

2021 **Report**  
**October**



**789**

Collective  
protests

**19**

cases of  
suicide and  
attempted  
suicide

**1470**

Migrants

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## Introduction

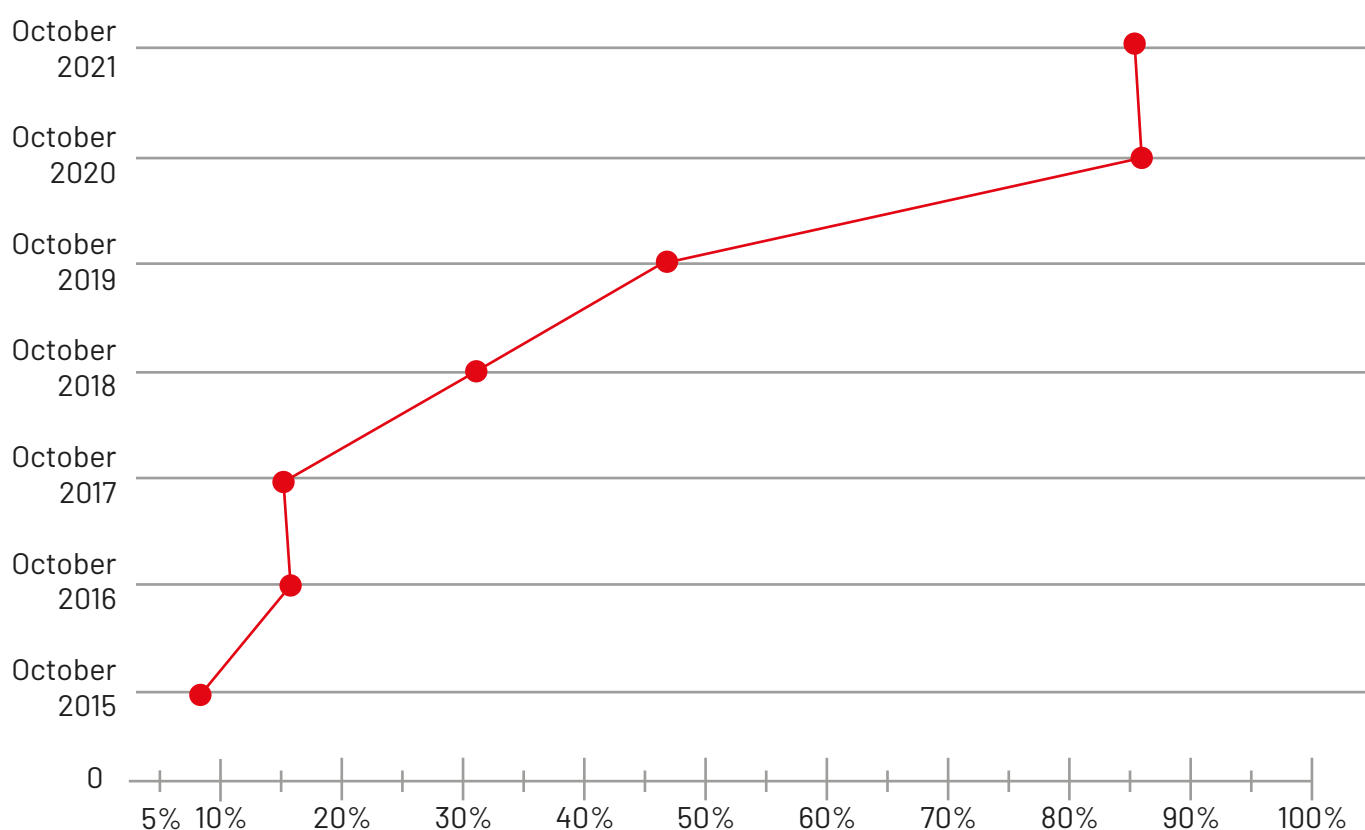
When the number of social protests decreased in the last two months of 2015 no one thought that it was just the calm that precedes a storm especially that this year was an important indicator of the accomplishments of the chosen government after the first parliamentary elections at the end of 2014 and the exit of the constitutive phase of the institutions of a permanent government. The truth was realized later in January (2016), when widespread protests broke out across the country, the government of Habib Essid at the time was forced to impose a curfew in various neighborhoods to face the great social tension that swept the country with the most important slogan: demanding employment and ending corruption in state competitions. The trigger was the sit-in of the unemployed at the headquarters of the governorate of Kasserine, which concluded with the drafting of a hiring list, but the list was quickly corrupted and manipulated by an official of the region, leading to the suicide of the late Ridha Yahyaoui, one of the protesters whose names were falsified.

This incident revealed the level of confusion of the government of the time, both in terms of its discourse addressed to public opinion, as well as in terms of its lack of plans and programs to meet the aspirations of the people, especially in terms of employment and social justice.

The numbers dropped in the last quarter of 2015 from 910 protest movements in October to 390 protest movements during the month of November which is a decrease of more than 50% and to 534 protest movements during the month of December of the same year. This calmness and slowness then turned into a major social explosion during the month of January 2016, which recorded 1,521 protest movements, about 49% of which were anarchic in nature; that is, tending to violence.

This explosion was expected by those who are following the social situation since people were looking for the fulfillment of their expectations and the transition to execution by the winning parties, who made heavy promises during their electoral campaigns.

The month of October was an indication of what would happen next. Every gathering recorded during the month of October, from 2015 to 2021, regarding social protests and social mobilization was related to the political, economic and social situation in the country and the explosion was mostly related to a "truce" granted by the bearers of economic and social demands to the power. Indeed, the truce of October 2018 (467 protest movements recorded) corresponds to the organization of general elections in late 2019 and the truce of October 2021 (789 protest movements were recorded) corresponds to a new political situation that the country has experienced since July 25 and it is assumed that this is a new stage of democratic transition.





### "Violent October"



It is true that the October 2015 and October 2021 results are the lowest in the last seven years (467 and 789 protest movements) in terms of the observed social mobilization and protest movements, but there is a remarkable and important evolution between the two figures with regard to the proportion of anarchic demonstrations, i.e., those that tend towards violence. This is where the danger lies. Anarchic demonstrations have increased since October 2015 by more than 800%! It was about 9.23% in 2015 and rose to about 15.8% in October 2016, then estimated at 14.4% in October 2017 and rose to 31.4% in October 2018, then to 44.1% in October 2019. The rate jumped to 86.7% in October 2020, then to 85.9% during October 2021.

This record increase in the proportion of anarchic demonstrations can be explained by the exacerbation of people's expectations, the lack of interaction of power with the demands of social mobilization and the failure of economic and social options to create growth and economic alternatives that achieve the slogan "bread, dignity and social justice". This has accentuated the severity of social tension, its tendency to violence, the diversity of its forms, its actors and the spaces that incubate it.

