

REPORT  
**AUGUST**  
**2023**

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## INTRODUCTION

Despite the slight drop in the number of social protests in August compared with the previous month (-4.7%), the diversity of demands, the multiplicity of actors and the distribution of these protests in various regions are indicators that can explain the extent of existing social tensions, particularly with regard to the deterioration of public services and the infringement of citizens' fundamental rights, principally the right to drinking water, the right of access to electricity, the right to food, and the right to health.

This tension is the result of an old, renewed crisis that the authorities have not yet succeeded in reducing, nor in drawing up a clear plan to resolve. It is a public financial crisis and an economic crisis that requires an urgent recovery plan and emergency measures to put an end to inflation. Official figures, published by the National Institute of Statistics in its August release, show a further rise in the inflation curve to 9.3% after a five-month period of decline.

This rise is due to "an acceleration in the pace of price increases between August and July 2023 compared with the same period last year". Food and beverage prices rose by 3.2%, with egg prices up 1.81%, vegetable prices up 5.1%, edible oil prices up 3.8%, cereal prices up 3.8% and fruit prices up 3.6%.

This rising price trend is undoubtedly having an impact on citizens' purchasing power, widening the circle of economic and social fragility, increasing poverty rates (poverty rate of 16.6% recorded in 2021 and extreme poverty rate of 2.9%) and exposing those living below the poverty line to hunger.

The nature of the protests observed confirms that the financial crisis facing the country has made itself felt and manifested itself in the significant deterioration of basic services, such as electricity and drinking water supplies, as well as health and other basic public services.

Faced with a general situation of economic and social crisis, with an economic growth rate that did not exceed 0.6% in the second quarter of the year, an unemployment rate of 15.6% and an increase in negative

social phenomena that confirm the recourse of many people to indivi-

dual solutions such as immigration, whether regular or irregular, as well as the spread of violence and crime, we observe the absence of a political discourse aware of the importance and gravity of this situation.

Uncertainty, lack of information and the absence of solid government communication, free from tension and not based on a logic of conspiracy and betrayal, double the gravity of the crisis. In addition, the persistence of violence and hate speech in the President's speeches has a negative impact and repercussions felt in the public atmosphere, as they are precursors that further fuel latent social anger at the deterioration of living conditions and the lack of clarity of vision.

While 223 protest movements were observed during the month of August, over 3,000 Tunisian immigrants were recorded arriving irregularly in Italy. The number of Tunisian "harragas" arriving in Italy since the beginning of 2023 has reached around 9,000 Tunisians, including 678 women and 2,467 minors.

These figures undoubtedly confirm the need for individual solutions to overcome the crisis from which a large proportion of Tunisians are suffering, the deterioration of basic services and the absence of a clear horizon.

# SOCIAL MOVEMENTS



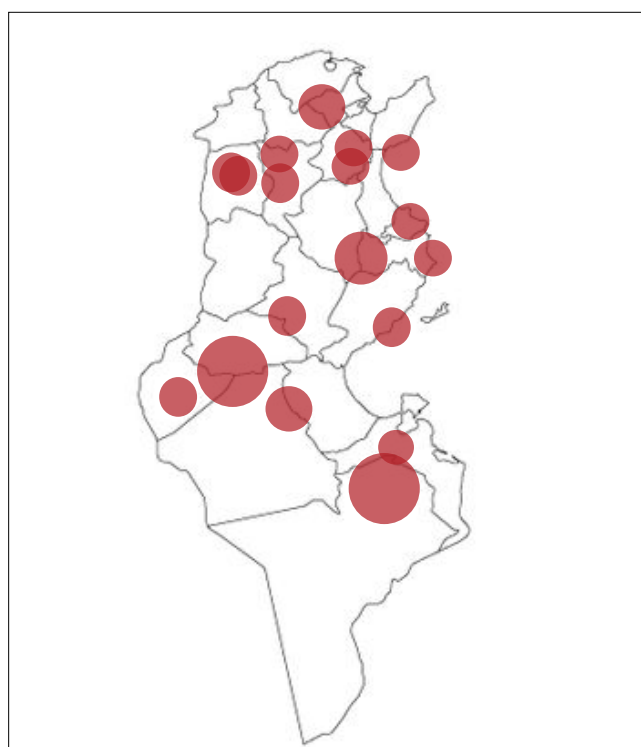
**223**  
Mouvements

**223 protest movements were observed throughout August.**

Although the figures show a relative decrease compared to the previous month, this figure reflects a state of latent social anger which sometimes manifests itself in violent reactions or an increase in the rate of violence.

The anger map included almost all governorates. The governorate of Gafsa topped the anger and protest zones with 72 movements, followed by the governorate of Tataouine with 40 protest movements, then Greater Tunis with 28 movements, and protests in the rest of the governorates were less than twenty movements throughout August.

