

OST

Department
Tunisian Social Observatory

QUARTERLY REPORT

OCTOBER - DECEMBER
2023

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

601 Protestations

a drop of around 12%
compared to the 3rd quarter

IRREGULAR MIGRATION

3225 Migrants

arrived to Italy through
Tunisian coast

31 CASES

SUICIDE
AND SUICIDE
ATTEMPTS

QUARTERLY REPORT

OCTOBER

DECEMBER

2023

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INTRODUCTION

The decline and disappearance of the number of protests can be documented over the months. The last quarter of the year saw a further decline in the number of mobilizations, but also an increase in violence and other manifestations of popular distress.

The most remarkable issue of the quarter was the convergence of demands and profiles taking part in the protests. Mixed in the social distress mold, the different actors formulate and discover the similarity of their struggles and the strategies of the power that wants to curb these struggles.

Employment remained at the heart of the claims, with adults accounting for the majority of the violence and the minority of the suicides. This is indicative of the country's context and the pressing concerns of its citizens.

Documenting exhaustion means, in a way, archiving it, keeping track of it. Exposing violence – often unpunished and ignored – is also a sign of resistance and active archiving of the country's particular situation. This is the purpose of this report produced by the FTDES's Tunisian Social Observatory, which offers an insight into the country's current situation.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

601 Protests
during the 4th quarter of 2023

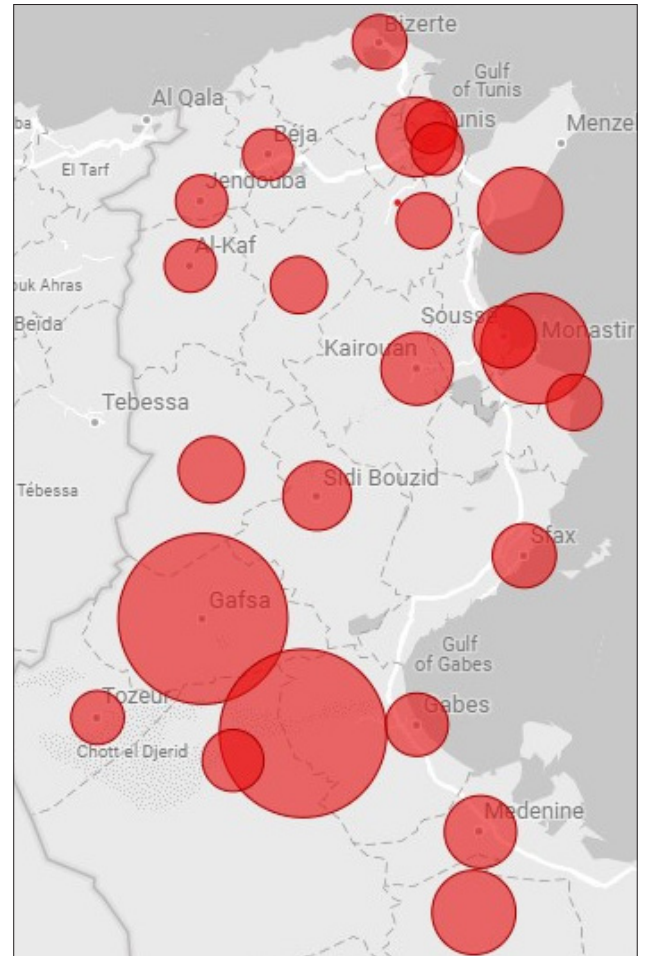
This quarter has shown a downward curve, which is to be expected from the figures recorded in previous months. During this quarter, 601 protest movements were documented. This represents a fairly significant drop and confirms the hypothesis of loss of momentum put forward in recent reports. Compared with 680 between July and September, 894 during the second quarter and 1262 during the first, it seems that social movements are becoming more and more disengaged as the months go by.

The regional and local disparity of some social movements indicates a difficulty for social actors to organize themselves and create alliances and coalitions that would enable social movements to last over time and reach more geographical areas, thus enabling them to bring their demands to decision-makers more effectively.

Demands are becoming more and more concrete and related to everyday socio-economic life. Social actors no longer demonstrate for ideals of justice or democracy, but for bread, electricity, and water. This – beyond an analysis based on figures – is interesting, as it captures the daily situation of the population, which must navigate deprivation, neglect, and mistreatment.

1.1 Geospatial Distribution

Gouvernerats	Total
Tunis	16
Bizerte	11
Nabeul	10
Sousse	9
Monastir	8
Kasserine	7
Kairouan	6
Sidi Bouzid	6
Manouba	4
Tataouine	4
Jandouba	6
Mahdia	3
Sfax	3
Ariana	2
Ben Arous	2
Gabès	2
Gafsa	2
Kef	2
Kebili	1
Medenine	1
Siliana	1
Total	103



THE NORTH-WEST: UNEXPLAINED OR EXPLAINABLE ABSENCE?