### And after it eases off?



789 protest movements were recorded throughout the month of October 2021, 21% less than the total in September and 78% more than the August protests. These are similar indicators to what happened in the last quarter of 2015 or the first truces in which the social movement took refuge in the hope of achieving its demands. Thus, these figures lead to two scenarios: the first is the ongoing truce, especially for social movements that have organized and conducted their struggles and have agreements that have not yet moved to implementation, such as urban construction workers and those who benefit from precarious employment mechanisms and job seekers in traditional protest regions such as Kasserine, Bouzid, Gafsa, Gabes and Tataouine, and this possibility depends on whether the government has an action plan with a clear agenda for the implementation of these agreements and economic options able to respond to those who have economic and social rights. The second scenario is the collapse of this truce and the shift to a major social explosion fueled by the inability of the president and his government, this time, to meet the very high ceiling of expectations after July 25.

The month of October 2021 has been marked by the continuity of the political, economic and social crisis in which uncertainty and lack of clarity of vision prevail, while the president continues to merely attack the parties and classifying them between the evil "them" and the good "us" without presenting a clear roadmap as to when and how the exceptional measures announced will end, nor is his plan to resolve the economic crisis revealed, including the critical situation of public finances that has affected the level of basic services provided to citizens in the fields of health, education, and transportation.

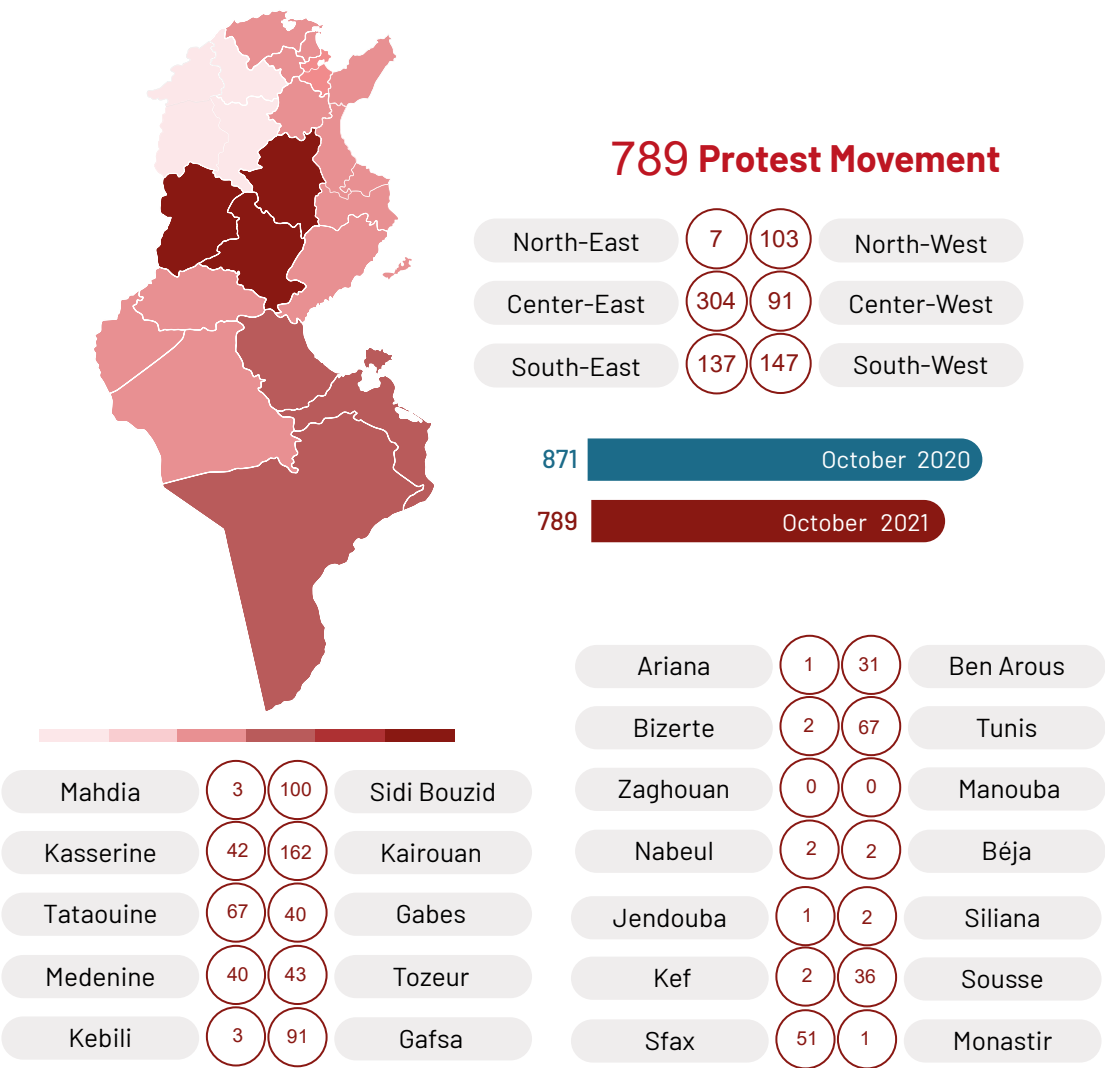
This unclear situation and the state of anticipation of a new phase of transition have allowed abuses such as the continuation of speculation, monopolization and price manipulation in both food and consumer goods. It also allowed other abuses related to the protocol of burying medical waste and exacerbated the smuggling of funds.

On the economic front, the month of October is behind us and the characteristics of the complementary finance law for the current year have not yet been decided, nor the characteristics of the finance law for the New Year, while the deterioration of the citizen's purchasing power is still ongoing.