Gafsa and Tataouine have been known as protest areas in recent years, due to demands that are mainly economic and social in origin, relating to employment and development, improving health and public services, and better working conditions. However, these protests are often confronted by a lack of interaction, the politics of exhaustion, stigmatization, criminalization and even prosecution.



The pace of protests in the two governorates increased in August by around 71% in Gafsa and by over 1,200% in Tataouine, compared with July. Demands from demonstrators in the region concerned the improvement of working conditions and the payment of wages to managers and workers. As for Gafsa, the demands were varied and included workers' rights, the interruption of drinking water, price rises, the right to employment and development, demands for infrastructure improvements, as well as the application of the law and the granting of licenses.

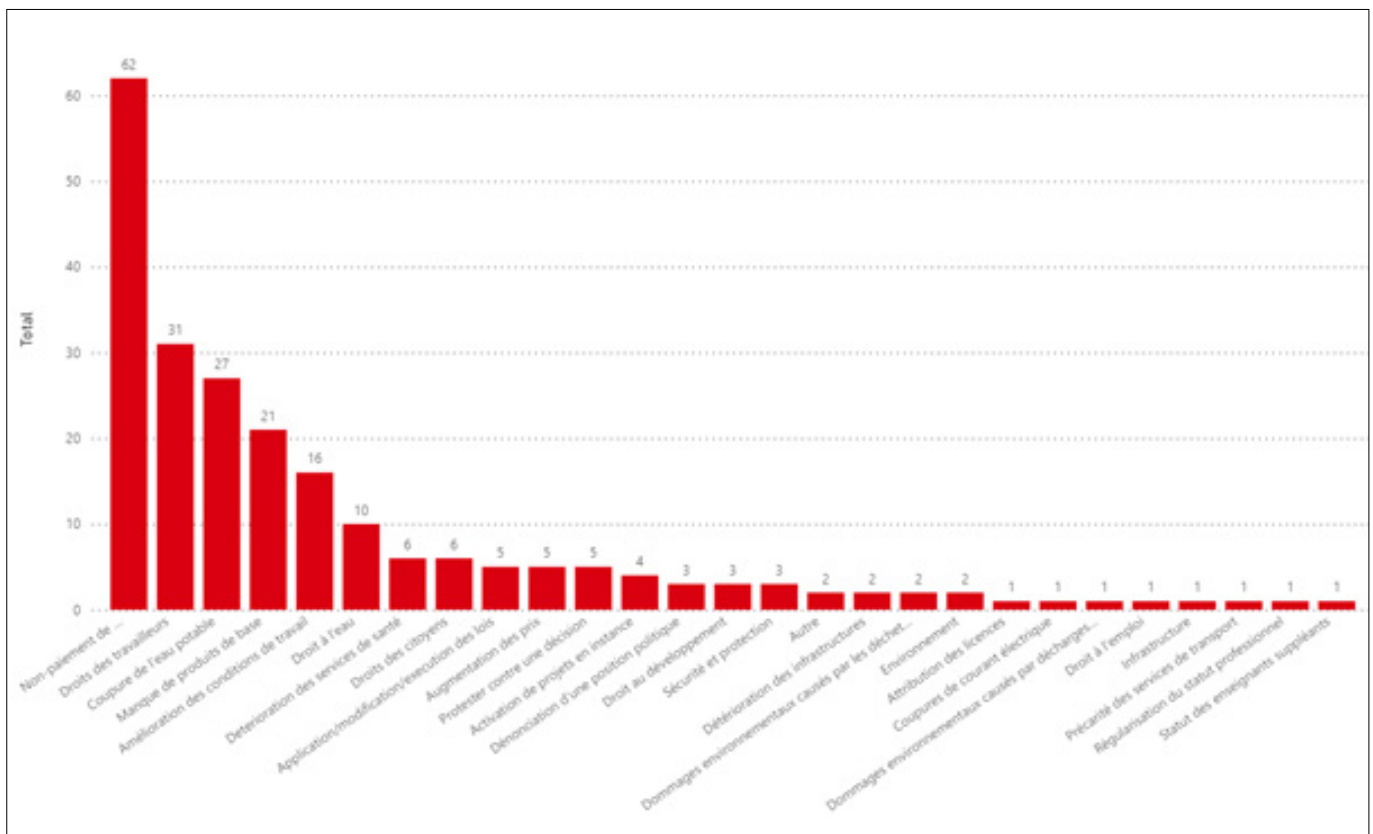
In Greater Tunis, the shortage of basic

commodities caused 17 protests, followed by others linked to the deterioration of health services, the interruption of drinking water, the regularization of professional situations and the random dumping of waste, which represents a violation of environmental rights.

