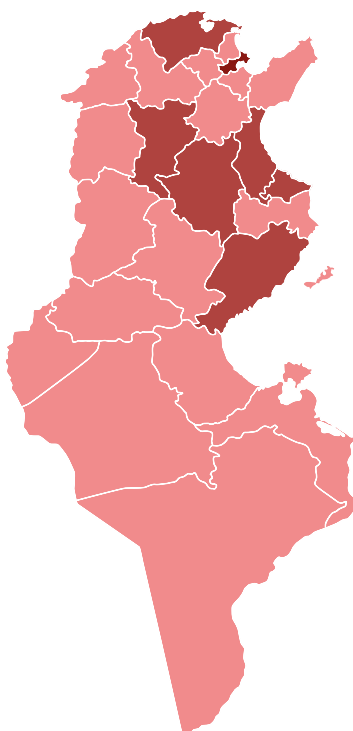
### Distribution of frustrating arrests during August

	Maritime	Terrestrial
<b>AUGUST</b>	<b>74,1%</b>	<b>25,8%</b>
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>45,5%</b>	<b>54,4%</b>

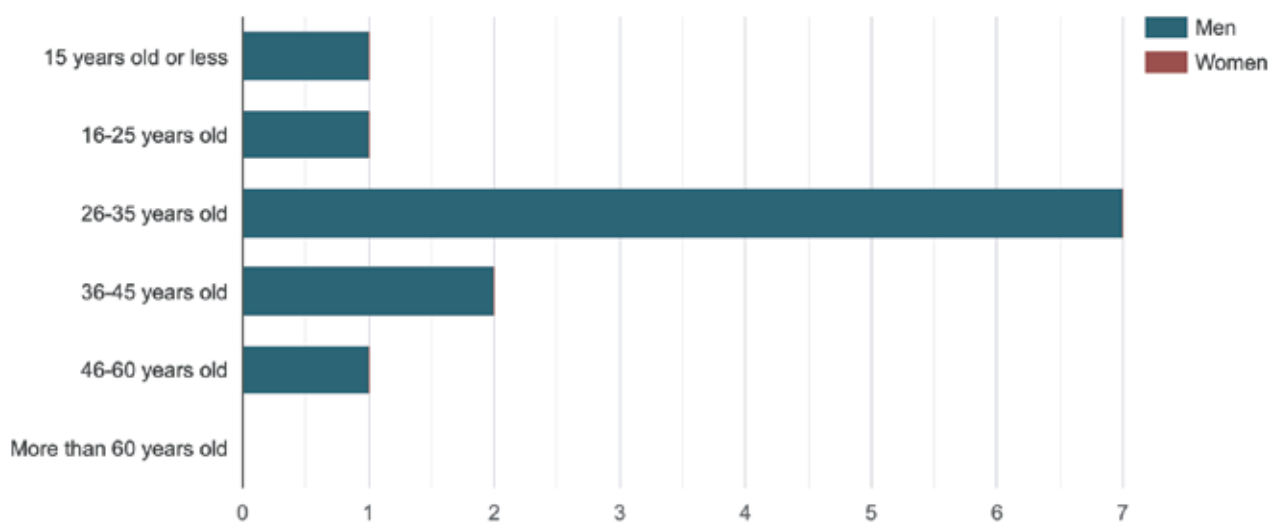
Intercepted crossings at sea represented 74.1% during the month of August 2021, which is the highest rate of this year 2021. The technical equipment and coordination with the Italian and European parties have played a major role.

## Suicide and attempted suicide

12 suicides and attempted suicides were recorded during the month of August 2021, all male. These cases were distributed as follows: one act of suicide or attempted suicide respectively in Bizerte, Sfax, Seliana, Sousse, Monastir and Kairouan and 6 acts of suicide or attempted suicide in the governorate of Tunis. In addition, a threat of collective suicide by a number of farmers in Mallag was recorded to protest against their working conditions, without having precise information on the exact number of these people.