The north-west (Kef, Jendouba, Seliana, Beja) recorded very limited numbers of protests. The absence of civic and trade union organization could be one reason for this level of investment, given the region's disastrous economic situation.

Social movements are concentrated in the regions usually invested by protest actors, which are also the regions where there is the most social inequality. Gafsa recorded 107 movements, Tunis 105, Monastir 56 and Nabeul 34.

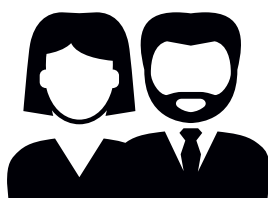
1.2 Gendered Distribution



1.50%



9.98%



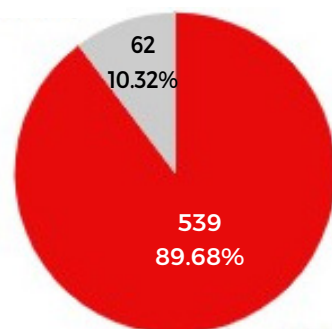
88.52%

As usual, the majority of protests were shared between men and women. 88.52% were mixed protest spaces, with 1.5% restricted to women only and 9.98% exclusive to men. The categorization of protest space is nevertheless gendered. Women act on networks or in restricted spaces, while confrontation remains the domain of men.

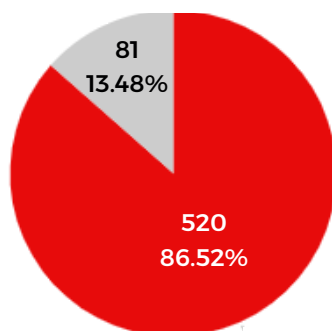
1.3 Emergence and nature of protest movements

Most protests were collective, accounting for 89.68%. Only 10.32% were individual. Compared with the third quarter, the rate of collective protests has fallen, although it remains higher than individual movements. Individual movements include angry outbursts in the media and elsewhere.

As for the organized or spontaneous nature of protest movements, these trends remain unchanged. The majority of protests are organized, with a rate of 86.52%, and only 13.48% are spontaneous. While social movements are declining, the bodies that continue to organize them are the usual fighters, i.e. trade unionists, politicians, and activists.

