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Report September 20 21

1006

**Collective
protests**

15

**cases of suicide and
attempted suicide**

1655

Migrants

Marginalization and collapse of the public school in Tunisia

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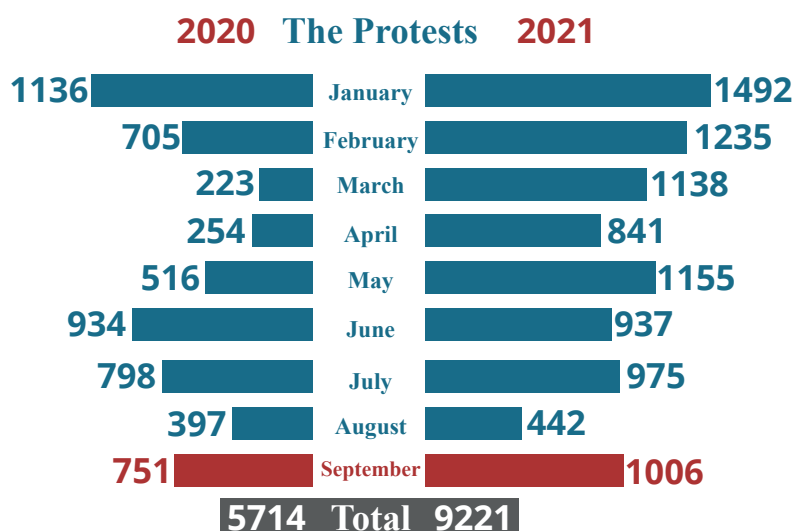
Introduction

The month of September was the venue for the return of demonstrations recording a clear increase in the level of demands, dissatisfaction and anger. This context essentially coincides with the start of the school year 2021-2022 accompanied by its set of failures, poor organization, fluctuation as well as an almost total abandonment of official structures. Unions, parents, educators and educational executives agree that it is the worst beginning of a new term that schools have experienced and witnessed over the past ten years, despite all the poor organization through which it has passed. It perfectly embodied the disparity between students, rural and urban areas, private and public sectors and this gap is a clear sign of inequality between children in Tunisia in terms of access to learning opportunities.

This new school year was characterized by dilapidated infrastructure, schools that have been completely abandoned, with an unprecedented overcrowding in classes (especially in the centers of governorates), a severe shortage of teachers and the refusal of substitute teachers to join their assigned schools after the failure of the Ministry of Education to meet its obligations towards them and the long-delayed payment of salaries. The situation of overpopulation and poor organization were aggravated by the transportation chaos

As for the start of the academic year, it was marked by the university housing crisis, where students found themselves either faced with the inability of the ministry to absorb them and provide housing, or confronted with the unfairly high prices of private apartments and hostels, so that some were forced not to rejoin academia due to their family's inability to provide for their education costs.

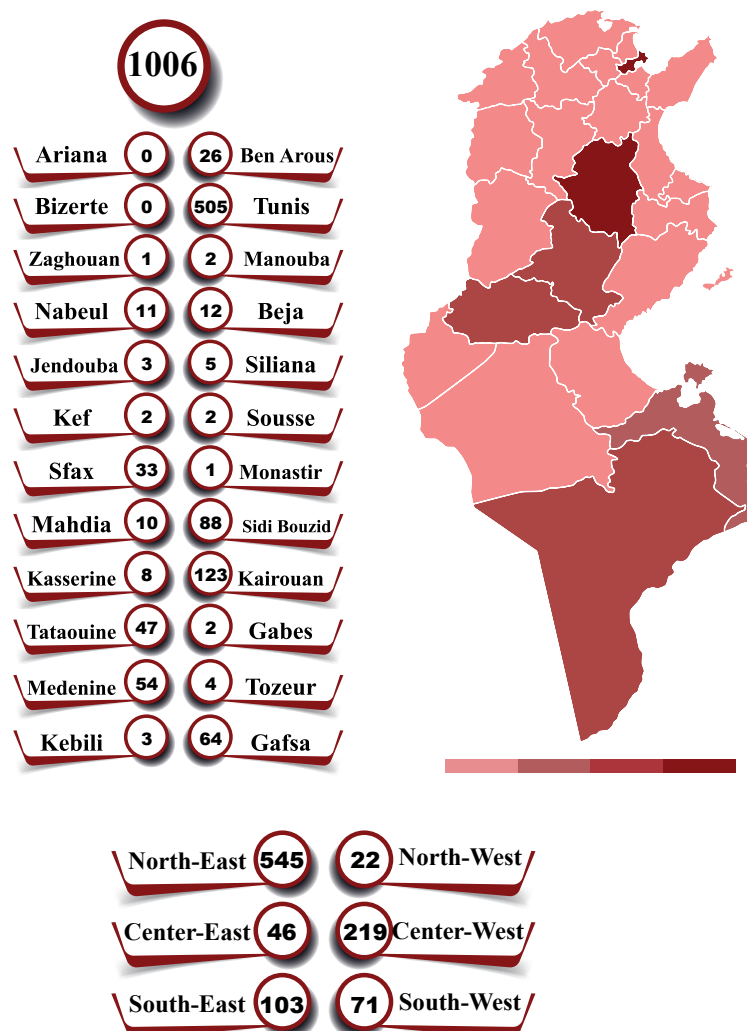
Part of the movements recorded during the month of September were linked to the political change that was initiated on July 25, 2021 and which led to a return to the high ceiling of expectations and hopes of Tunisians. Hopes and expectations of the unemployed holding higher education degrees were also raised in implementing Chapter 38 which regulates the employment of unemployed holders of higher education degrees whose unemployment lasts more than 10 years, published since August 2020 and whose orders have not been drafted to date or the presentation of any serious intentions by politicians and officials within the government indicating that they will move towards its concrete application. It has not yet moved beyond the stage of political rivalries and bidding. This context was a starting point from which the workers of the urban construction sites announced their entry into a new series of social movements, demanding again the fulfillment of the regularization of their professional status, which dates back to the year 2012 and was the subject of two signed agreements. The first is for those under forty-five years of age and is progressing slowly and the second is for workers who are over forty-five years of age and is almost at a standstill.