Kairouan came fourth, where 17 protests were observed, all linked to fundamental rights such as the right to water, the shortage of basic products and the deterioration of services.

The governorates of Tozeur and Ariana came last, recording just one protest each linked to price rises in Tozeur and security and protection in Ariana.

## Reason



# 1.1 Protest Forms & Demands

Sit-ins were the most important form of protest throughout August, accounting for 45% of all protests observed, and the main protagonists were workers. The media was also the most important platform for protesting, expressing anger and talking about demands, the most important of which were the interruption of drinking water supplies and price rises.

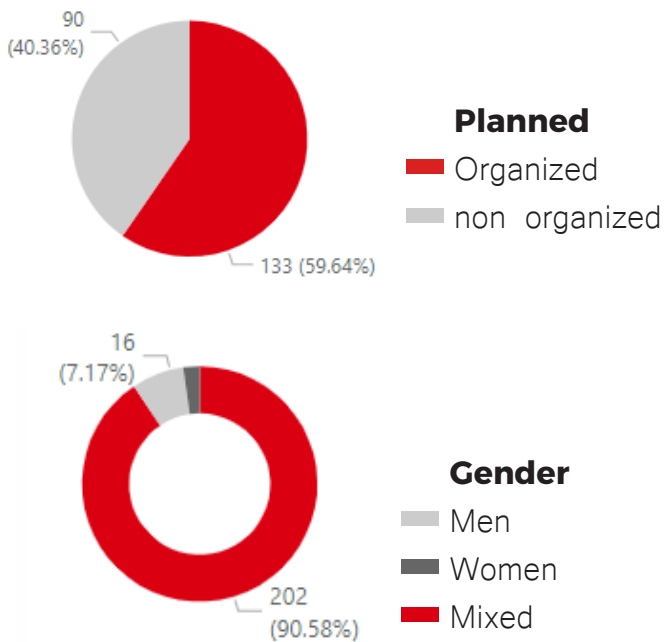
The interruption of drinking water and the right to water motivated the blocking of the road during 8 protest movements led by residents and farmers in Sfax, Siliana, Jendouba and Bizerte. Thirst was the cause of 16.5% of protests in August.

Manner	Total
Sit-In	102
Media call	37
Protest rally	30
	15
Detress calls	13
Road blocking	10
Congestion	8
Indignation	3
Blocking activities	1
Burning tires	1
Peaceful march	1
Social media	1
Stoppage	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>223</b>

Protests linked to the shortage of basic products and rising prices also marked August. Protests linked to the lack of certain basic products rose by 90% compared to July. The percentage of protests against high prices was also up 66% on the previous month. This escalation of the protest.

pattern undoubtedly confirms the state of social tension concerning deteriorating living conditions and declining purchasing power.

## 1.2 Actors & Spaces



%40.3 of protests in August were spontaneous, i.e. immediate reactions to something. The percentage of spontaneous protests was around 34% in July, indicating a growing trend towards protest reactions.