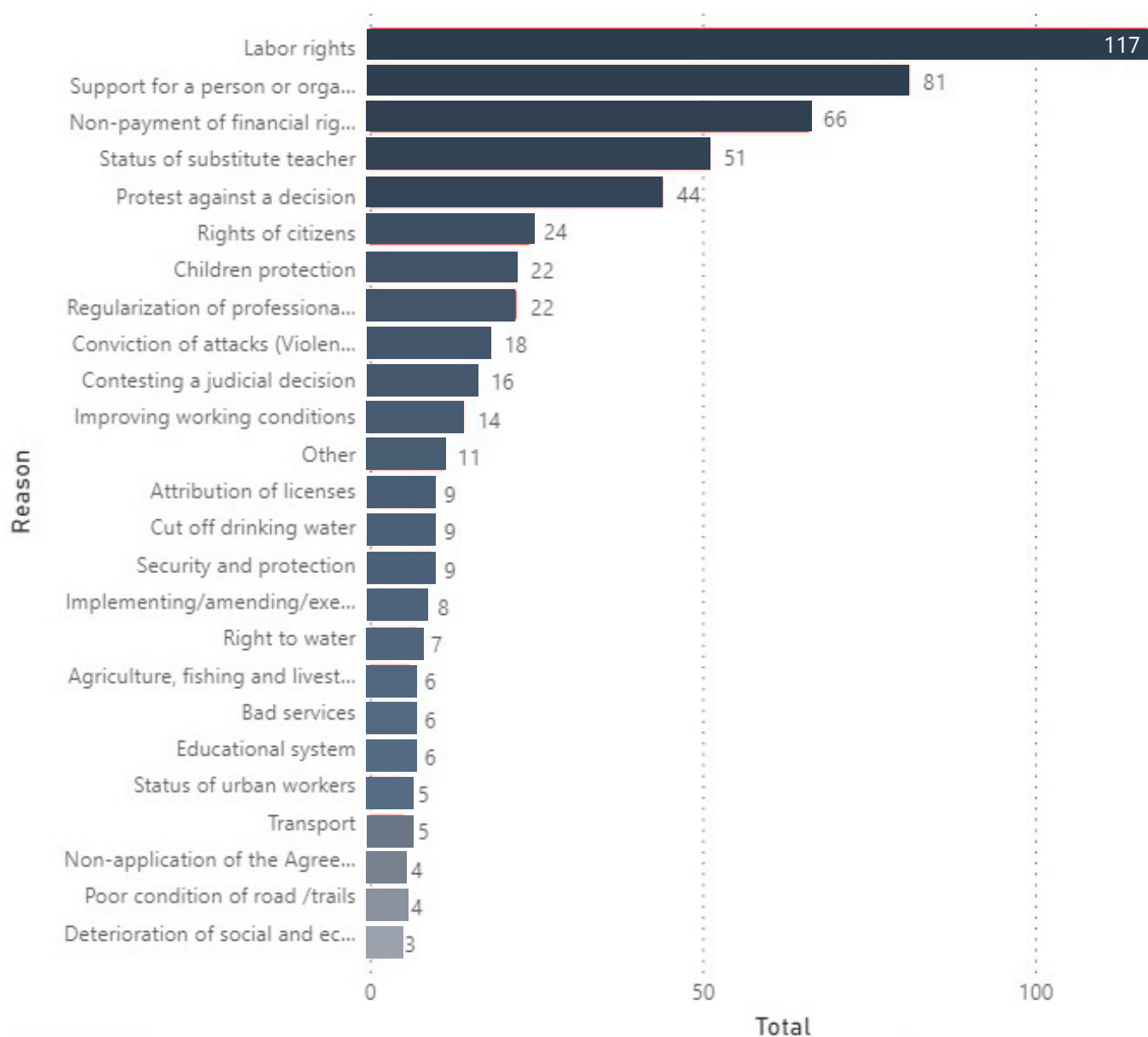


Type
■ Collective
■ Individual



Planned
■ Organized
■ Non Organized

1.4 Demands and Actors



Demands included workers' rights in large part, support for individuals and organizations, non-payment of financial entitlements, the status of substitute teachers, protests against decisions, citizens' rights, child protection, regularization of professional status, condemnation of assaults, contesting a court decision, improvement of working conditions. Others protested against the interruption of drinking water, for safety and protection, for the right to water, agricultural demands, demands relating to the education system, infrastructure and transport.

As for the actors, they are diverse. The trio of students, activists and workers is well represented among the social movements. These groups of regulars conti-

nue to make the same demands, even if their voices remain inaudible to the authorities. Persistence is a sign of commitment. Above all, it is a sign of their ability to continue organizing under increasingly restrictive conditions. Other actors took part in these protests in the last quarter of 2023. They included families, residents, journalists, lawyers, doctors, workers, parents, fishermen, prisoners, soccer fans, van and cab drivers, farmers, shopkeepers, the unemployed, students and teachers.

1.5 Forms and spaces of Protest

These protests have taken different forms, even if protest rallies and sit-ins are predominant. This diversity is the sign of a renewal in the techniques of struggle. We also note the return of the school examination boycott, marches from the interior regions to the capital and the detention of a means of transport. Protest strategies are more radical than in previous months. This is indicative of popular anger, which is even stronger and more tightly controlled by those in power and their tools, from the police to the media.

These protests took place in the places of power and work, to which the demands were directed. 140 took place in educational institutions, 93 in the media, 92 on the premises of the Gafsa Phosphate Company, 66 in front of administrative head offices, 45 in other workspaces. Others took place in front of the People's Representative Assembly, on Habib Bourguiba Avenue, public buildings, hospitals, roads, governorate headquarters, delegations, ministries, etc.

Space	Total
Institutions éducatives	140
Media	93
CPG	92
Administrative Headquarters	66
Workspaces	45
Roads	36
Governorate Headquarters	24
Public spaces	22
Ministry headquarters	21
Prison	20
Municipal Theater of Tunis	16
Judicial institutions	7
Avenue Habib Bourguiba	4
People's Representative Assembly	3
Hospitals	3
Social Media	3
Public buildings	2
Headquarters delegations	2
Railways	1
Kasba Square	1
Total	601

IRREGULAR MIGRATION

December 2023

The month of December shows a significant drop in waves of irregular immigration. This decrease is mainly due to climatic factors.

In this context, we recorded a 64.68% decrease in the number of arrivals of Tunisian nationality in Italy during this month compared to the same period in 2022. The total number of Tunisian immigrants reached 17,322 from the beginning of January to the end of December.

In a related context, we recorded an 80.40% decrease in the number of migrants prevented from crossing from the Tunisian coast compared with the same period last year, 90% of whom were of non-Tunisian nationality.

Intercepted operations dropped by 72.40% compared with the same period in 2022, of which 80.35% concerned operations intercepted at sea.

The governorate of Sfax remains the leading governorate in terms of the number of operations, with 80% of intercepted crossings. However, the monitoring of these operations remains limited due to the lack of information provided by the Ministry of the Interior.