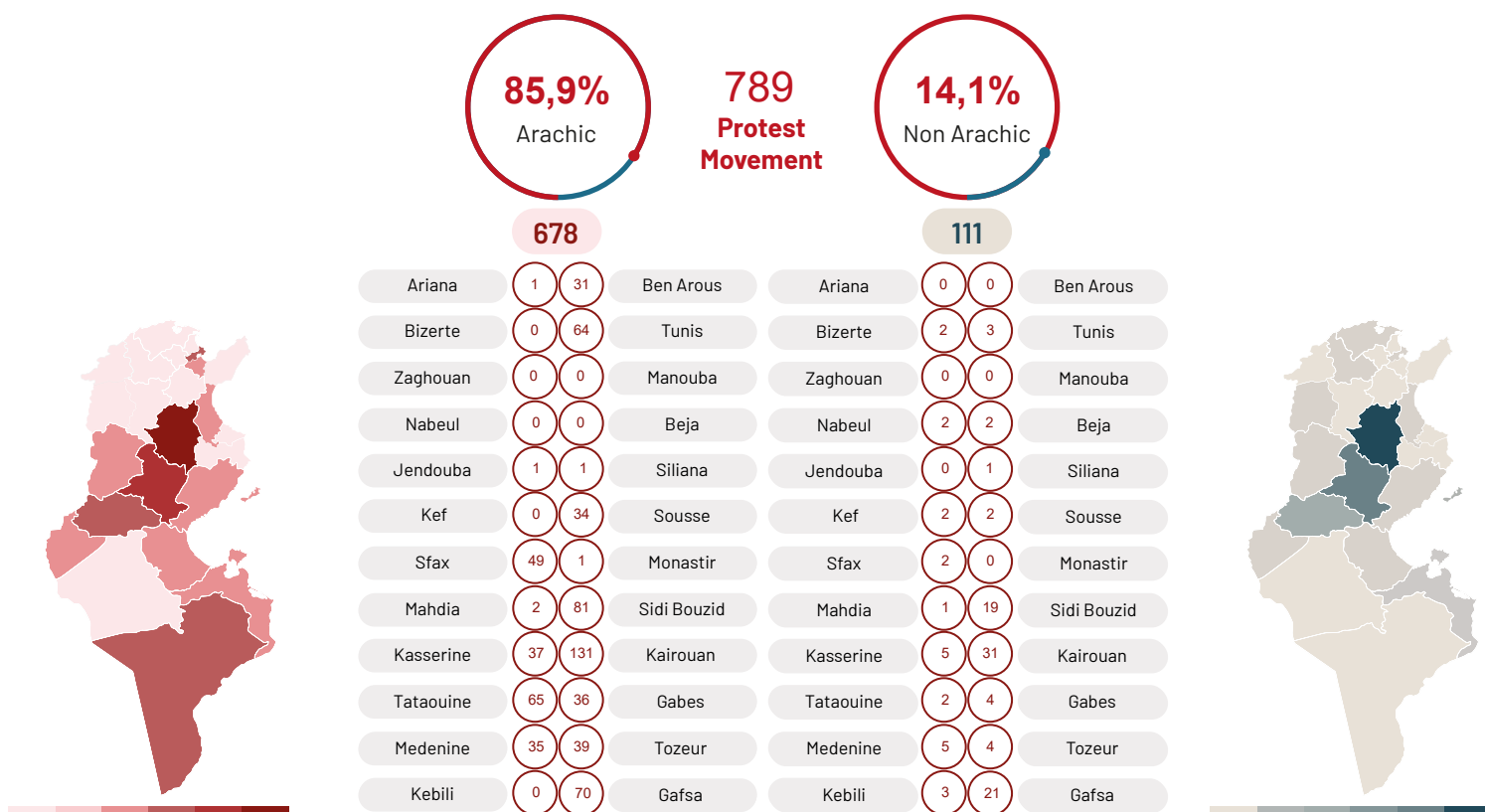
# October Protests

The governorate of Kairouan returned to the forefront of the protest scene during the month of October 2021. It is a traditional protest area that has occupied for many years the forefront of citizen protests before the repercussions of the Corona pandemic has led to changes in the map of protest since April 2020 by shifting the center of gravity of the protest to other governorates such as Sidi Bouzid and Tunis.

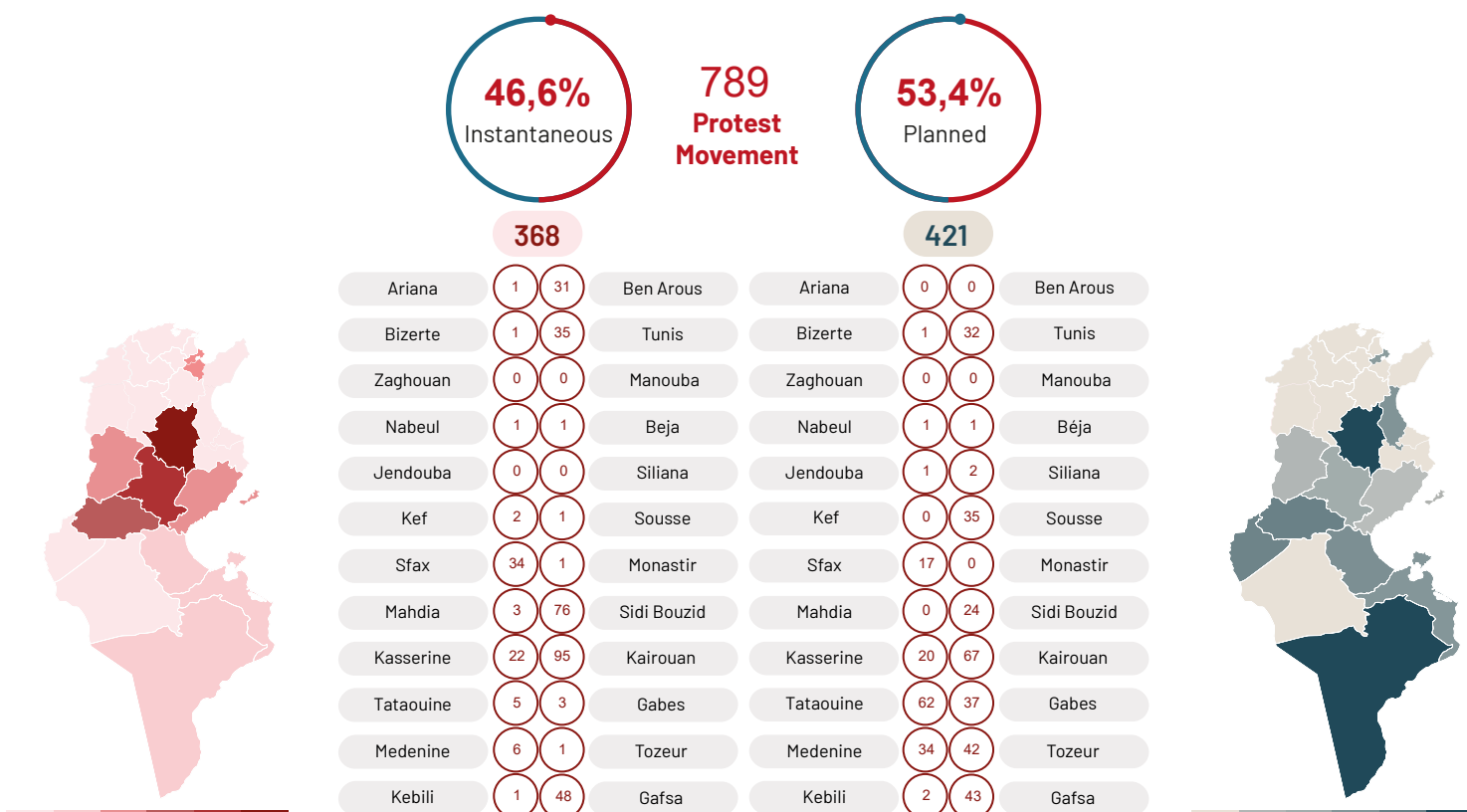
The Centre-West region is the most affected by the protests with about 38% of the total observed demonstrations, followed by similar proportions in the South-West (18.7%), South-East (17.3%), North-East (13%), Centre with (11.5%) and finally the North-West (0.88%)



Anarchic protests accounted for 85.9% of the total demonstrations recorded. In fact, anarchic protests reached 97% in the governorate of Tataouine and 96% in Sfax.