The september Protests

This month of September, in addition, has witnessed protest movements that revolved mainly around the slogan of the revolution, which has not yet been achieved, namely freedom and national dignity. These protests have also had as claims: drinking water, improving infrastructure, eliminating the isolation of a range of regions, ensuring the transportation of citizens and their students and this, by building roads, including rural.

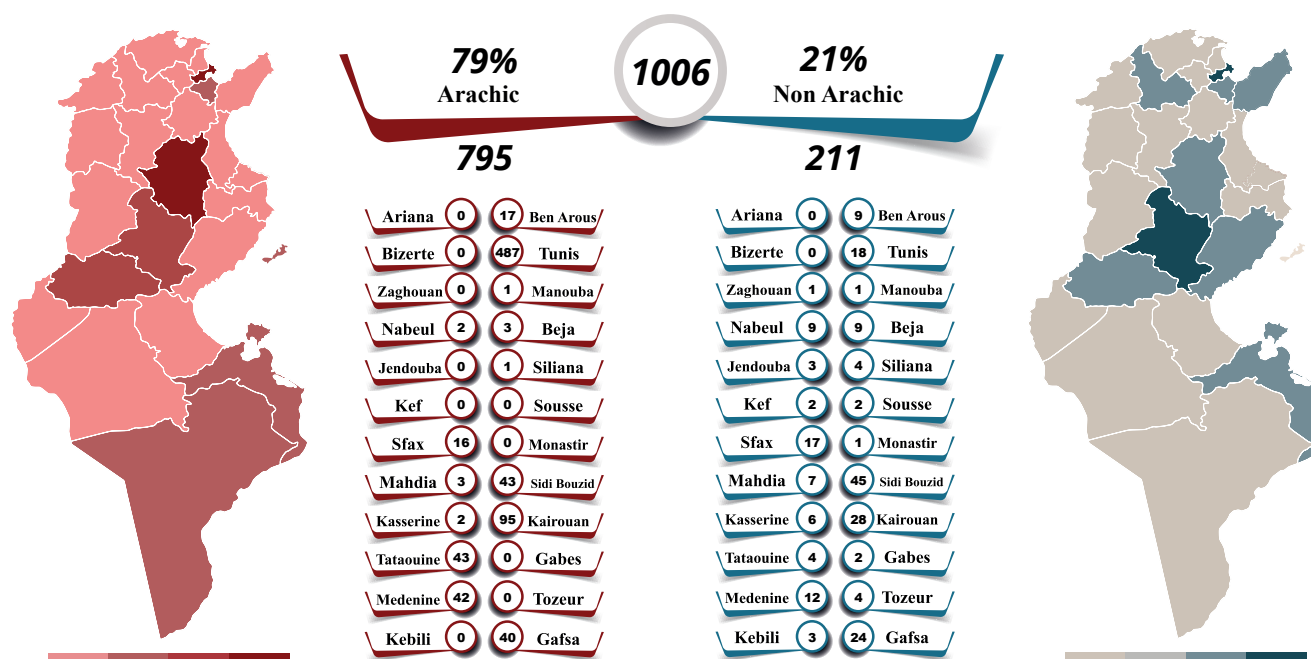
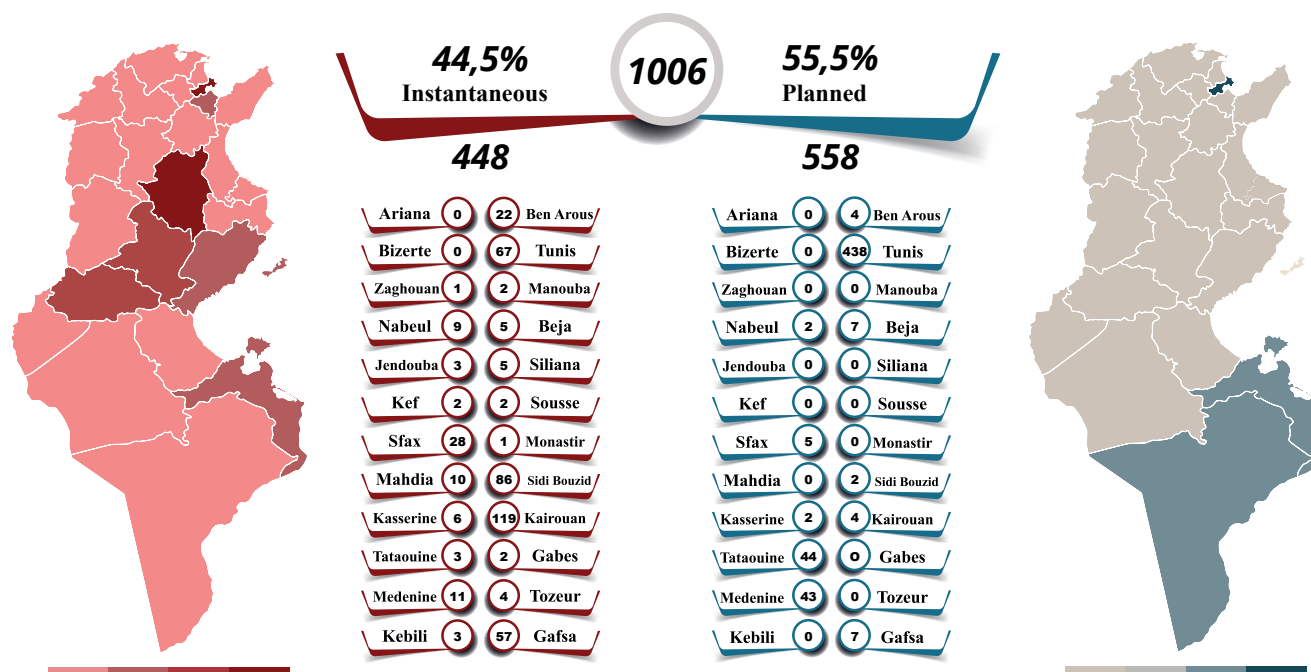
We can say similarly, according to the watch of the team of the Tunisian Social Observatory and the assessment of movements that have been recorded from various visual, audio and written media as well as through social networks, that the month of September 2021 has been a milestone for movements with political reference par excellence. Almost weekly the capital (governorate of Tunis) has seen more than one movement, some supporting President Kais Said, the exceptional measures, the dissolution of Parliament, and others opposing movements, which refuse to suspend the constitution and considering what the president has gone unconstitutional and that he must retract, return to legitimacy and complete the path of democratic transition. It is perhaps this wave of periodic movements that explains the monopoly of the Northeast region of about 545 protest movements, which represents more than half of the total movements that occurred in September and which is within the limits of 1006 protest movements, the rest of the regions shared the remaining movements.