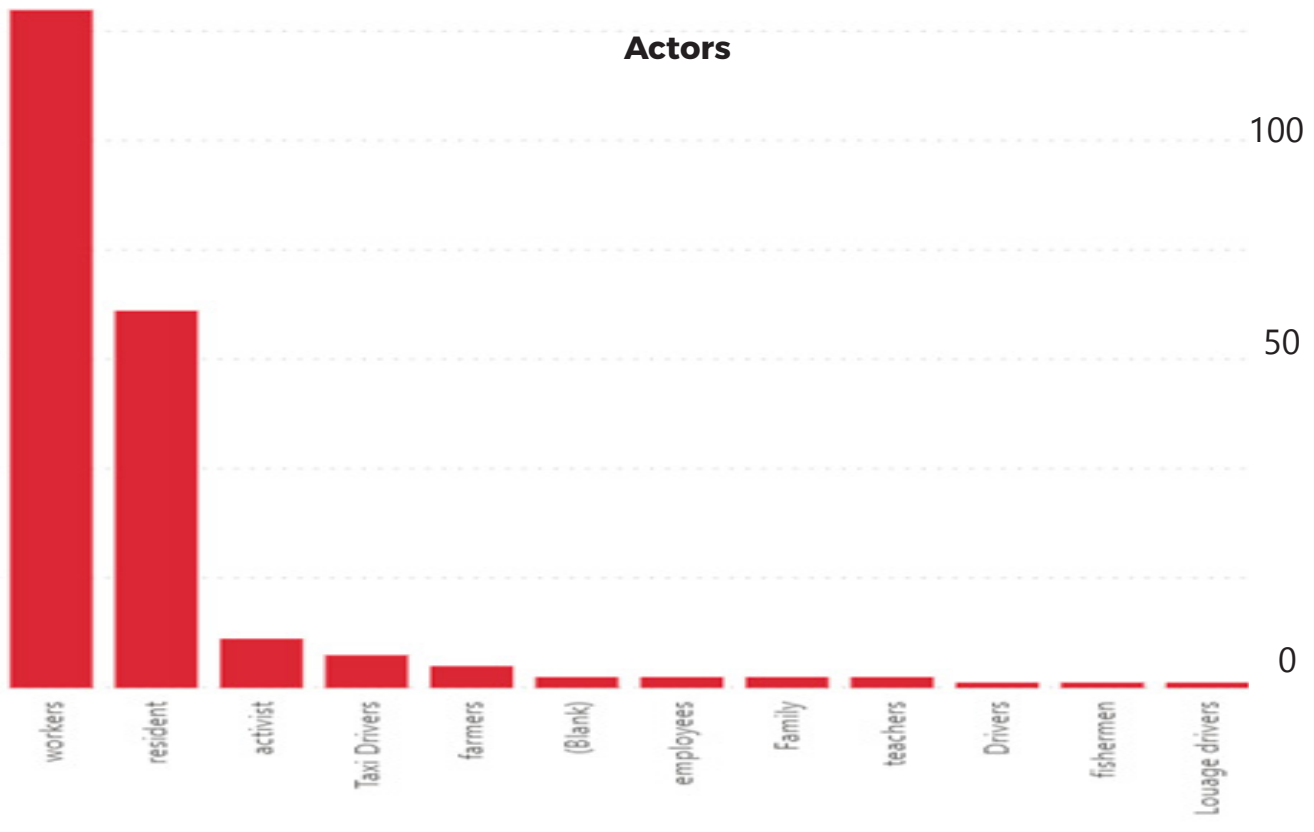
%90.58 of protests in August were mixed, while those led exclusively by men accounted for 7.17%.

Five protests led exclusively by women were observed. These concerned environmental damage resulting from solid waste, environmental degradation, the interruption of drinking water supplies, and the settlement of the status of supply teachers. While men protested against the granting of work permits, the right to water, the deterioration of health services, law enforcement, the supply of drinking water, insurance, safety and protection, and protests against decisions and the denunciation of a political position.

Workers were the main protagonists of the August demonstrations (124 protest movements) for reasons linked to working conditions, financial rights, the relaunch of stalled projects and shortages of basic commodities. Most of their movements took the form of sit-ins (102 movements) in addition to demonstrations. Workplaces were their most important protest sites.

Citizens were the second most important protagonists of the social movement observed in August (69 protest movements), launching appeals through the media, blocking roads, organizing protest rallies, and through social networks. Most of the demands concerned the interruption of drinking water, price rises, shortages of basic products, the deterioration of health services and other issues linked to citizens' rights and quality of life.

The rest of the protests were led by activists, cab drivers, farmers, employees and fishermen.



Roads were a major focus of protest in Sfax, Jendouba and Médenine, as well as in Nabeul, Siliana, Bizerte, Kef and Kairouan.

In conclusion, all the indicators monitored during the month of August confirm the existing state of social tension, the exposed and growing culprit of which is the deterioration in living conditions and the serious decline in purchasing power. The decline in the quality of basic services also represents another factor in the growth of protests and social anger due to thirst and frequent power cuts, which further aggravate the crisis in the agricultural production system and expose the population to the dangers of thirst.

The social situation is likely to evolve considerably over the coming weeks. A logical and certain consequence of the nature of the economic, financial, social and also political developments that Tunisia is undergoing, and it has to be said that the country will end the year with great uncertainty over the 2024 budget.

Space	Total
Work spaces	108
Medias	4
Roads	17
Ministry headquarters	16
Public spaces	11
Governorate headquarters	7
Social media	6
Public building	5
Hospitals	5
Headquarters of the municipalities	1
Judicial institutions	1
Public Service	1
Railways	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>223</b>



# IRREGULAR MIGRATION

Irregular migratory flows continued in August despite reinforced security measures in coastal areas. 3,196 Tunisian immigrants arrived on the Italian coast, 68.52% of them are men, 24.21% are minors and 7% are women. This figure represents an increase of 80.66% compared with July. This brings the total number of arrivals in Italy since the start of the year to 9,283 migrants, representing a 20% decrease compared to the same period last year.

Regarding thwarted operations, we observed 127 operations during the month of August 2023, representing a decrease of 69% compared with the number of operations thwarted during the same period last year.

Thus, the total number of foiled operations since the beginning of 2023 has reached 1453 operations, of which 91% are sea crossings, and 8% are land crossings.