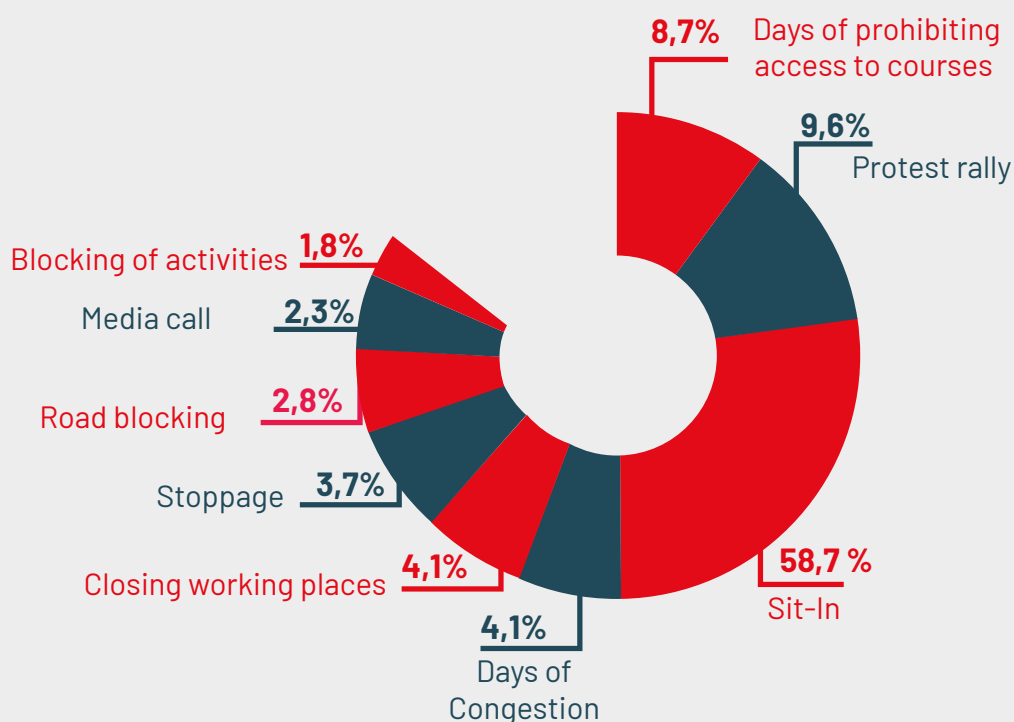
The percentage of planned protests reached 53.4% and spontaneous protests reached 47.6%.



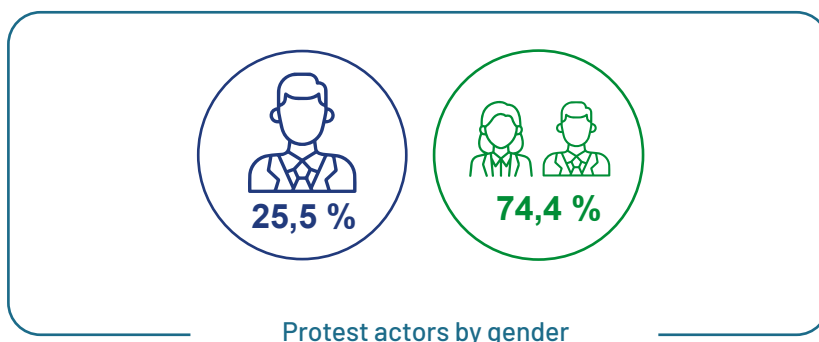
The sit-in was the form of protest most adopted by the demonstrators, with a rate of 58.7%, followed by protest rallies with a rate of 9.6% and then the ban on attending classes with a rate of 8.7%, without forgetting other forms of protest such as strikes, hunger strikes, indignations, burning tires, calls on social networks, stone throwing, etc

### Modes of action

**367**  
Days of Sit-In

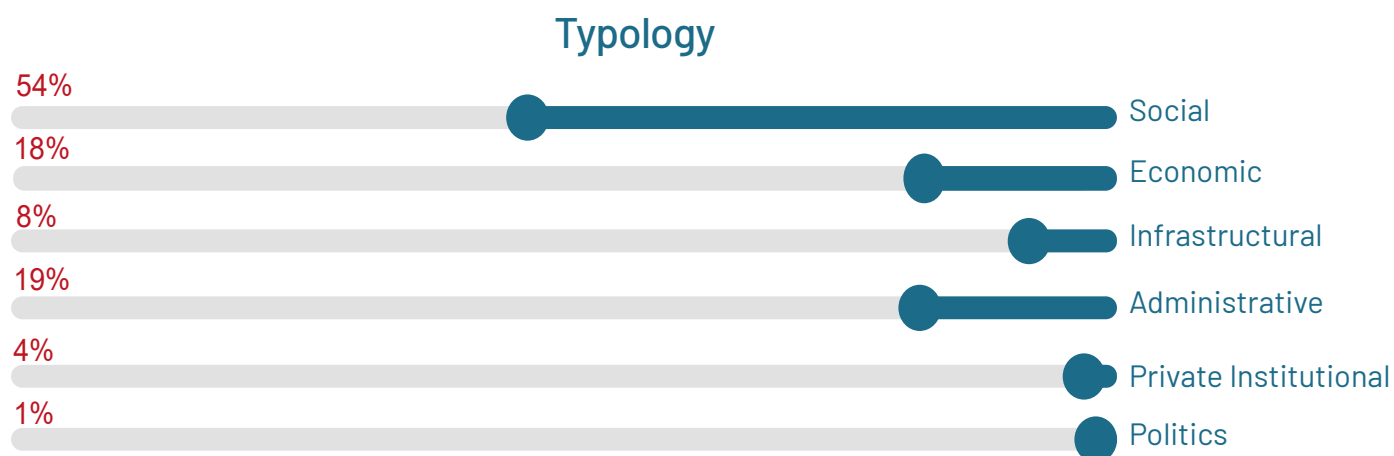


As for the actors of social movements, men were present in 25.5% of all protests and mixed demonstrations represented 74.4% of all acts of protest





Economic and social demands came first with 76%, followed by administrative demands with 19%. Among the demands raised by the demonstrators there are:



- The right to water (11%), including denouncing the interruption of drinking water (6%) and demanding connection to the drinking water network (5%).
- The right to employment (30%), including demanding the application of agreements (5%)
- Claiming workers' rights (20%), including improving employment situations (14%), denouncing violations of workers' rights (7%) and non-payment of wages (7%).
- The right to development (9%)
- The right to a healthy infrastructure (11%), including protests due to the non-existence of this infrastructure (9%).



As for the perpetrators, they were residents and parents (12%), educational personnel (7%), pupils (5%), students (4%), unemployed (32%), farmers (5%), sailors (5%), and drivers (5%), including drivers in the public sector (4%).

Roads and educational institutions represented the most protest-prone spaces, with 23% each, followed by government spaces with 11%.

The central authorities represented the most important party to which the demonstrators directed their demands with 59%, followed by the regional authorities with 32%, and then the National Water Distribution Utility (SONEDE) with 5%.