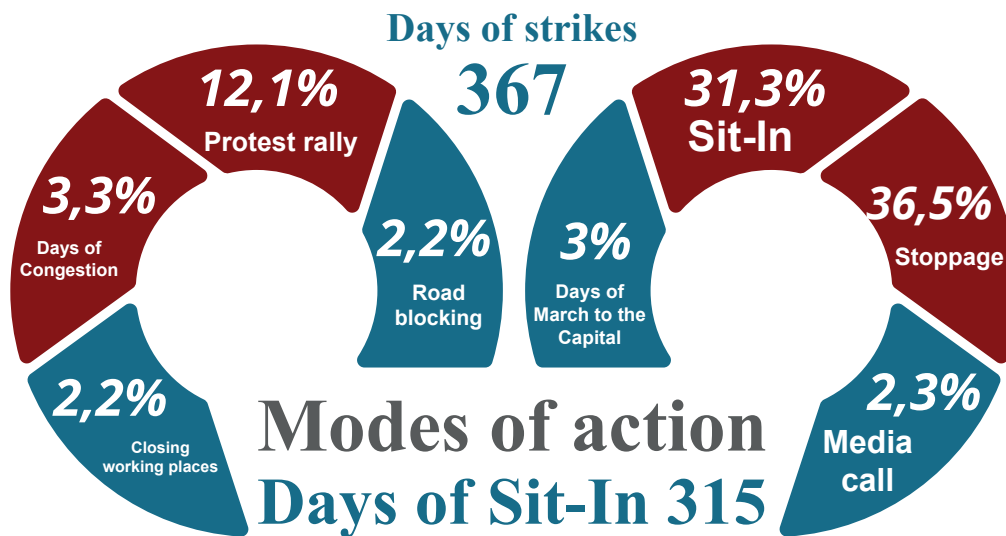
Statistically, the pace of protests increased during the month of September 2021, compared to the same period last year, which recorded 751 protest movements, as well as the year before (2019), which also registered about 739 protest movements, indicating a growth rate of about 35%.



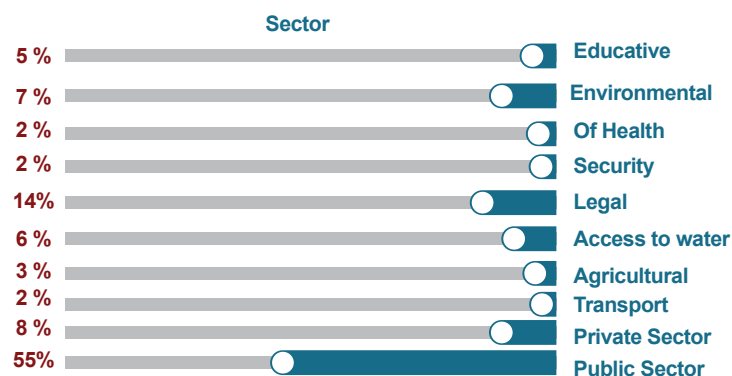
Converging ratios between organized and spontaneous protests also appeared, while the proportion of anarchic protests, i.e., those tending to violence, remains high and approached 79% throughout September. Note that anarchic protests began their escalation since April 2020, that is, during the period of total containment instituted by the government of Elyes Fakhfekh at the time. This also seemed to change the mapping of the protests so that the governorate of Sidi Bouzid became the governorate that experienced the largest number of protests with a rate of anarchic demonstrations reaching 74% of the total demonstrations recorded.



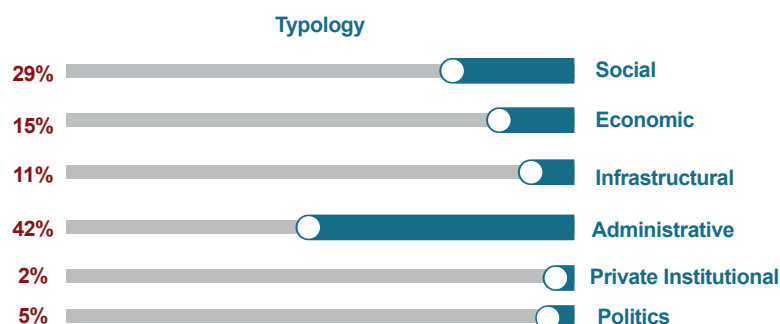
The month of September has seen 367 days of strikes, which accounted for 36.5% of the total movements recorded, but also sit-ins, protest rallies, road blockades and a lot of anger, indignation and calls in the media such as those made by farmers demanding a lowering of the prices of fodder and fertilizers or by citizens who are tired of demanding their right to drinking water or timely disposal of household waste or safe roads without fatal road accidents.

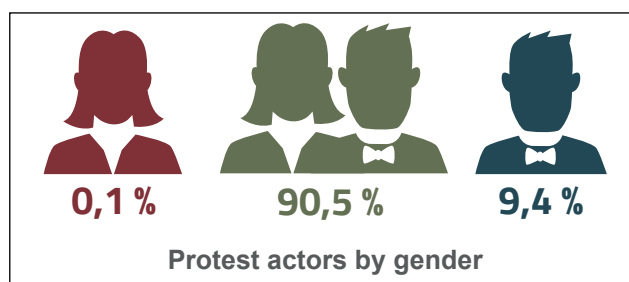


The movements related to the educational aspect and the beginning of the school year represented 5% of the total movements. As for the administrative aspect, it recorded the highest percentage ever known at 42% of the total movements of September 2021. The environmental movements were within 7% of all recorded claims. Movements of a legal nature are in the lead with 14%, and those of a political nature with 5%, which confirms that the last period has been a political one by excellence, with the main engine being the contestation on the constitution and its interpretations. 55% of the demands and actions concerned the public service and official structures.