On the other hand, the number of migrants prevented from crossing the Tunisian coast during this month reached 4427. It should be noted that this number reflects a decrease of 22.51% compared with the same period in 2022. It should also be noted that 20% of migrants are of Tunisian nationality, while sub-Saharan migrants account for a significant percentage of up to 80% of the number of people trying to cross to European shores.

Since the beginning of 2023, the total number of people prevented from crossing the Tunisian coast has reached 39568 migrants, an increase of 116% compared with the same period in 2022.

The human tragedy on the Tunisian coast continues, with 55 victims and missing persons reported in August, bringing the total number of victims and missing persons since the beginning of the year to 723.

”  
**3196**

**MIGRANTS**

a raise over

**80%**

**COMPARED  
WITH JULY**

“

# 1.1 Comparison In the same period during the years 2020-2021-2022-2023

The month	2020				2021				2022				2023			
	The number of arrivals to Italy	Number of frustrating passes	Number of passersby suspended	The number of arrivals to Italy	Number of frustrating passes	Number of passersby suspended	The number of arrivals to Italy	Number of frustrating passes	Number of passersby suspended	The number of arrivals to Italy	Number of frustrating passes	Number of passersby suspended	The number of arrivals to Italy	Number of frustrating passes	Number of passersby suspended	
January	68	22	316	84	17	463	382	124	1155	341	85	2322				
February	26	25	571	660	17	1273	308	95	1036	770	177	5147				
March	60	4	137	334	72	882	224	58	886	774	241	7494				
April	37	6	99	307	42	409	315	87	1515	1047	170	4081				
May	494	60	1243	601	95	2487	1024	172	2658	497	180	4057				
June	825	119	1611	977	143	2120	1714	175	2086	770	123	3528				
July	4145	245	2918	4044	211	2993	3461	226	3226	1769	37	848				
August	2306	191	1621	4035	317	5582	4284	411	5713	3196	127	4427				
Data*																
<b>Total</b>	<b>7961</b>	<b>672</b>	<b>8516</b>	<b>1194</b>	<b>4435</b>	<b>16209</b>	<b>11742</b>	<b>18275</b>	<b>18275</b>	<b>9283</b>	<b>1453</b>	<b>39568</b>				

\* The data was provided in statements from the Ministry of Interior and has not been detailed.

## 1.2 Distribution of arrivals to Italy by months during August 2023

The month	Number of arrivals	Men	Women	Accompanied children	Unaccompanied and separated children
January	341	295	8	10	28
february	770	576	51	37	106
March	777	492	52	53	180
April	1027	734	62	70	181
May	497	390	25	27	55
June	770		52	51	91
July	1769	1160	121	140	342
August	3196	2190	232	282	492
<b>Total</b>	<b>9283</b>	<b>6138</b>	<b>578</b>	<b>777</b>	<b>1690</b>

## 1.3 Distribution of passers-by by nationalities During August 2023

the month	Tunisian	Non-Tunisian
January	19.18%	80.82%
february	15.58%	84.41%
March	5.5%	94.5%
April	19.79%	80.2%
May	22.18%	77.82%
June	16.89%	83.11%
July	20.92%	79.07%
August	20.51%	79.48%
<b>Total</b>	<b>17.56%</b>	<b>82.43%</b>

## 1.4 Distribution of frustrating passes by authorities during August 2023

Mois	Médenine	Gabès	Sfax	Mahdia	Monastir	Sousse	Nabeul	Tunis	Bizerte
August	0.78%	1.5%	54.33%	33.85%	5.51%	*	0.78%	0.78%	*

\*The presence of this sign does not mean that these authorities do not witness crossings, but the official data published in the notifications did not include frustrating crossings in these bodies.

## 1.5 Distribution of frustrating passes during August 2023

The month	Land	The Sea
January	11.76%	88.24%
february	21.46%	78.53%
March	13.64%	86.36%
April	11.18%	88.83%
May	37.73%	62.27%
June	11.72%	88.28%
July	40.55%	59.45%
August	8.66%	91.33%
<b>Total</b>	<b>21.82%</b>	<b>78.17%</b>

## 1.6 The tragedies of irregular migration on the Tunisian coasts during 2023

The month	The number of victims and missing
January	28
february	7
March	92
April	373
May	34
June	114
July	22
August	55
Data*	235
<b>Total</b>	<b>958</b>

\*The data was provided in statements from the Ministry of Interior and has not been detailed.