Despite the difficulties encountered in observing and monitoring cases of disappearance and drowning on the Tunisian coast due to the lack of information, this year, according to what has been observed with the available resources, is the most tragic on the Tunisian coast, with more than 1,313 victims and missing persons, most of whom are of sub-Saharan nationality.

2.1 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	Number of frustrating passes	Number of passersby suspended	Number of frustrating passes	Number of passersby suspended	Nombre de traversées interceptées
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		
Sep-tember	1951	170	2035	1796	308	3199	2958	270	3882	4814	479	8781		
October	1300	157	1349	1504	263	2739	1999	331	5584	1672	353	3407		
No- vember	1298	63	849	713	117	1969	744	174	4034	1304	156	3982		
December	373	34	717	616	86	1541	705	185	3734	249	51	731		
Total FTDES	12883	1096	13466	15671	1748	25657	18148	2903	38372	17322	2178	48805		
Total MI*											6169	80636		

* Les données ont été fournies dans les déclarations du ministère de l'intérieur et n'ont pas été détaillées.

2.2 Distribution of arrivals to Italy

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
Mars	777	492	52	53	180
April	1027	734	62	70	181
March	497	390	25	27	55
June	770	366	52	51	91
July	1769	1160	121	140	342
August	3196	2190	232	282	492
September	4814	3088	412	382	932
October	1672	1083	122	145	322
November	1304	1003	85	74	142
December	249	171	19	21	38
Total	17073	11257	1352	1378	3086

2.3 Distribution of passers-by by nationalities

The month	Tunisian	Non-Tunisian
January	19.18%	80.82%
February	15.58%	84.41%
Mars	5.5%	94.5%
April	19.79%	80.2%
March	22.18%	77.82%
June	16.89%	83.11%
July	20.92%	79.07%
August	20.51%	79.48%
September	14.89%	85.10%
October	40.56%	59.43%
November	27.5%	72.5%
December	9%	91.38%
Total	19.30%	79%

2.4 Distribution of frustrating passes by authorities during

Mois	Médenine	Gabès	Sfax	Mahdia	Monastir	Sousse	Nabeul	Tunis	Bizerte
Décembre	0.39%	0.4%	52%	21.78%	14.84%	7.81%	4.18%	0.79%	*

*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.

2.5 Distribution of frustrating passes

The month	land	The Sea
January	11.76%	88.24%
february	21.46%	78.53%
Mars	13.64%	86.36%
April	11.18%	88.83%
March	37.73%	62.27%
June	11.72%	88.28%
July	40.55%	59.45%
August	8.66%	91.33%
September	13.98%	86.01%
October	19.54%	80.45%
November	14.10%	85.90%
December	17.64%	82.35%
Total	18.50%	81.50%

2.6 The tragedies of irregular migration on the Tunisian coasts

The month	The number of victims and missing
January	28
february	7
Mars	92
April	373
March	34
June	114
July	22
August	55
September	44
October	3
November	7
Décembre	13
Data*	523
Total	1313

* Les données ont été fournies dans les déclarations du ministère de l'Intérieur et n'ont pas été détaillées.

The number of dead and missing on the Tunisian coast during 2023	The number of dead and missing in the Central Mediterranean Basin during 2023
1313	1793

MONITORING METHODOLOGY

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...)

RRIVALS 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.

AINVISIBLE 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

The phenomenon of violence is gaining momentum. It can be explained by a generally tense atmosphere and brutal acts in everyday life. Violence continues to increase in different parts of the country.