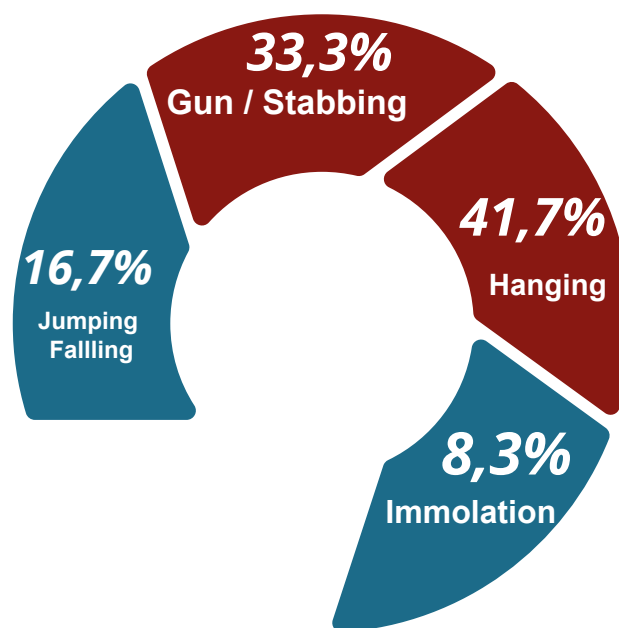


The 26-35 age group was ranked first, with a rate of over 50%, followed by the 36-45 age group.



	15 years old or less	16-25 years old	26-35 years old	36-45 years old	46-60 years old	More than 60 years old
Men	1	1	7	2	1	0
Women	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1	1	7	2	1	0

One suicide or attempted suicide was also observed in a child under the age of 15. Suicide by hanging was the most observed form of suicide with a rate of 41.7%, followed by the use of knives or firearms with 33%, then by jumping or falling from buildings or in wells with 16.7% and immolation with 8.3%.



## August 2021 report on violence

Violence and its appalling forms of murder, abuse and assault on individuals have become part of the social scene in Tunisia, without the authorities displaying a clear strategy to control and prevent such violence as a threat to individuals and social peace. This violence has been significant especially in the age group of less than 25 years, according to what has been noted throughout the month of August 2021 by the monitoring team of the Tunisian Social Observatory and it involves violence against oneself and against others. At a time when public opinion was shaken by the murder committed by a young man in his twenties against his parents and his brother when he stabbed him with a knife and then committed suicide for psychological reasons (according to what was reported in the media), another young man in his twenties was involved, the next day, in another heinous murder, stabbing with a knife an elderly man expert in sorcery for the same reasons (psychological reasons) A few days later, a 17-year-old committed the crime of pouring gasoline on the body of his friend (a 16-year-old) and setting it on fire in retaliation for an argument that broke out between them during a drunken evening. Do the authorities have a clear response to the increasing level of this violence and how to prevent it?

Also, during the month of August 2021, we noticed, through the monitoring process, a strong return of domestic violence, going as far as a husband burning his wife in a sensitive area of her body, in the region of Sidi Hassine, following a disagreement between them. What we also noticed was the extent of negative interaction with the incident on social networking sites, as those interacting with the news showed a clear normalization with the violence and attempted to justify it. Do the authorities have a clear response to the growth of domestic violence and the growing phenomenon of social normalization with violence?

It is obvious that the authorities have no strategy to fight this hemorrhage and nor to face it from an awareness perspective according to the sector, such as, road violence, criminal violence and violence against women. They do not present, for example, a clear vision regarding the prevention and treatment of domestic violence, nor do they present violence as a social form that has repercussions and costs on the national collective.

During the month of August 2021, a mapping of violence was detected, in which the center of mass was the Capital Region with 29.6% of the total violence observed, then Sousse with 20.5%, Monastir with 15.9%, Nabeul and Kairouan with 9.1%, then Kasserine with 6.8%.