**The number of dead and missing on the Tunisian coast during 2023**

958

**The number of dead and missing in the Central Mediterranean Basin during 2023**

1500

## FOR IRREGULAR MIGRATION

The totality of the data contained in this report represents what the Tunisian Forum for Economic and Social Rights has been able to gather from various sources and by the available means. The digital data remains incomplete, not detailed and subject to updating and may not fully reflect reality, but in the absence of detailed and updated information from the Tunisian official side (number of passes - number Passengers - their distribution according to age groups and gender - defining where they come from - their social status - the number of missing persons...) These data may contribute to a clearer understanding of migration dynamics and significant transformations.

### Frustrated Passes

Reliance is placed on the Ministry of Interior's communiqués and the statements of the spokesperson of the National Guard in the various media. Most of them do not contain detailed data (sex, age groups, the parties from which the immigrants come...)

### Arrivals to European coasts

Many structures that emit digital data about arrivals to Europe, such as UNHCR, IOM, European countries' ministries of the interior and the European Coastal Control Agency. The figures provided remain approximate and require continuous updating according to figures from official and civil structures that may be issued in subsequent reports but provide a reading of the evolution and change in the dynamics of irregular migration.

### Invisible numbers

It's the number of migrants arriving in Europe across different routes without passing through local authorities or international structures does not have any effect on the census, which is important and varies according to the tactics of migrant smuggling networks. It also includes departures from the Tunisian coasts, which succeed in evading strict security controls, or those that are prohibited from passing them without issuing or without being announced.



# Violence

*Violence as a societal behavior is the most obvious form of the state of anger and denial experienced by Tunisians with the intensification of the economic crisis, the persistent shortage of food products, the increasing deterioration of living conditions, the widening circle of poverty and unemployment, and the deterioration of public services.*

Thus, many of the movements undertaken by social actors during August took a violent form, tensions, and road blockades. These movements were mainly linked to demands for water, electricity, and food supplies.

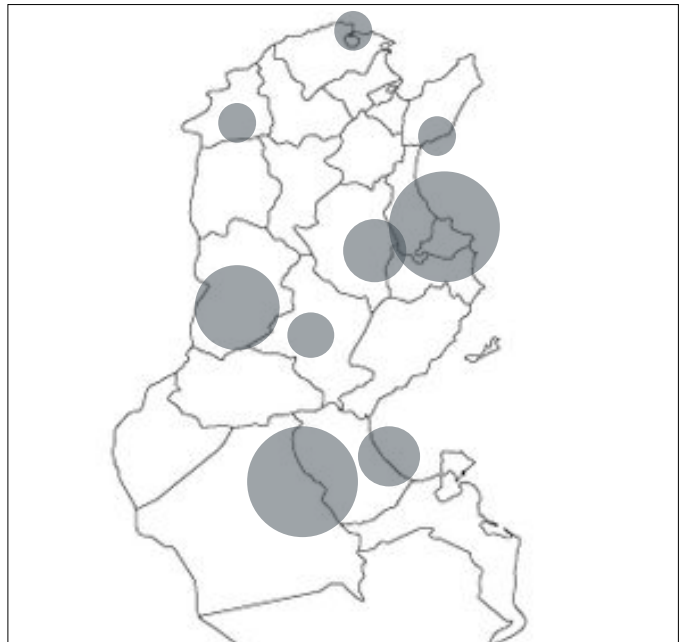
The violence took many forms and spread to public and private spaces, targeting women and children as well as men.

As a result of the indifference of state structures to the seriousness of this phenomenon, which continues to intensify and become more widespread in Tunisian society, public space has become an unsafe place for the various social categories and a setting for harassment, theft, and physical attacks. Private space, in turn, has become, like public space, an environment in which domestic, conjugal, and relational violence is intensifying.

## 3-1 Geospatial Distribution of Violence

Over the month of August, the capital Tunis returned to the top position in terms of violent incidents observed, recording around a quarter of cases, followed by the Governorates of Sousse, Kasserine and Kairouan .

Nabeul, which topped the ranking last month, came at the bottom of the ranking.



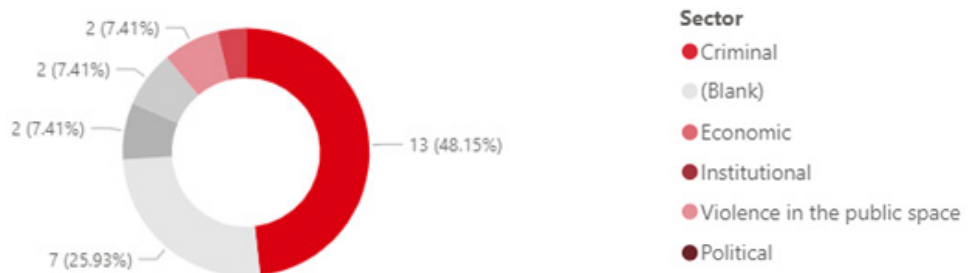
## 3-2 Forms & Spaces of violence

**67 %**

of the violence observed in August was of a relational criminal nature, linked to murders, robberies, hold-ups and extremely violent assaults for revenge and denigration.