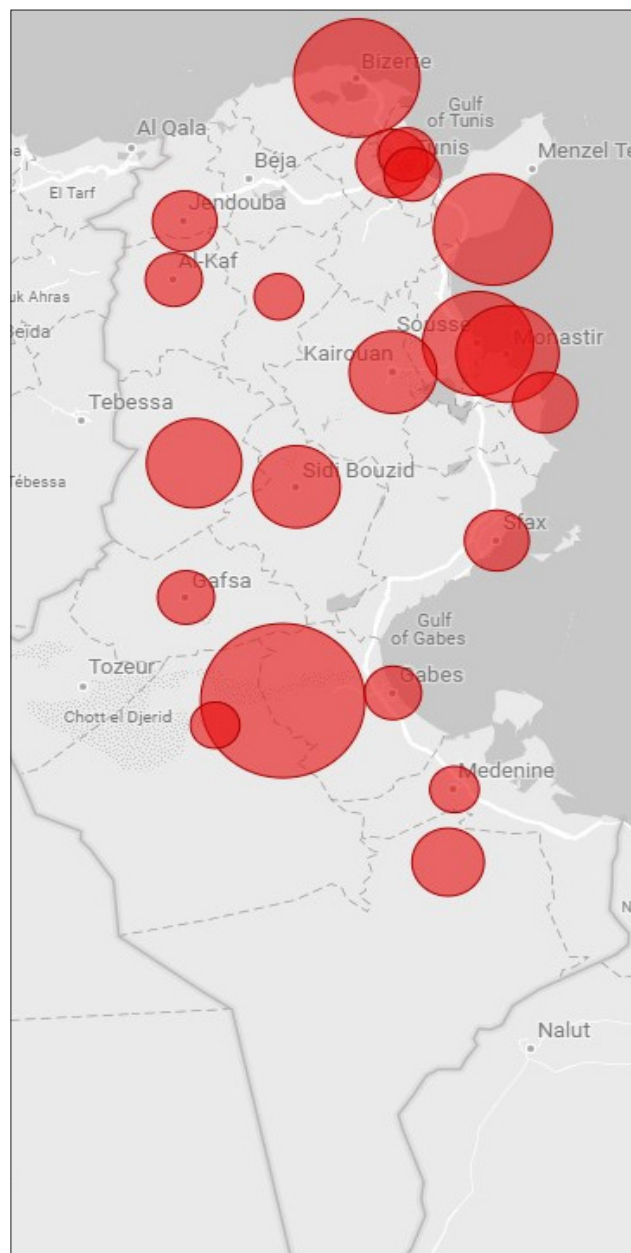
Multi-factorial, this violence can be explained by a combination of different factors, notably cultural, social, political and psychological. It is increasing with the growing effects of the economic crisis and impunity for interpersonal criminal acts, as well as the normalization of violent discourse on social networks.

On social networks, rhetoric glorifying violence continued to proliferate. They reflected the public's frustration, but also its openness to hate speech and violence. Revenge and the conquest of property were put forward as a guarantee of success or masculinity. The effects of this phenomenon have been and continue to be a driving force and an engine of violence.

3-1 Geospatial distribution

As regards geospatial distribution, the cartography of violence remains as diverse as in previous months. Unchanging, some regions dominate the census, even if no Tunisian governorate was spared from violence. The regions recording the highest rates change from quarter to quarter, even if the same trends persist. Indeed, violence increases in regions where inequalities proliferate. These inequalities are not limited to deprivation. It's not always about the poorest governorate. Inequalities between inhabitants of the same town or village have a greater impact on violence.

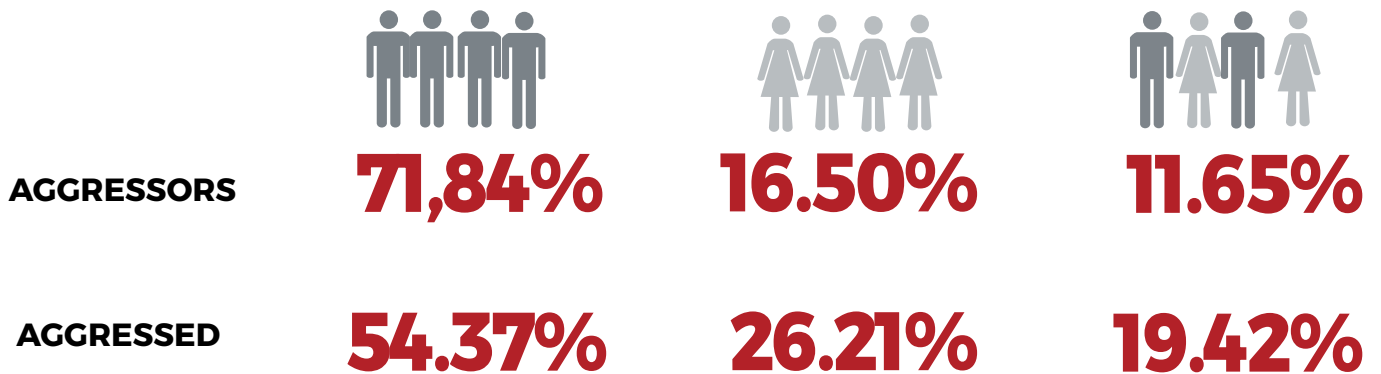
Neighborhoods where violence proliferates are located close to others that are wealthier and whose inhabitants enjoy more privileges. Violence emerges from frustrations and is therefore an effect of these frustrations among the people. This fact is alarming, since nothing seems to ease or calm these frustrations, neither on the part of those in power nor on the part of commu-



nity or militant leaders.

The governorates of Tunis, Nabeul, Kairouan, Sousse and Bizerte recorded the highest rates of violence in the last quarter of 2023.