As in previous months, movements of an economic and social nature are still the most significant and have accumulated during the month of September to the extent of 44%, of which 29% are social and 15% economic.





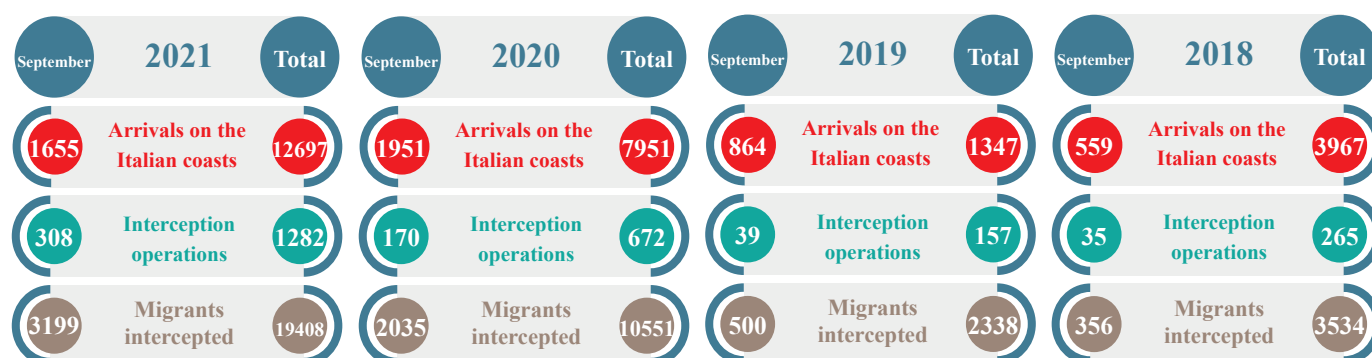
Work spaces were the locations of most protests with 46%, followed by roads with 19%, media headquarters and ministries with 10%. Along with the return to school, educational institutions represented a space of protest to the extent of 8% of the total spaces of protest. The headquarters of governorates, delegations of sovereignty have also represented spaces for the movements of demonstrators without forgetting hospitals to the extent of 4% of the total areas of demonstrations.

The protesters were wage earners (48%), residents (19%) defending the needs of their neighborhoods and cities for basic services, as well as the unemployed and unemployed graduates (16%), workers (8%) defending professional demands, parents of schoolchildren (6%) as well as journalists (4%), teachers (4%) and medical staff (4%).

The initiating social actors movements		Protest spaces	
48 %	Employees	46 %	Work spaces
19 %	inhabitants	19 %	Roads
8 %	Unemployed	10 %	Medias
8 %	Unemployed gradu	10 %	Ministry headqua
8 %	workers	8 %	Educational inst
6%	Parents	8 %	Governorate head
5 %	other Citizens	6 %	Social Media
4 %	Journalists	4 %	hospitals
4 %	teachers	4 %	Headquarters of
4 %	Medical service	1 %	Public buildings

Irregular Migration during September 2021

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



During the 10 years of the so-called resistance to irregular immigration (2011-2020), the Tunisian authorities prevented 4,2019 immigrants from reaching the Italian coast, while in the first 9 months of 2021 they managed to prevent the arrival of 19,408 immigrants, about 46% of the total figures of the previous 10 years. The figures confirm the dominant approach adopted in the field of irregular immigration, which is purely security-based, both on the coast and in territorial waters, reaching as far as international waters. During the month of September 2021, 3,199 immigrants were intercepted, representing an increase of 57% compared to September 2020. 308 crossings were thwarted, reflecting an increase of 81%, while the number of arrivals on the Italian coast reached 1,655 migrants, decreasing by 15% compared to September 2020. The number of arrivals of Tunisian nationals on the Italian coast during the first nine months of 2021 reached 12,697, or 28% of total arrivals on the Italian coast.

These figures reflect the issue of securing immigration as part of the Tunisian policy, especially following the post-pandemic and the escalation of European pressure on Tunisia in a way that not only threatens the rights and dignity of immigrants, but also threatens the right to circulation for Tunisians in their own country by restricting the movement of citizens to the coastal areas, especially those that experience intensive departures of immigration boats.

DISTRIBUTION OF ARRIVALS TO ITALY IN 2021

	NON-ACCOMPANIED MINORS	ACCOMPANIED MINORS	FEMALES	MALES	THE ARRIVALS
SEPTEMBER	139	68	52	1386	1655
TOTAL	1772	477	449	9988	12697

The number of Tunisian minors arriving on the Italian coast reached 2,249, which means that they represent about 18% of the total number of Tunisian arrivals. Tunisian minors represent one third of the total number of minors of all nationalities arriving on the Italian coast. In addition, the Tunisian Forum for Economic and Social Rights estimates the number of families to more than 300 families, arriving on the Italian coasts in the first nine months of the year 2021.

Distribution of frustrating arrests by region

	Jendouba	Bizerte	Tunis	Nabeul	Sousse	Monastir	Mahdia	Sfax	Gabes	Medenine
September	1,1%	3,3%	11,1%	3,3%	11,1%	8,8%	14,4%	41,1%	2,25%	4,5%
Moyenne	0,1%	2,73%	9,73%	12,8%	5,2%	6,5%	13,61%	42,4%	0,73%	6,25%

The mapping of intercepted transit operations has not changed, Sfax continuing to monopolize the largest percentage, with 41.1% during the month of September 2021, as opposed to the decline of the governorate of Nabeul and the emergence of the region of Tunis, which has witnessed the thwarting of operations not only from the ports but also from the coast.

Distribution of frustration by territory during September

	Other nationalities	Tunisians
SEPTEMBER	51,2%	48,7%
AVERAGE	56,91%	43,08%

The rate of migrants from sub-Saharan Africa is back in first position compared to the rate of intercepted migrants of Tunisian nationality reaching 51.2% during the month of September 2021.