The initiating social actors movements		Protest spaces	
15 %	Employees	9 %	Work spaces
18 %	Inhabitants	23 %	Roads
16 %	Unemployed	3 %	Medias
16 %	Unemployed graduates	8 %	Ministries headquarters
7 %	Workers	23%	Educational institutions
12%	Parents	1 %	Governorate headquarters
5 %	Other Citizens	1 %	Social Media
1 %	Journalists	1 %	Hospitals
7 %	teachers	9 %	Headquarters of the Delegations
		5 %	Public buildings

## Irregular Migration

### Comparative data during the same period 2018-2019-2020-2021

October	2021	Total	October	2020	Total	October	2019	Total	October	2018	Total
1470	Arrivals on the Italian coasts	14308	1300	Arrivals on the Italian coasts	11212	381	Arrivals on the Italian coasts	2592	323	Arrivals on the Italian coasts	4849
263	Interception operations	1545	157	Interception operations	999	47	Interception operations	243	14	Interception operations	314
2739	Migrants intercepted	22147	1349	Migrants intercepted	11900	750	Migrants intercepted	3588	84	Migrants intercepted	3974

October 2021 witnessed the arrival of 1,470 Tunisian migrants, representing an increase of 13% compared to October 2020, and bringing the number of arrivals on the Italian coast since the beginning of this year to 14,308 Tunisian migrants which represents 27% of the total arrivals in Italy, and a 27.6% increase rate compared to the same period during the year 2020. In October 2021, the Tunisian authorities have thwarted 263 crossings, which means an increase of 67.5% compared to October 2020, and prevented 2,739 migrants from reaching the Italian coast, which brings the number of migrants intercepted since the beginning of the year to 22,147, representing an increase of 86.1% compared to the same period of the year 2020. Despite the strong security control by various human, logistical and technical means and despite the air control deployed by maritime units and the European Union along the Tunisian coast, the various dynamics of irregular migration, whether self-organized or within the framework of migrant smuggling networks, manage to circumvent this fortress supported by Europe.

### DISTRIBUTION OF ARRIVALS TO ITALY IN 2021

NON-ACCOMPANIED MINORS	ACCOMPANIED MINORS	FEMALES	MALES	THE ARRIVALS	
134	62	51	1223	1470	October
1922	561	521	11303	14308	Total

2483 Tunisian minors managed to reach the Italian coast this year, 1922 of whom were unaccompanied. These terrifying figures reflect some of the miserable reality of childhood in Tunisia, despite the presence of a legal arsenal for the protection of children's rights, which proves to be incapable of dealing with the phenomenon outside of security approaches due to the lack of political will. The multidimensional crisis that Tunisia is going through cannot by itself explain what is actually happening to children in Tunisia and the violations they suffer, combining school dropout, violence and other phenomena. Faced with the general state of frustration, fear of the present and the future as well as the non-functioning of the state and its structures, the children of Tunisia have become easy prey for the smugglers. The family's resistance to the irregular migration project of their children disappears, and they become tolerant, participating or encouraging. We estimate the number of families arriving in Italy this year to be around 500 families.

### DISTRIBUTION OF FRUSTRATING ARRESTS BY REGION

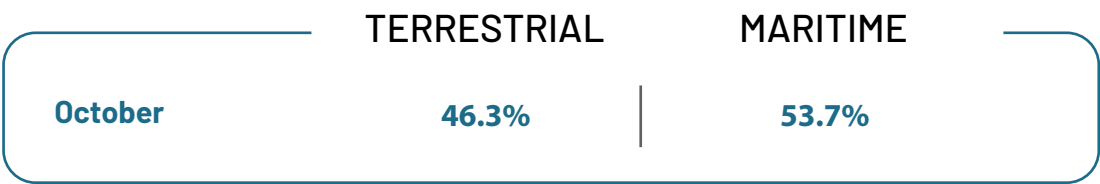
	Jendouba	Bizerte	Tunis	Nabeul	Sousse	Monastir	Mahdia	Sfax	Gabes	Medenine
October	-	3,7%	9,8%	8,3%	6%	10,6%	21,21%	28,78%	3,7%	7,5%

### MIGRANTS BY NATIONALITY

	TUNISIANS	OTHER NATIONALITIES
October	35%	65%

During the month of October 2021, the region of Mahdia emerged to rank second after the governorate of Sfax as it witnessed 21% of intercepted migration operations. The night of October 2nd, 2021 has also witnessed the interception of 47 sea crossings according to the Ministry of the Interior. This figure is interesting as it raises the question of the extent of logistical and technical resources mobilized if compared to the drowning of October 16 off the coast of Mahdia knowing that the naval unit dispatched to the scene was content to rescue 6 migrants and return to the port without urgently calling other units to complete the rescue operations with no consideration for the 25 people reported missing and whose fate was unknown.

Migrant smuggling networks are still attracting more and more migrants from sub-Saharan Africa and this is where the phenomenon of scamming is particularly important, as it leads to the interception of the majority of attempted crossings. These networks direct sub-Saharan migrants and inform the authorities directly or indirectly after collecting the funds. These networks are very active and uncontrolled even on social networks.



THE TRAGEDIES OF IRREGULAR MIGRATION ON  
TUNISIAN COASTS IN OCTOBER

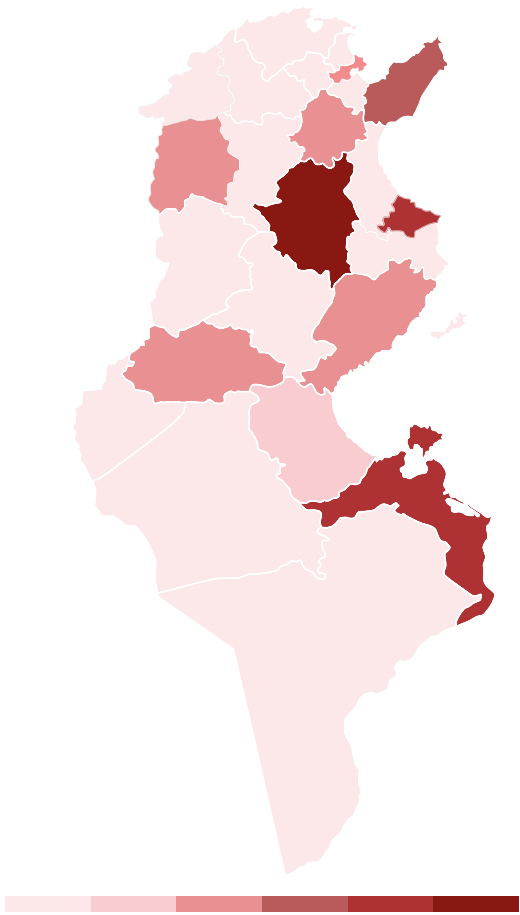


The night of October 16, 2021 witnessed the most tragic accident of this month, when a boat capsized in the waters of Mahdia, resulting in the retrieval of 4 bodies in a first stage, the rescue of 7 migrants while 25 were reported missing. This tragedy raises the absolute priority of security approaches to the phenomenon excluding search and rescue approaches. The naval units necessary to carry out search operations in the first hours of the accident were not deployed at that time. On the contrary, the search operations were not carried out with sufficient seriousness, except after the protest of the families of the missing persons and the road blockades. These figures of casualties and missing persons remain approximate and in line with official data in the absence of a governmental structure dealing with missing people in case of disappearance at sea.