3-2 Actors' Profiles



Aggressors

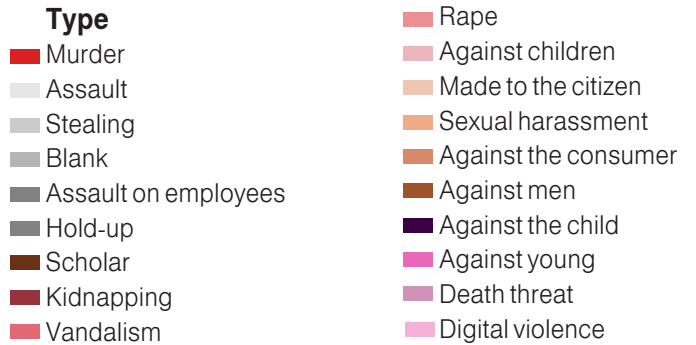
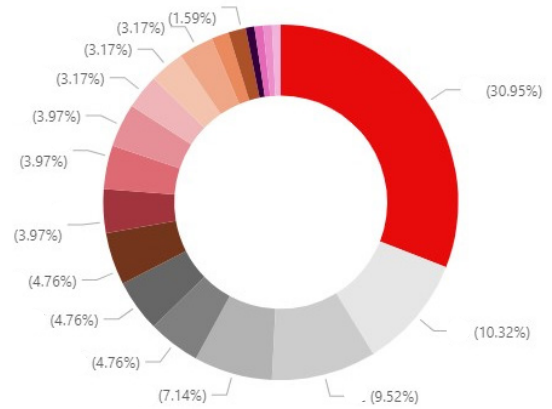
The majority of aggressors were men, accounting for 71.84%. Women accounted for 11.65%, and 16.5% were mixed groups of men and women. This is indicative of the male nature of the violence, which persists from month to month. It is a sign of the patriarchal society in which we live, and of the strength of gender effects on violent behaviors.

Aggressed

As for the victims of violence, 54.37% were men, while 26.21% targeted women and 19.42% mixed groups. Although violence is widespread among the population, the relatively high rate of female victims of violence should be taken into account in future formulations.

3-3 Types of Violence

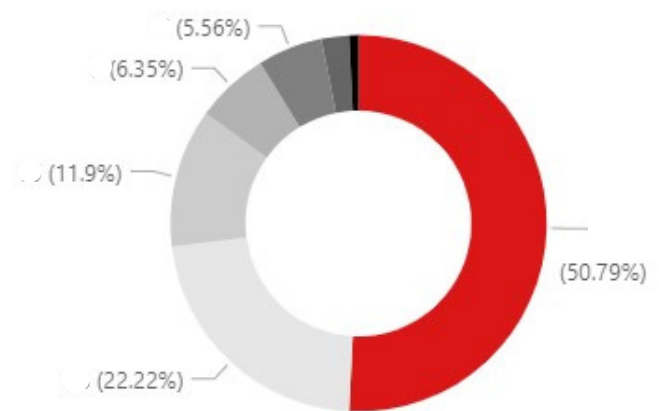
In terms of types of violence, the majority of incidents involved murder (30.95%). Assaults account for 10.32%, robberies for 9.52% and assaults on employees for 4.76%. Violence also includes school violence, kidnapping, vandalism, rape, violence against children, consumers, and women, as well as death threats and sexual violence.



3-4 Areas of Violence

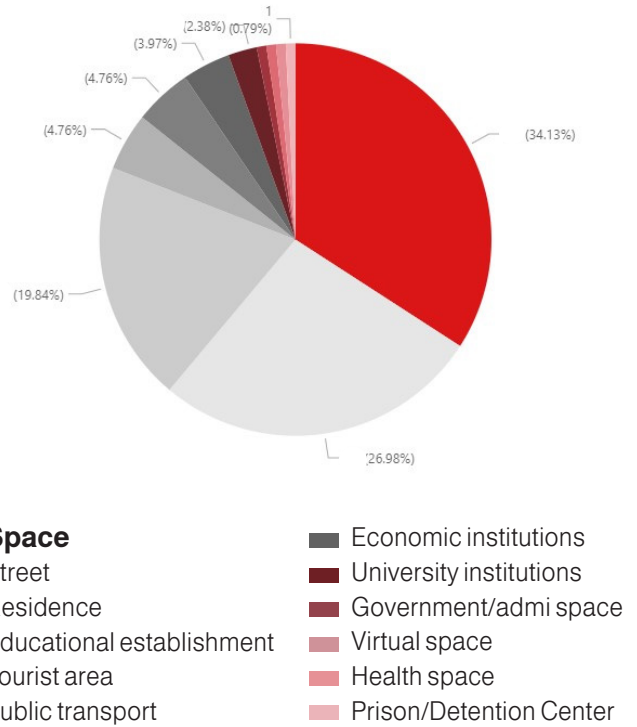
The violence recorded during the fourth quarter was both individual and collective. It almost unequivocally concerns both sectors of daily life. Indeed, 51.46% of violence was inter-individual, while 48.54% was collective.