During this month of September 2021, the percentage of immigrants intercepted while departing from the Libyan coast by the Tunisian authorities represented 16% of the total number of intercepted immigrants. This figure explains the escalation of the humanitarian crisis in the governorates of Sfax and Medenine, the difficulties encountered by migrants from sub-Saharan Africa to find shelter and the lack of services to which they have access and which have caused tensions in these regions. The escalation of the migration crisis in the southern governorates, the stigmatization and eviction of migrants from neighborhoods, dorms and residences, have aggravated their suffering because of the blind involvement of the Tunisian authorities in the security approach and which has indirectly turned Tunisia into a landing platform for migrants in non-regulatory situation. The crisis in Sfax and Medenine, given the passivity of the central authorities, could be the witness of many scenarios of violence, discrimination and violations against migrants from sub-Saharan Africa. Tunisia is paying the price for its unlimited security cooperation and direct coordination with the European Border Control Agency and the Italian authorities, due to the humanitarian costs of non-statutory migrants.

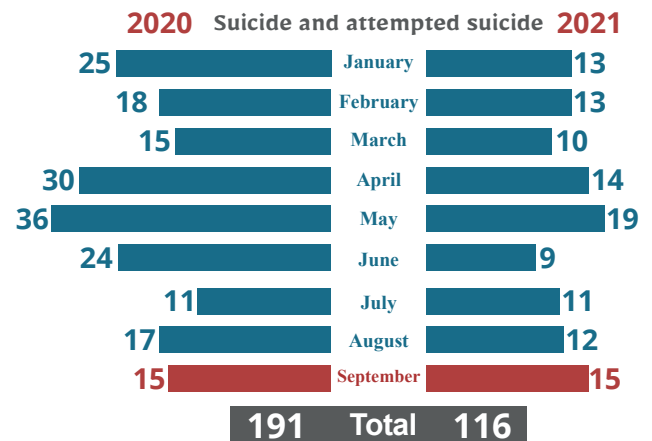
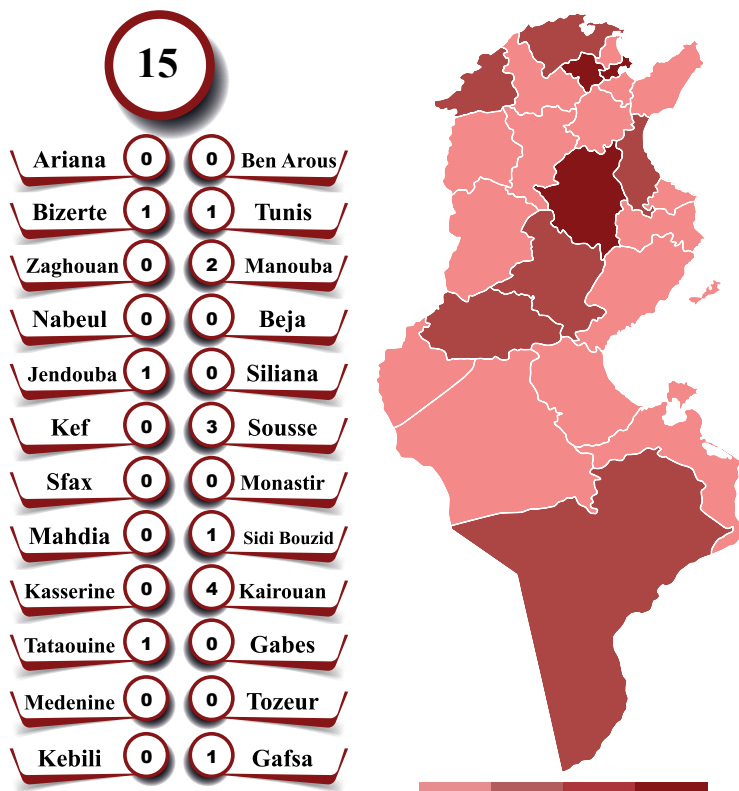
Distribution of frustrating arrests during September

	Maritime	Terrestrial
SEPTEMBER	48,34%	51,64%
AVERAGE	45,8%	54,11%

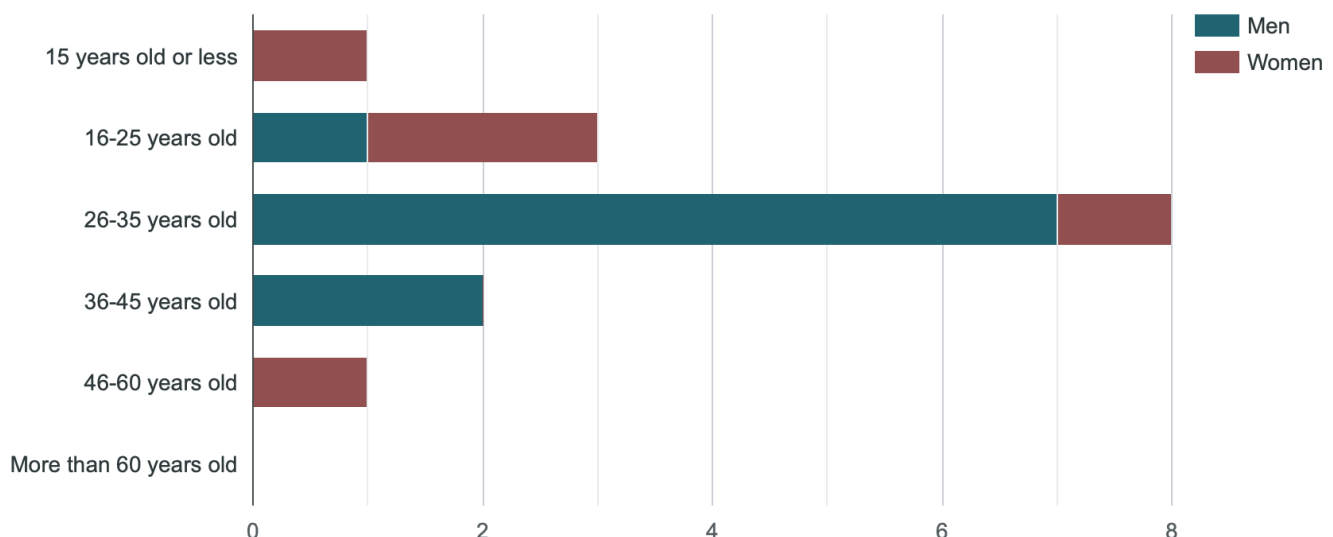
The extent of the security presence on the coast, which was strengthened after the events of July 25, 2021, has become visible, which has allowed the interception of many crossings. The Tunisian authorities adopt various tactics to prevent crossings, which depend mainly on the human factor and the logistical and technical skills provided by Tunisian-European cooperation.