# Suicide and attempted Suicide

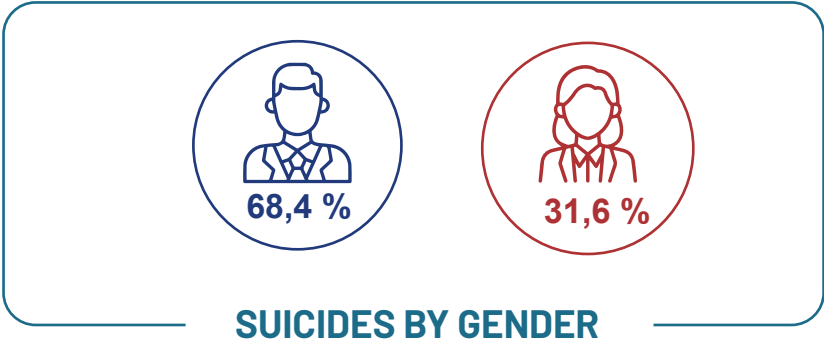
During the month of October 2021, 19 cases of suicide and attempted suicide were recorded, distributed as follows: 6 acts of suicide and attempted suicide in Kai-rouan, 4 cases in Monastir, 2 suicides and attempted suicides in Tunis and Medenine and one case of suicide or attempted suicide in Zaghouan, Nabeul, Sfax, El Kef and Gafsa.



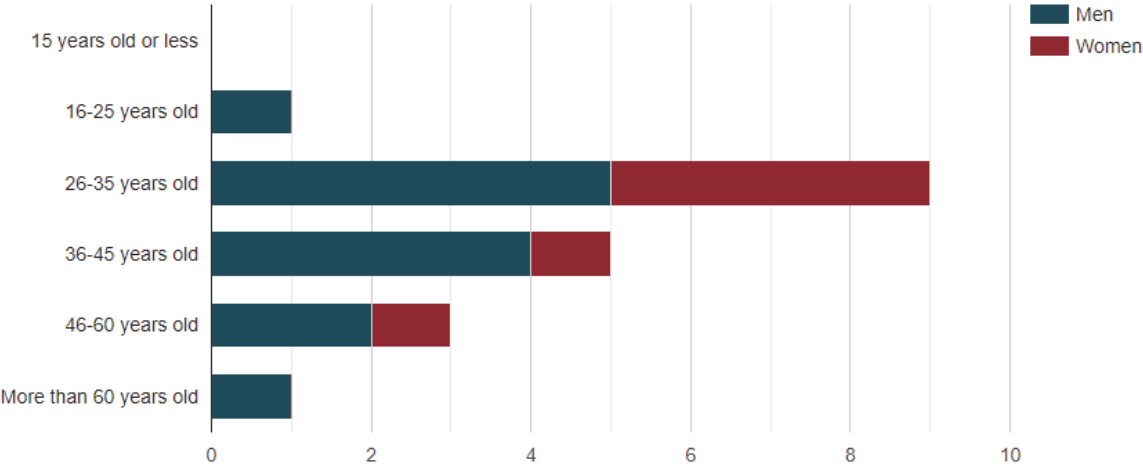
## 19 SUICIDE AND ATTEMPTED SUICIDE

Ariana	0	0	Ben Arous
Bizerte	0	2	Tunis
Zaghouan	1	0	Manouba
Nabeul	1	0	Beja
Jendouba	0	0	Siliana
Kef	1	0	Sousse
Sfax	1	4	Monastir
Mahdia	0	0	Sidi Bouzid
Kasserine	0	6	Kairouan
Tataouine	0	0	Gabès
Medenine	2	0	Tozeur
Kebili	0	1	Gafsa

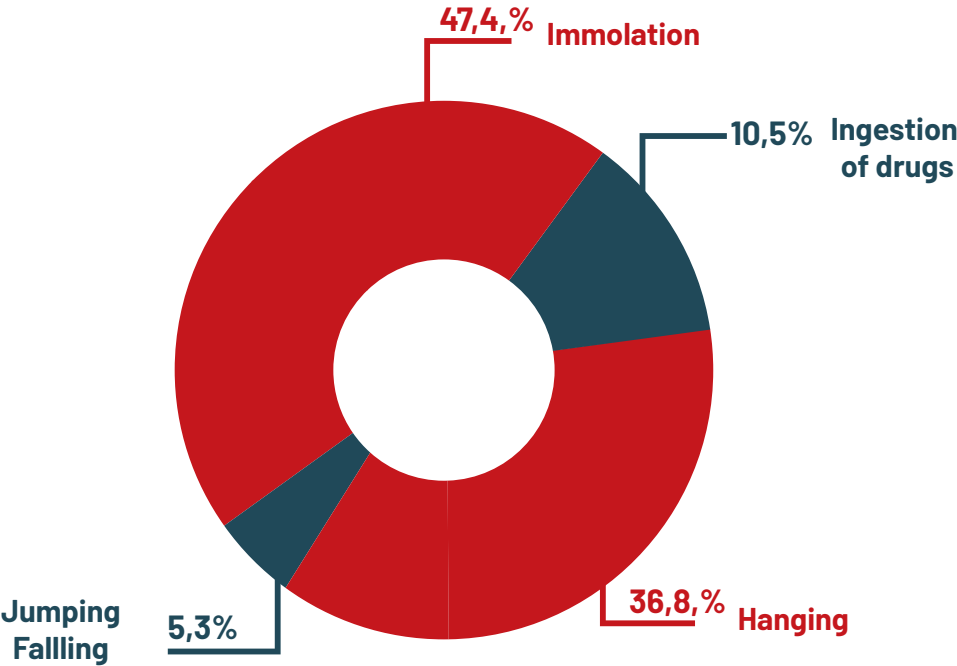
Women represented 31,6% of the total victims



The age group of 26-35 years represented about 47% of the victims of the observed cases (9 victims). Immolation was the most important form of suicide and attempted suicide observed, with a rate of 47.4%, followed by hanging with a rate of 36.8%, and then ingestion of toxic substances with a rate of 10.5%. Each of these forms remains a form of violence against oneself and a step towards self-harm.