Compared with the previous quarter, fewer acts of violence were of a criminal nature. This represents 22.22% of the total rate. However, at 50.79%, the acts recorded were more related to terrorism. 11.9% were institutional violence, 6.35% protest violence, 5.56% in the public space, 2.38% economic violence, in addition to a few acts of religious violence.



3-5 Spaces of violence

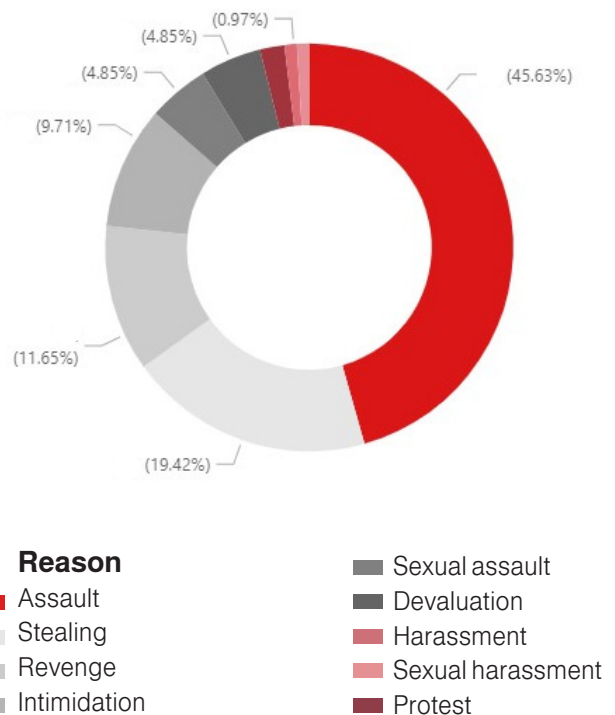
Most of the acts of violence recorded were perpetrated in the street, accounting for 34.13%. Additionally, 26.98% were perpetrated in the domestic environment. 19.84% took place in schools, 4.76% in tourist and leisure areas, 4.76% in public transport, 3.97% in economic institutions, 2.38% in universities and university accommodation, as well as other events recorded in virtual spaces, prisons and health facilities.



3-6 Reasons for the Violence

45.63% were assaults, 19.42% were economic thefts, 19.42% were motivated by revenge, 11.65% were intended to intimidate, 9.71% were motivated by devaluation, 4.85% were for protest, 1.94% for harassment, and 0.97% for sexual gratification.

The tools of violence ranged from knives and stones to throwing people into wells, armed and unarmed violence, and so on.



3-7 Summary of the most significant violent events in the last quarter of 2023

CATEGORY	EXAMPLES
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN	Sexist and sexual assaults on women in the street.
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	Violence by parents against their minor children Domestic violence perpetrated against women
REVENGE	Murder in a wedding ceremony. Infanticide. Assault of a student by other students.
PROTEST VIOLENCE	Violence against police officers as part of a protest launched by sub-Saharan migrants. Violence against the Tunisian Electricity and Gas Company agents.

SUICIDE & SUICIDE ATTEMPTS

The number of suicidal behaviors recorded was lower than at the start of the year. A total of 31 events were recorded, compared with 32 in the third quarter and 45 in the second. Obviously, the difficulties in recording suicides highlighted in previous reports have had a considerable impact on the data collected, particularly due to the taboo surrounding this phenomenon in society, which reveals itself in different ways of endangerment, whether through violence, immigration in "death boats" or addiction.

However, these figures - which show stability - reveal that nothing has changed for months, that public policies around mental health have not been developed, that professionals have not been trained, that awareness-raising campaigns have not been launched, and that social networks continue to be a tool for transmitting bad news of suicides or attempted suicides, each time more spectacular and more indicative of a vulgarization of self-inflicted harm and learned helplessness that leads loved ones to launch cries for help and announce their grief to the public.

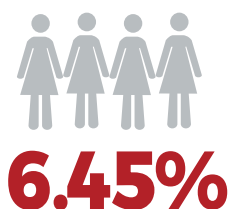
Among suicidal acts, the majority led to death. Indeed, 24 people who tried to commit suicide - that is, 77.42% of those who committed suicide - died. This indicates a desire and the use of techniques leading to certain death. Deaths are becoming increasingly frequent among the proportion of suicidal people, month by month. A minority of the total survives. These are generally non-isolated people, whose suicide attempt is discovered and stopped by a family member.

4-1 Geospatial Distribution

Suicides and attempts to commit suicide are distributed across the country's major regions in a similar way. The mapping of suicidal behavior differs from the usual norm. Sfax recorded the highest rates – 19.35%, followed by Tunis – with a rate of 12.9% – Kasserine and Nabeul with 9.68% respectively, and then Bizerte with a rate of 6.45%.