Suicide and attempted suicide

As for suicides and suicide attempts, it is very likely that September 2021 saw a resurgence of the phenomenon after its decline in the previous months, since 15 suicides and suicide attempts were recorded, an average of one suicide every two days. 10 of them were men and 5 were women.

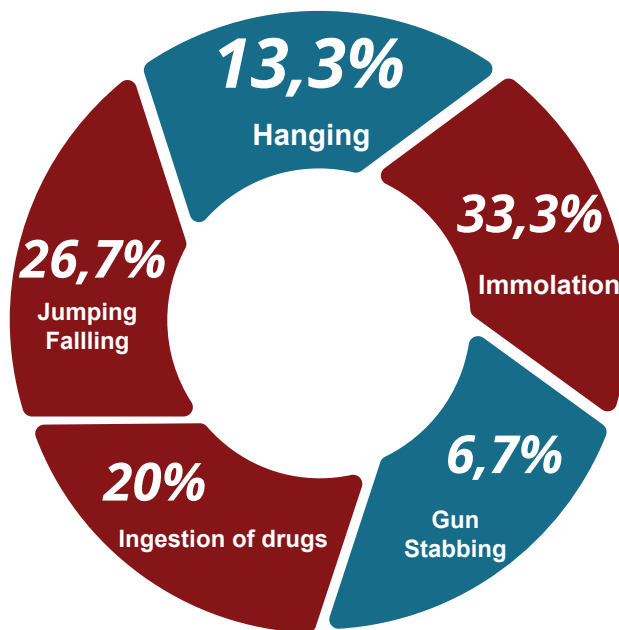


According to what has been noted by the team of the Tunisian Social Observatory, we can say that there is an upsurge of suicide and suicide attempts among the age group of less than 25 years, a category that includes mostly children first and then adolescents and youth, which is an important age group within the Tunisian society that represents about 40% of the total population



	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	7	2	0	0
Women	1	2	1	0	1	0
TOTAL	1	3	8	2	1	0

and is the most vulnerable psychologically, economically and socially. The authorities concerned and the competent structures are now called upon to provide them with more assistance and to offer them a more balanced and stable environment.



September 2021 report on violence

Nowadays, violence in Tunisia is presented as a social problem that must be the subject of a clear and urgent strategy to curb its increase and the expansion of its damages. Violence today affects all spaces, both private and collective and concerns all age groups. Its forms vary to take a theatrical aspect. The incidents of violence monitored throughout the month of September by the watch cell of the Tunisian Forum for Economic and Social Rights included kidnappings and hijackings in the street for the purpose of rape and theft, as well as cases of assassinations and death threats in the streets and in domestic spaces. Almost every space has become a breeding ground for violence. In the east of Sidi Bouzid, violence reached the point of attacking an educational institution during the flag salute and violently assaulting a teacher in front of all eyes.

The absence of a strategy

This hemorrhaging of social violence is not accompanied by any official plan to prevent its growth and escalation, whether in public spaces such as streets and educational institutions, or in private spaces such as homes. Strict enforcement of the law against offenders and perpetrators of violence and the breaking of impunity may be the best strategy to reduce violence over the short-term.

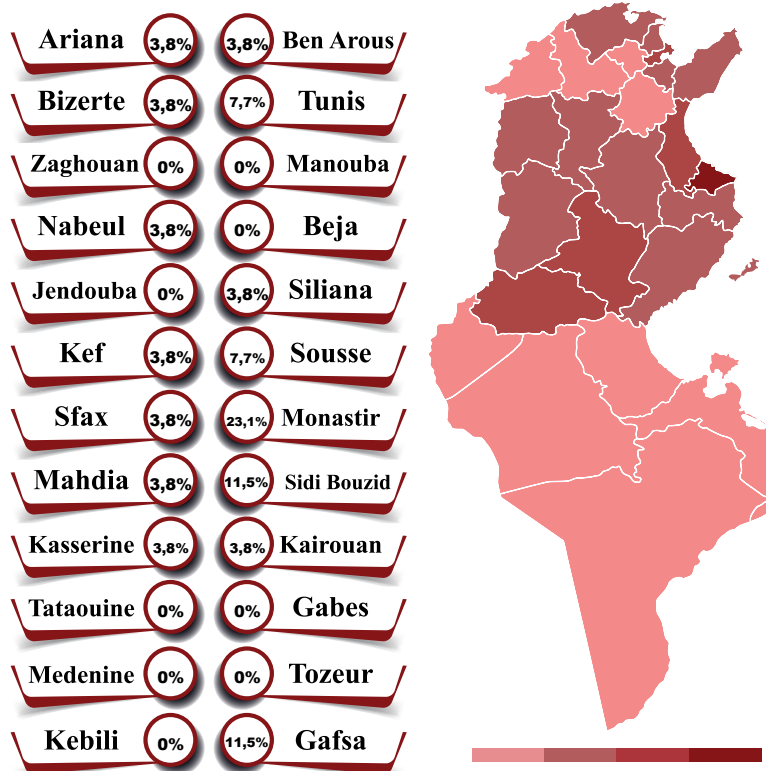
The development of a culture of mental health, of the need to pay attention to mental illnesses and to treat them, is a solution that can contribute to stopping crimes committed under the influence of such disorders. We can cite, as an example, the Bardo massacre where four members of the same family, the father, the mother and two brothers, were killed by one of the family members before he committed suicide, or the case of another family that almost experienced a similar massacre at the end of September in the governorate of Nabeul, where the son, dug graves and threatened to bury his family members alive in the garden of the house due to a mental disorder. Moreover, bones of children have been crushed, as they are the fragile group unable to express their claims and defend their rights. This symbolic and psychological violence directed against children, can only lead to the creation of future rapists and abusers.