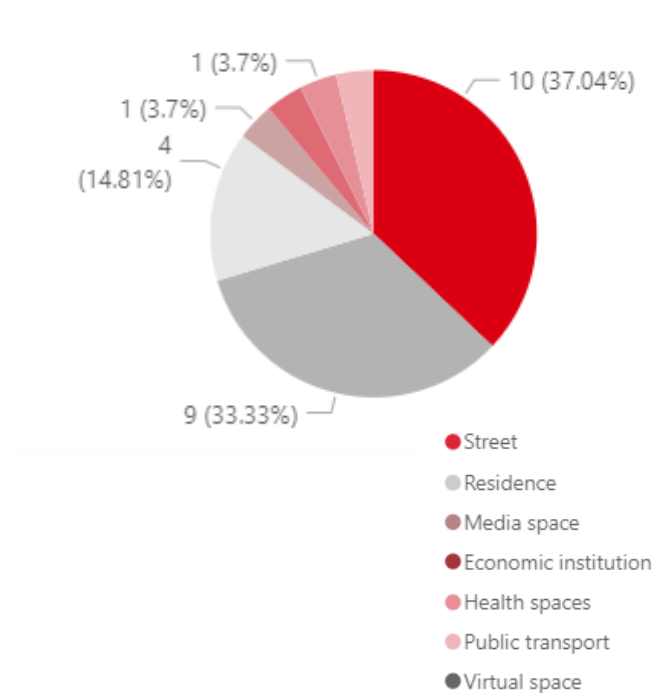
**7,41%**

of violence was equally divided between institutional violence, domestic violence and violence in the public space. Political violence came last, accounting for 3.7% of recorded violence.





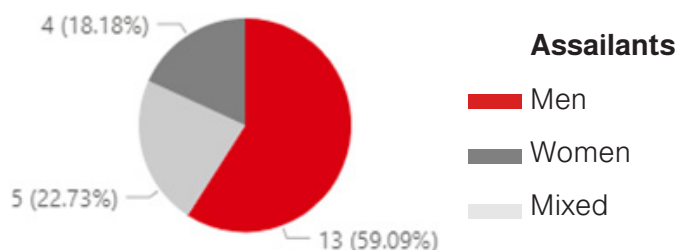
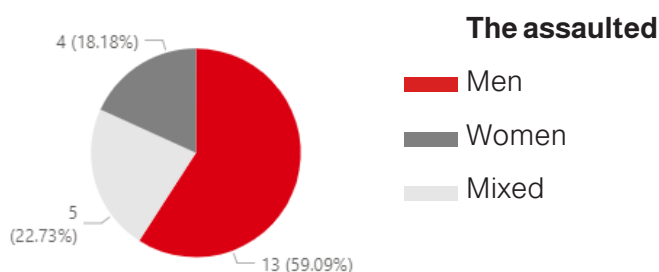
The street accounted for 37% of recorded violence in August, while 33.33% of recorded violence took place in the private sphere, notably the home. The media, cyberspace and social networking sites came third in terms of the violence observed during the same month. Together, they witnessed around 18% of the violence observed. Means of transport, health and hospital institutions and economic institutions accounted for the remainder of violent events observed through the various media submitted to the sample.



## 3-3 Gendered Violence

Women were the victims of 18.18% of the violent incidents observed in August and were also responsible for the same percentage of recorded cases of violence. This also applies to men, since 59% of them were victims of the incidents and cases of violence observed and are responsible for the same rate of violence recorded.

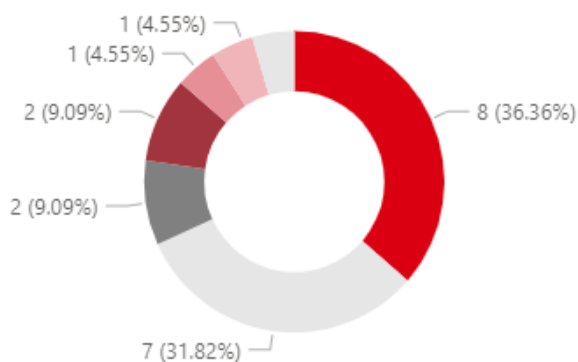
22.37% of violent incidents involved both victims and perpetrators. domestic between divided was and ages all concerned violence.





**Category**  
 ■ Collective  
 ■ Individual

Violence was evenly distributed over the month of August: 50% was individual and 50% collective.