Governorates	Total
Sfax	6
Tunis	4
Kasserine	3
Nabeul	3
Bizerte	2
Medenine	2
Monastir	2
Sidi Bouzid	2
Ariana	2
Béja	1
Gafsa	1
Kairouan	1
Mahdia	1
Sousse	1
Zagouan	1
Total	31

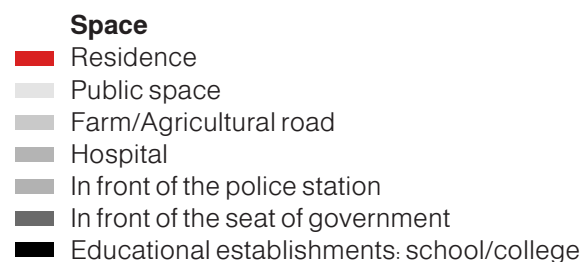
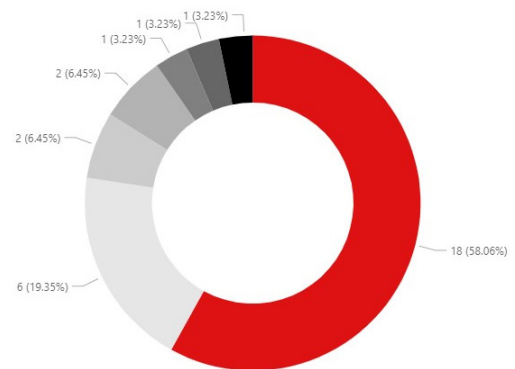
4-2 Gendered Distribution



If we adopt a gender-based classification of suicidal people, we observe that the majority of actors are men, compared to a minority of female suicidal people. 93.55% are men, while only 6.45% are women. This confirms once again the urgent need for awareness-raising campaigns on men's mental health, which is undermined by the weight of taboos and toxic masculinity. Men's difficulty in verbalizing psychological suffering and seeking help before acting on it not only leads them to commit acts of violence, but also to direct this violence against themselves. The difference in percentages is increasingly pronounced, compared with previous months.

4-3 Suicide sites

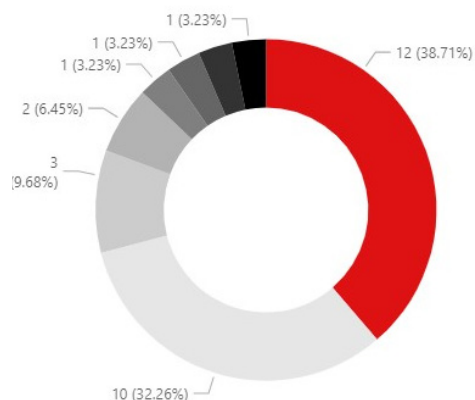
Suicides and attempted suicides take place in both private and public spaces. Indeed, 58.06% took place in the homes of the people concerned, 19.35% in public spaces, 6.45% in farms and agricultural areas, 6.45% in hospitals, one suicide in front of a police station, one in front of the governorate headquarters and one in a school. This diversity of locations indicates a diversity of motives, ranging from solitary despair to protest.



4-4 Biographical categories of suicide victims

The diversity of places and reasons goes hand in hand with a diversity of profiles. Among these people, 12 were adult men and women, 10 were young people, 3 were migrants, 2 pupils, a child, a student, an elderly man and a worker. This diversity reflects the widespread suffering of the population, but also the policies of precariousness and repression towards migrants which lead these people to commit suicide.

The majority of suicide victims are adults aged between 30 and 50. This is indicative of an age group that is vulnerable to destabilizing factors and depression. Pupil and student suicides, for their part, are a marker of the failings of the education system, which does not make psychotherapy accessible and does not raise awareness of its importance. It also points to stress factors in these establishments. In addition, migrant suicide points to racism, which is commonplace, whether on



the part of the population or on the part of the state through its repressive policies. Seeing the center from the perspective of marginalized and minority situations obliges us to take these suicides into account and to fight against this phenomenon by reaching out to the people concerned, offering them a space for dialogue and psychological and social support.

4-5 Summary of motives for suicidal behavior in the last quarter of 2023

MOTIVES

NON-OBSERVANCE OF PSYCHIATRIC DISORDERS

EXAMPLES

Several unexplained suicides with a history of psychiatric treatment without regular follow-up.

SUICIDES OF POLITICAL ACTORS

Suicide of a former deputy of the El Nahdha party.

FAMILY CONFLICTS

Suicide of a young man following violent conflicts with his father.

Suicide of a student in the family home following altercations.

Suicide of a young woman following her husband's imprisonment.

MIGRANTS' SUICIDES

Three suicides of sub-Saharan migrants due to their social condition

MIGRANTS' SUICIDES

Three suicides of sub-Saharan migrants due to their social condition

ISOLATION

Suicide of socially isolated people in rural areas