Moreover, the absence of schooling in many areas can be seen as symbolic violence practiced by the state against the children of these regions.

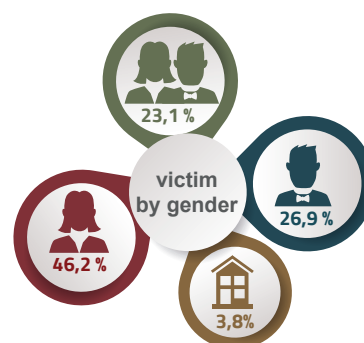
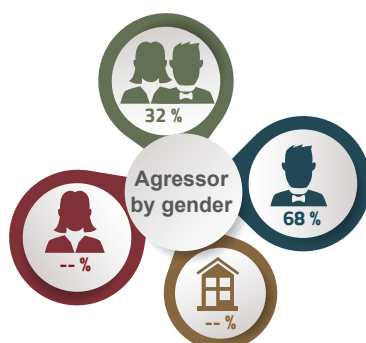
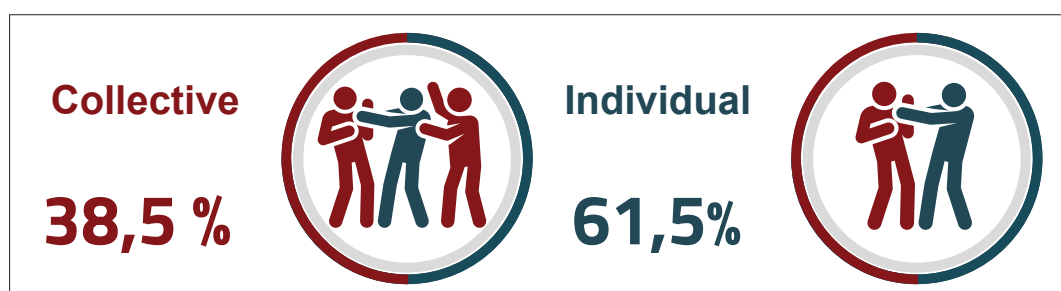
This symbolic violence is also manifested in the deterioration of health, transportation and all basic services, which have been in decline throughout the post-revolutionary years in the face of the continuing absence of a clear reform agenda that remains tied to the political climate supporting reform.

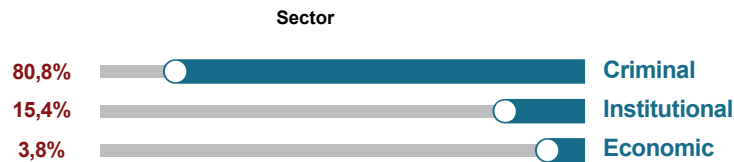
September's harvest

Three main regions have turned into scenes of violence and stand out for the number of violent incidents: the Sahel region, which includes the governorates of Sousse, Mahdia and Monastir and which was the scene of 34.6% of the violent incidents observed, the Central region, which includes the governorates of Sidi Bouzid, Gafsa and Kairouan, witnessed 25.8% of the total violent incidents and the Capital region, witnessed 15.3% of the incidents of violence recorded throughout the month of September 2021.



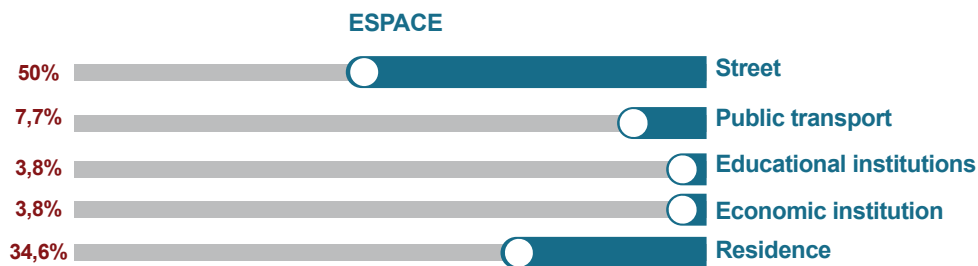
This violence was individual in 61.5% of cases and collective in 38.5%. Women were in first place in terms of victims, with 46.2%, men came in second with 26.9% of the total victims. On the other hand, men were in first place in terms of aggressors, with 68% and women were in second place with 32%.





Criminal violence leads with 80%, followed by institutional violence with 15.4% and economic violence with 3.8% of the total observed acts of violence.

As for the spaces in which the violence was perpetrated, the street comes first with a percentage of 50%, households with 34.6%, public transportation with 7.7%, educational institutions and economic production facilities with equal proportions estimated at 3.8%.



Among the violent incidents observed, we present the following to demonstrate the inclination to show violence:

- A husband cuts off his ex-wife and her mother and runs her over with his car, she died on the spot;
- A mother sells her children with the involvement of the father in Mahdia;
- Foreigners broke into an educational institution during the salute of the flag and assaulted an educational executive;
- The absence of school transportation deprives a number of students to join the school benches in Siliana;
- Torture of an 8 year old girl by her father and his wife;
- A young man tried to kill his parents and sister in Nabeul;
- A woman was killed after an argument erupted between her and six people;
- A 14 year old girl was kidnapped in the street and gang raped.

Conclusion

All economic, social and educational indicators and factors as well as the political climate indicate that the month of September 2021, which has witnessed a significant increase in the pace of movements, will be the starting point and the beginning of a hot end of the year and a last quarter that indicates an early launch of a wave of movements, claims and protests, especially with the continued state of ambiguity, political uncertainty and instability.

The social and economic vulnerability in which a significant part of Tunisians have settled: the problem of periodic price increases, the high cost of living, the dilemma of the lack of tax justice, the prevalence of corruption and nepotism are no longer a problem for the poor class but also to the middle class that shifts to poor class as wage earners and employees representing in total more than two thirds of Tunisians.

Marginalization and collapse of the public school in Tunisia: Have we been facing a class education that enshrines inequality between children of different social classes?