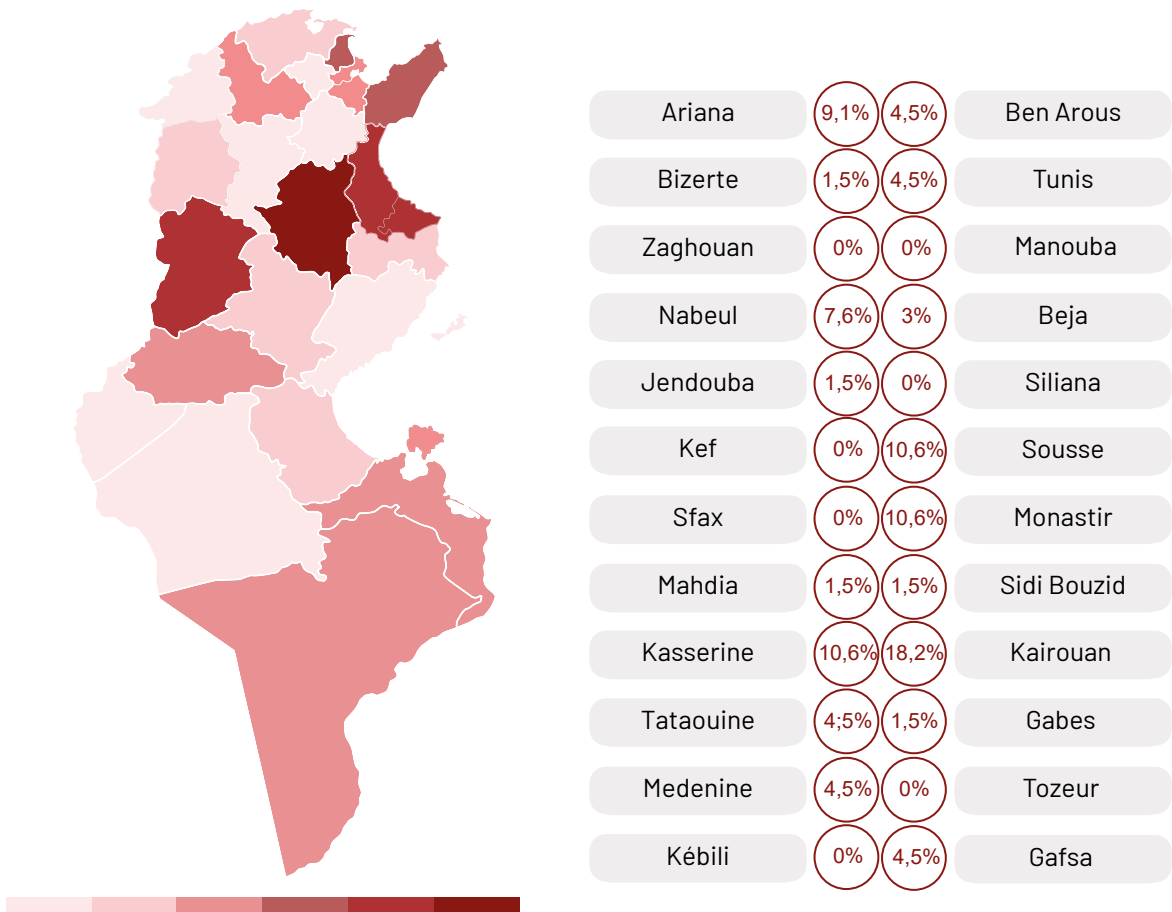
	15 years old or less	16-25 years old	26-35 years old	36-45 years old	46-60 years old	More than 60 years old
Men	0	1	5	4	2	1
Women	0	0	4	1	1	0
TOTAL	0	1	9	5	3	1



# October 2021 Violence Report

The month of October 2021 was marked by a clear change in the level of violence. This violence has turned, on several occasions, to its most extreme forms, especially in the family sphere. The hope and political change recorded since July 25 and the appointment of the new government, which has allowed a relative truce from the protest movements and social demands, have not had the same effect on the phenomenon of violence ... behavior and impulsive reactions have become the most notable mechanisms of interaction between individuals in various spaces and situations. Between the student and the educator, the husband and the wife, between students, between children and their parents, between neighbors and between parents and friends, not to mention in the work space and within the various social institutions.

Given the lack of any intention to analyze, diagnose, or even pay attention to the social issues and problems that represent a motive and an engine of violence of all kinds, the Tunisian Social Observatory expects that the rate of violence will continue to increase and its scope will continue to grow.



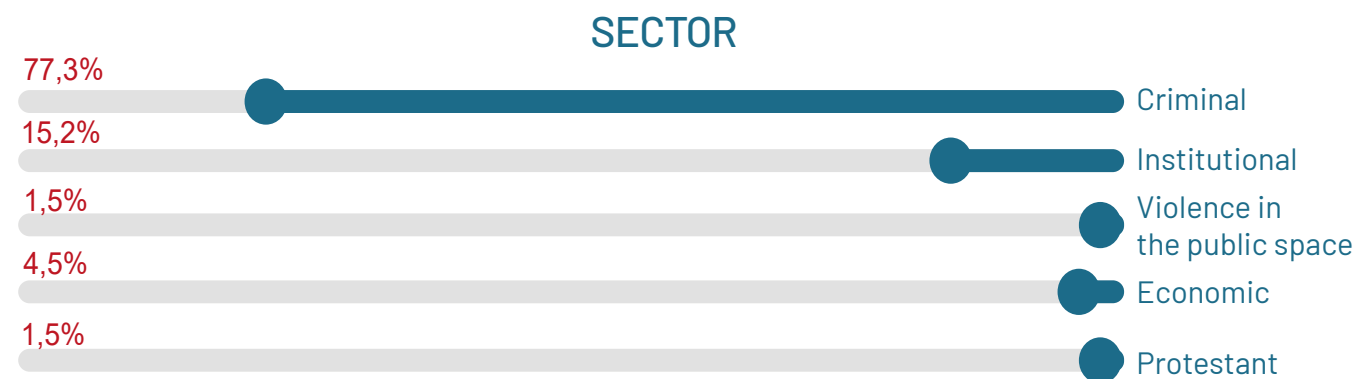
Domestic Violence



What we can distinguish through the watch during the month of October 2021, is that conjugal violence has taken a more extreme form in family spaces since the conflicts between spouses have ended more than once by the murder of the woman. Marital relations are now witnessing the use of knives, fires of retaliation in a context of conjugal conflict management

This conjugal violence carries a clear and evident violence against the child, as he/she represents the first round witness of these practices and the most affected by their psychological repercussions. Moreover, this domestic violence usually hides a physical violence against children and this month has registered a number of incidents of abuse and violation, whose victims were children under 15 years old. The most notable were the sexual abuse of a father on his three and five year old children. According to the results of the vigil, domestic violence was not limited to women and children, but also included fathers and mothers

It can be said that the high level of violence recorded within the family and in the family space and which amounted to nearly a quarter (about 21.2%) of the violence observed during the month of October 2021 reflects in large part the increasing extent of disappearance of values and the disintegration of the social fabric within Tunisian society and in its first core the family