**Reason**  
 ■ Assault  
 ■ Stealing  
 ■ Sexual assault  
 ■ Revenge  
 ■ Stunting and undevalue  
 ■ Sexual harassment  
 ■ Intimidation

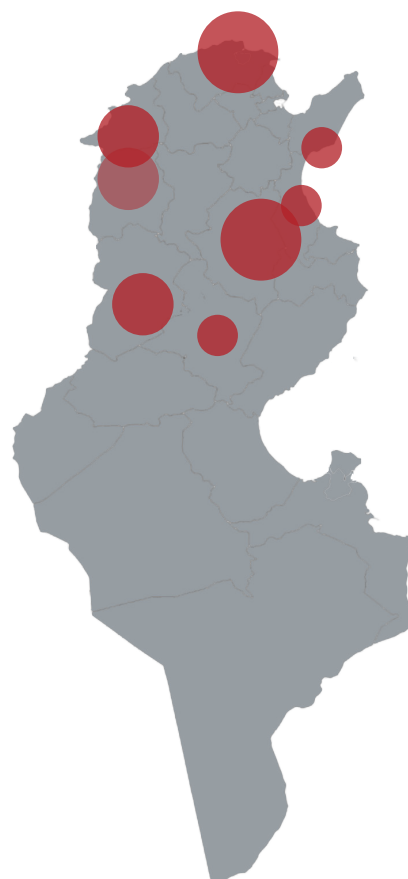
The the in women, against violence and children against violence violence, against violence violence, domestic assault, sexual harassment, of form we violence, of acts these During murder. and threats death consumers, weapons bladed of use the and hijackings, detentions, beatings, observed.

## SUICIDE & SUICIDE ATTEMPTS

*The month of August 2023 witnessed a doubling of suicide cases and attempts, with one recorded every two days, a clear indicator of the spread of discontent, given that psychologists class suicide as one of the tragic reactions an individual can undertake as a response to exhaustion and depression, and as an attempt to escape from his or her reality, particularly economic and social.*

The month of August recorded 17 cases and attempts of suicide, an increase of seven cases on the previous month, and with an upward trend compared with previous months.

The governorates of Kairouan and Bizerte accounted for half of the cases, each recording 4 cases and two attempted suicides, followed by the governorates of Kasserine, Kef and Jendouba, each with two cases and one attempted suicide. Sousse, Sidi Bouzid and Nabeul each recorded one case and one attempted suicide.



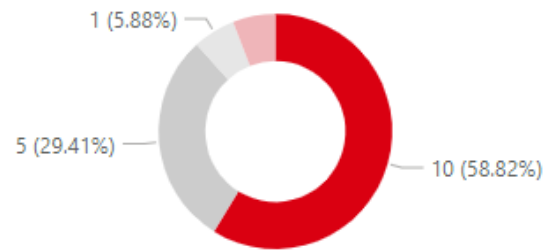
### 4-1 Gendered distribution



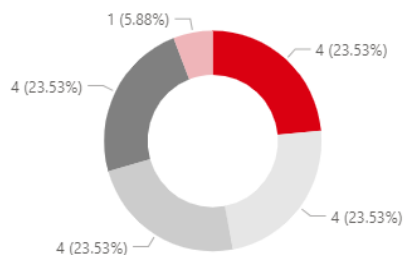
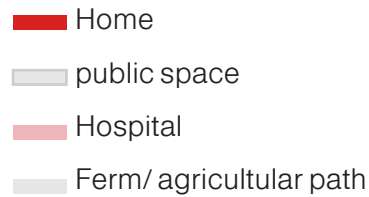
of those who committed or attempted suicide during August 2023 were men, while the percentage of women was around 23.53%.

## 4-2 Spaces

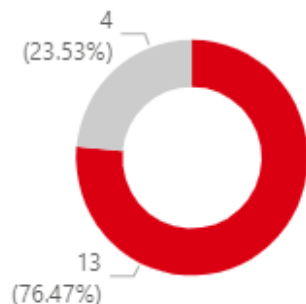
10 cases of suicide and attempted suicide were recorded inside family or private residential spaces, while the public space witnessed 6 cases of suicide and attempted suicide, including one in an agricultural property and another in front of the Sijnan delegation. One case of suicide was also recorded in a hospital.



### Space



### Acteurs



### Death



## 4-3 Age Groups of Victims

Suicides and suicide attempts affected all ages during the month of August. Attempts to burn oneself, hang oneself, throw oneself off or take drugs and pesticides. Perpetrators ranged in age from 14 to 72. The team observed 4 cases of suicide in schoolchildren under 17.

It also documented 4 cases of suicide in young people under 40 and 5 in people under 50, including one employee. Among the victims of the suicide scourge were 4 people aged over 60.

Men accounted for 76.43% of those who committed or attempted suicide during the month, while women accounted for 23.53%.

13 of those who committed suicide died, while 4 survived their attempt.