Rihab Mabrouki

The past few weeks have brought intensive discussions and negotiations on the conditions surrounding the return to schools. Only a few days after students went back to classes, many parents were challenged and protests were initiated to demand improvements in some elementary schools and to ensure that they are prepared to meet the most basic needs of the pupils as part of their education. Activists also shared images on social media websites showing the collapsing ceilings of some public schools, the absence of educational staff and of transportation for thousands of students living in rural areas and the lack of potable water in many educational institutions. These conditions create a favorable environment for the rapid spread of the virus due to the lack of water-based prevention measures and actions taken by the government in response to the epidemic. In many areas, parents have been tempted to boycott the return to school, especially since the fear of the spread of the pandemic persists despite the marked improvement observed in the past period.

Elementary school without water!

In October 2020, the Minister of Education Fathi Slawti declared that there are 1415 elementary school in Tunisia that are not connected to the network of the National Company for the exploitation and distribution of water. 461 educational institutions are experiencing problems and disruptions in the supply of water. In the governorate of Kairouan alone, of the 313 elementary school in the 2018/2019 school year, 175 did not have access to water, according to a statement issued by the Tunisian Forum. The numbers are expected to increase, especially in light of the political quarrels in the country over the past ten years, which have diverted attention from public education as a priority in the work of successive governments. This situation has led to an escalation of the rate of protest during the start of this school year, which has spread to almost all governorates of the republic, bringing the interior regions in the first ranks. On September 17, 2021, the people of Al Ryashia in the governorate of Kairouan held a demonstration, following which the road to the governorate of Sidi Bouzid was closed in front of the elementary school "Al-Ajaina", in order to demand improvements and access to drinking water in the school, as well as the improvement of agricultural routes leading to it in order to avoid accidents that threaten the safety of students. The governorate of Kairouan is not the only one to complain about the problem of water shortages in schools, meanwhile, parents in the delegation of Sbitla, governorate of Kasserine, are keeping their children from attending school because of the lack of water.

In Tamaghza as well, parents of the preparatory school pupils continued to disrupt classes until the beginning of the current month, due to the absence of the cook in charge of preparing meals for students living in remote areas, as well as the absence of an educational and administrative framework for the students.



¹ The students of Al Ajaina Primary School participated in demonstrations to demand an improvement of the school's condition.

Collapsing infrastructure

In the area of Ryashia, in the governorate of Kairouan, in an isolated school without fences and guards, students were trapped for hours in a dangerous situation, expecting the roof of the classrooms to collapse due to the poor infrastructure and the lack of any renovation since the construction. These are indications of the extent of the risks surrounding the public school and the low quality of education offered there, which led the students and the educational staff to avoid the location, which would affect its value as an educational space.

This issue does not only concern one region from the north or the south of the country, but it is a widespread phenomenon that requires serious measures and effective treatment to improve the standing of the public school. This is continuing after more than 03 years since the government promised to implement a comprehensive program for the maintenance of educational institutions, with funds estimated at 500 million dinars, which will allow the renovation of many elementary school as part of a program to improve the education sector. In September 2021, the Office of the President of the Republic approved the establishment of a committee on the maintenance of educational institutions and the allocation of 50 million dinars to the work of the committee, as stated by an official of the Ministry of Education, Wejden Ben Ayed, to a private radio station. The figures remain on paper while the real situation of the rural schools remains unchanged.



Al Ajaina elementary school²

Marginalization of the public school: a systematic policy to privatize education

International laws require that all states use all available resources to fulfill the basic right to education for all children. However, some governments underestimate or fail to invest in the right to education to best meet the basic needs of the student, namely, education and health, providing water and protection through school infrastructure. This decrease in investment in public education deprives children of one of their basic rights and prevents thousands of them from going to school, as is the case today in Tunisia.

The situation in public schools has led to an increase in the dropout rate, with approximately 280 students dropping out of school every day, or more than 100,000 students per year, so that in the last ten years the total number of dropouts has reached approximately 1 million, in both elementary and secondary schools, due to poor conditions in school buildings, the distance to rural areas and the unavailability of basic protection for the student. Violations and widespread legal practices are entrenching inequality and discrimination in terms of access to knowledge, and also depriving children of education, which is a fundamental right to their development and to be able to claim their rights. The leadership needed to resolve this crisis is still lacking, especially given the concerted efforts of different parties to open the door to private education, to become the exclusive preserve of a particular class, greater class discrimination is enshrined and the state shirks its responsibility to reform the education system, as it has become the property of the private sector.

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"The decline of the state in guaranteeing quality public education and the collapse of the public school paves the way for damming the ability of the poor to attain the quality of other classes capable of producing their own high quality knowledge spaces." This was pointed out by the Lebanese thinker Mehdi Amel in his book 'Theoretical introduction to the impact of socialist thought on the national liberation movement'. He points out that the inevitable consequence of special education will be the production of a class education that enshrines the inequality between children of different social classes. This coincides with the economic deficit that Tunisia has experienced since the beginning of the last decade, which has led to a decline in the role of the state as an economic actor guaranteeing its citizens basic rights, such as education and health. This has affected the public school, which has been mired in classroom violence by a decline in the quality of education and a disdain for its infrastructure in exchange for the growth of private education, which has presented itself as a lifeline of knowledge, only for those who have been able to afford it. In 2017, there were 735 private educational institutions in Tunisia, providing services to more than 138,000 students, according to the school census published by the General Directorate of Studies, Planning and Information Systems of the Ministry of Education. The sector currently employs more than 197 thousand teachers, inspectors and administrators, representing 30.9% of all civil servants, and provides services to over 2 million students with a general budget of 6509 million dinars for 2020, according to the same source.

The figures indicate that this sector has been overthrown and has a monopoly on quality, both in the development of accredited educational mechanisms and in the provision of advanced equipment to facilitate the cognitive access of its executives, making it a refuge for the academic success of a single class.

It has also contributed to a deeply problematic process that requires serious reflection on the future of thousands of uneducated students and thus on the future of an entire generation.

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.

They are distinguished by their organizational means and their capacity to ensure its continuous action and mobilization for the same reasons.

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.