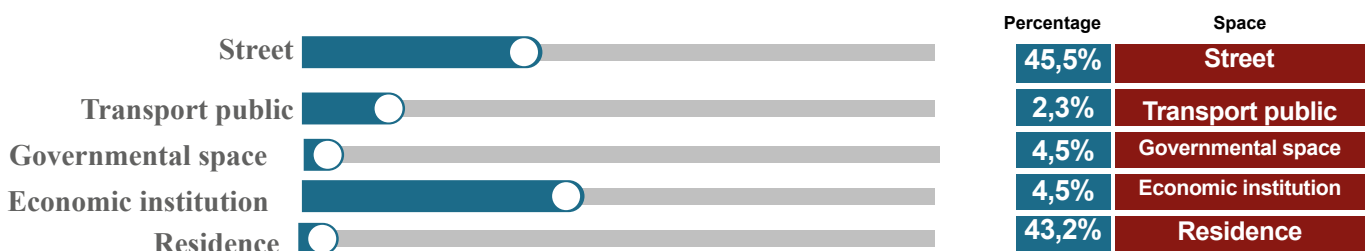
Women accounted for 26.6% of the total victims of violence recorded during the month of August 2021, men 21.1% and the remaining percentage is composed of victims of both sexes for a number of incidents of violence observed.



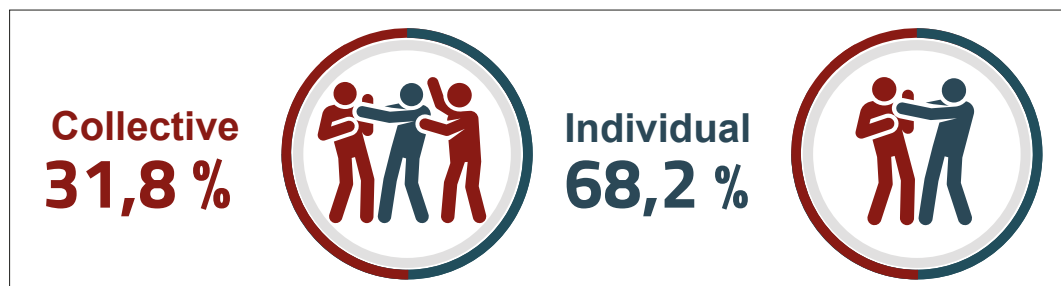
Criminal violence accounted for 90.9% of the total violence observed, while economic violence accounted for 4.5%.



The street and domestic environment were the most important spaces in which violence was committed, with a percentage of over 40% for each space. To varying degrees, administrative spaces, means of transport and economic production institutions were the setting for violence.



In short, the fight against violence is inseparable from any other battle to correct the course of democratic construction in the country. This process will be aimed at guaranteeing social peace as well as ensuring an active economic life in order to build a healthy future for future generations. The government should seriously address the issue of violence, especially among adolescents and under 25 years old, by involving researchers in sociology and behavioral psychology and include everything in a strategy containing mechanisms for preventing this violence in educational institutions and their surroundings, in the family and its surroundings and in common spaces and their surroundings.



## Conclusion

In conclusion, it was foreseeable that the level of social tension would subside throughout August 2021 to make room for observation and monitoring, but it should be noted that the high expectations for political change since July 25 and the delay in ending the current political crisis, particularly in view of the lack of a clear vision and the absence of a clear roadmap, may accelerate the return of social mobilization, especially in the context of the new school year and the start of the agricultural season.

## a sophisticated path from engagement to leadership

Rihab Mabrouki

The gathering of women in the streets and public courtyards of the cities of the mining basin years before, to demand the departure of the colonizers and to stand up in the face of injustice, will be remembered by all. These scenes may have been an important sign that the women of this region were never afraid to participate in popular demonstrations calling for independence, despite the threat to their lives, but it also revealed the important role played by women in bringing about the desired change. Dozens of female faces resisted external and internal oppression before and after independence. Their blood was spilled to achieve independence. Following independence, during protests against successive governments, women emerged as an inseparable part of the masses, demanding not only political and social changes, but also to address customs and traditions that they considered to be limiting their roles in society.