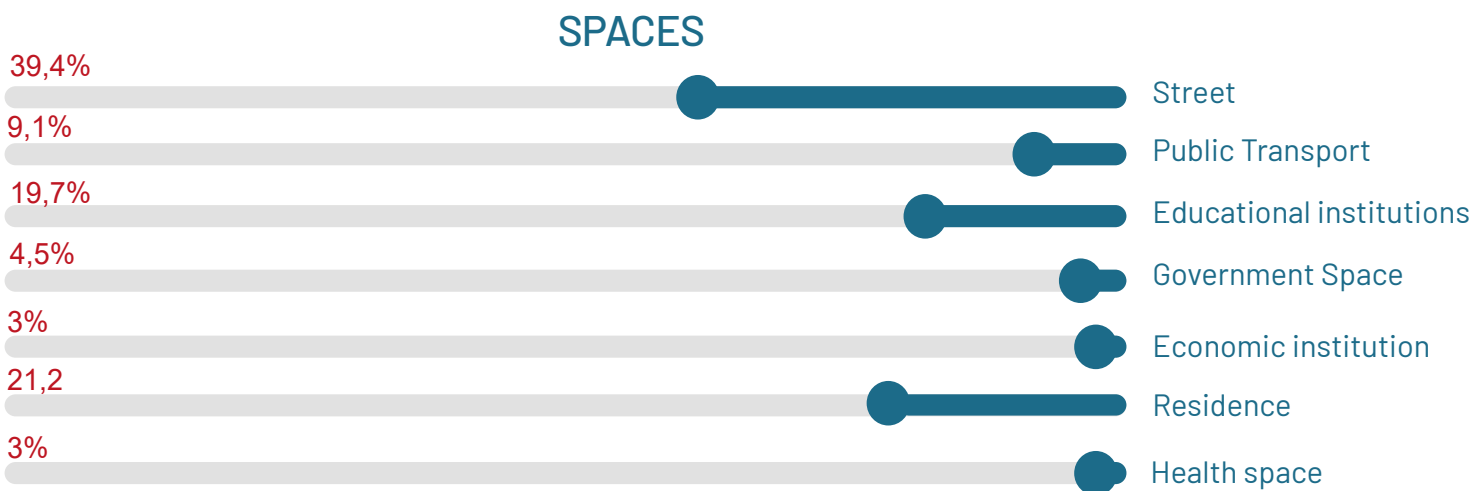
Violence in  
Public Spaces



Violence in the public sphere in the form of robberies, thefts and criminal violence maintained its leading position in the level of violence recorded during the month of October, with a rate of 77.3% of all violence observed. It should be noted that violence in the public space has recorded a qualitative change in its public manifestations where there was a remarkable trend towards the use of bladed weapons and even firearms. Violence has undergone a change in its actors, especially at the age level, where there is an increased involvement of children and youth. This age group, which has been the victim of family violence, marginalization, school dropout, economic crisis in the face of a lack of educational, cultural and social programs, has apparently chosen to be more visible through more extreme behaviors and violent tendencies.

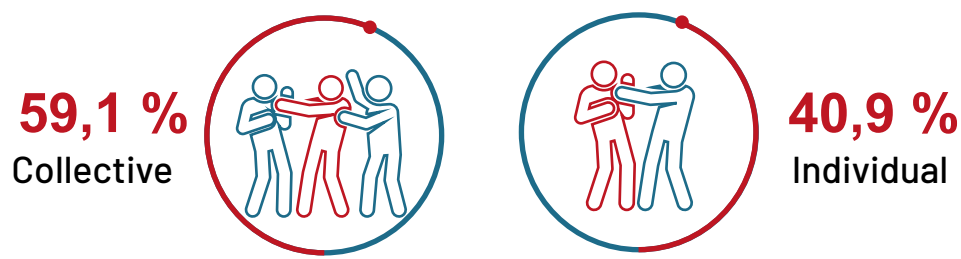
39.4% of the violence observed in the public space took place in the street while public transport witnessed 9.1% of the violence and educational institutions, schools and high school facilities 19.7%.

It can be said that the high level of violence in all its forms has had a clear impact on the change in the particularities of the public space, which is no longer a general framework of coexistence but has been transformed into a space of verbal and moral violence with a large presence of environmental and physical violence.





The rates of involvement of individuals and groups in the violence are similar: individuals alone are responsible for 40.5% of the violence observed, while 59.5% is in a collective form.

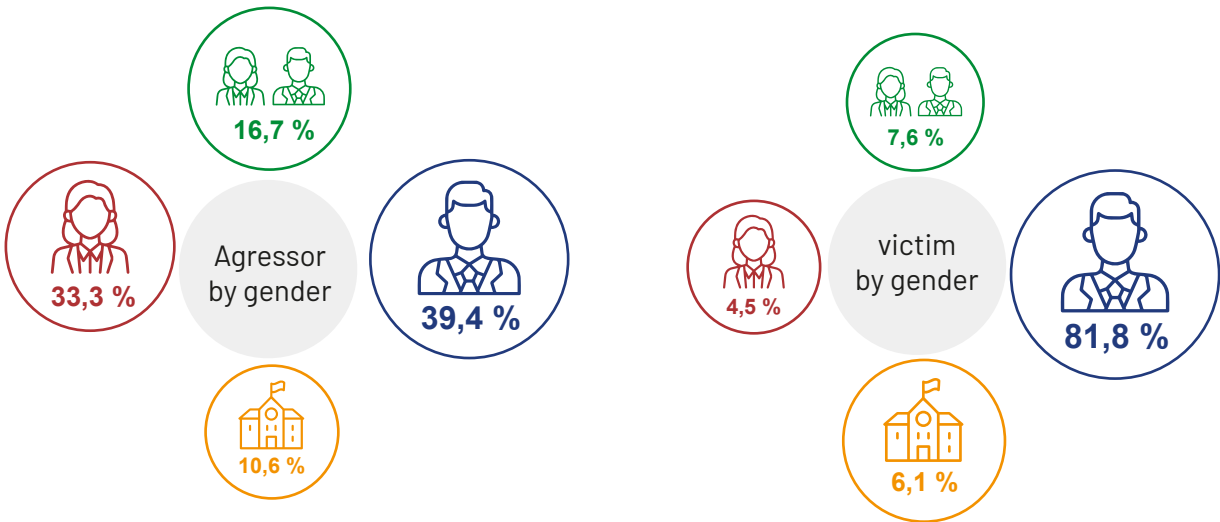


Gender-based violence



For reference, women have been involved in violence in all its forms, even organized violence, where it can be seen that they have become an active part of its events and have become users of violence like men as a way of dealing with others, protecting themselves and imposing their position within the group.

Women were responsible for 6.1% of the total violence observed, while men were responsible for 81.8%. On the other hand, the percentage of victims was similar between men and women: women were victims of 39.4% of the violence and men were victims of 33.3% of the incidents of violence recorded during October 2021.



Not going deeper into mechanisms of dismantling and fighting against the phenomenon of violence, which increases monthly and about which the alert is launched at each monthly report of the Tunisian Social Observatory, will only threaten the components of stability and coexistence between Tunisians. Solutions must be found to remedy this issue in the near future with the full involvement of the various official structures and competent institutions.

## Conclusion

The announcement of the formation of the government represented a breath of political oxygen that feeds the state of expectation and therefore the continuation of the truce. The selection of the government members has restored the hope of the social elevator and has given women a set of sovereign ministries and this is what sends positive messages to the street and gives credibility and a kind of guarantee and confidence in favor of the truce and the state of waiting.

The Bouden government faces two main challenges to ensure social peace in the last quarter of this year:

- In relation to the citizen by restoring his purchasing power.
- In relation to the social movements by implementing the agreements signed (27 agreements in the public sector) and by responding to the demands of the social movements in order to avoid a social explosion.
- In relation with the state institutions by strengthening their social role in health, transport and the right to water.

The current social climate aggravates the fragility of certain age groups, especially children and adolescents. The vision does not seem clear regarding the societal project in which we want the child and the adolescent to be at the center to solve the basic social problems related to them such as unregulated migration, violence, drug addiction and suicide. This is another challenge that the Bouden government is facing and that consists in the global diagnosis and treatment of all these problems that duplicate the fragility of the child and the adolescent, as the street is the only societal institution that integrates and cares for the child and the teenager.

# 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.