### Women as protest actors before the revolution : mining basin uprising

Many of these women have been determined to build a new future for the mining area, using protest as a weapon to fight repression. During the 2008 mining basin uprising and the rising up of the whole spectrum of society in the city of Redeyef, calling for the overthrow of the repressive regime, a group of women emerged as leaders of the popular marches that roamed the streets of the city. Their militant role emerged from their active participation in the demonstrations after decades of poverty, marginalization and losing the region's part in employment and development, Aljia Aljdidi, the icon of the uprising in the mining basin, that woman of the seventies, the scene of her finger pointing, the details of an unfinished suffering, is one of the women who led the protests in the city of Redeyef and were subjected to police repression in the meantime. She faced the sound of bullets as she cheered, and for days she stood in the tents of the townspeople. In October 2013, Aljia Aljdidi died, leaving behind an increasing media activism at home and abroad and an inspiring image for other women, possibly a model for women leaders in the areas with an iron fist and an example of the evolution of protests among women in this region for their right to a decent life. A path that can be seen as a product of economic and social factors, the most important of which has been the legacy of the culture of women's protest since the colonial period, when many feminine faces emerged to resist the colonizers with all means of struggle, such as the delivery of food aid to the resistance in the mountains. We conclude, therefore, that the culture of women walking off the streets in mining towns is not new, but is born out of the conditions, social changes and deposits of poverty, oppression and marginalization that have turned women into an active player in the protests and an integral part of the system that advocates for change.



**The activist Aljia Aljdidi**

### **The feminist protest continues after the revolution: the unemployed graduates**

Despite the rise and participation of women in all forms of protests, they still face many challenges. They remain marginalized and excluded from the most basic rights that translate their humanity, i.e. employment, as is the case with unemployed women in the governorate of Gafsa, who have university degrees. Despite the scorn, oppression and physical and moral violence they are subjected to on a daily basis, this has not discouraged them from continuing to protest and seek change.



**Protests of unemployed graduates in Gafsa**

Munira Ayari, one of the protesters from the governorate of Gafsa, is a graduate of the National Institute of Labour of Tunisia and has not yet obtained her right to employment since her graduation in 2003. Munira is one of the participants in the petition for collective divorce, which was released due to the violation of these women's economic rights and their exclusion from employment by the prefect on the grounds that her husband had obtained a public job. A petition that represented a symbolic movement of women to defend their legitimate right to work appeared as a new form of peaceful protest that we have never seen before. In the State of Rights, women are denied their right to employment on the grounds that their husbands have access to government jobs, which would further reinforce women's dependence on men and limit their ability to achieve financial independence. This was rejected by the unemployed in the governorate of Gafsa, which led them to create unusual and uncommon forms of protests to convey their situation to the Authority.

We can say here that the prevailing and deteriorating economic and social situation in this region has led women to resist in the face of existence by storming the streets to fight through various forms of protests. Speaking to us about the sit-in experience, Munira says: "Since February 11, 2018, we protest outside the governorate headquarters without any response from the authority in question, we went through all forms of protests from marches and sit-ins to the point of editing a petition for mass divorce to claim our right to work."

The experience of women in the Gafsa governorate engaging in protest and the evolution of their activist role from participation in protest movements to leadership and the organization of sit-ins is hardly proof that women in this region have reached the required level of full exercise of their legitimate rights. On the contrary, the current situation raises a number of additional questions about the extent of women's empowerment, what they have gained through their participation in protest movements and the extent to which they are now able to influence political and social life as an active element in the course of these protest movements that have created a kind of change. Perhaps this is the reason for asking: have women today gained from years of oppression and marginalization, or has their struggle been met with social exclusion and discrimination?

## 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.