

YEARLY REGIONAL REPORT

# Mixed Migration Flows to Europe

Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)

January – December 2024



GLOBAL DATA INSTITUTE  
DISPLACEMENT  
TRACKING MATRIX

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Migration routes from countries in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Africa regions through the Mediterranean Sea and to Europe have been used actively since the early 2010s. In the wake of the large increase of mixed migration flows to Europe in 2015-2016, IOM rolled out a Flow Monitoring system to monitor Mixed Migration Flows by land and by sea to Europe, as part of its Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) tools.

DTM Europe gathers, validates and disseminates information on migrants and refugees travelling through the Mediterranean, Western African Atlantic, and Western Balkan routes to Europe. Key countries in Europe on these routes include:

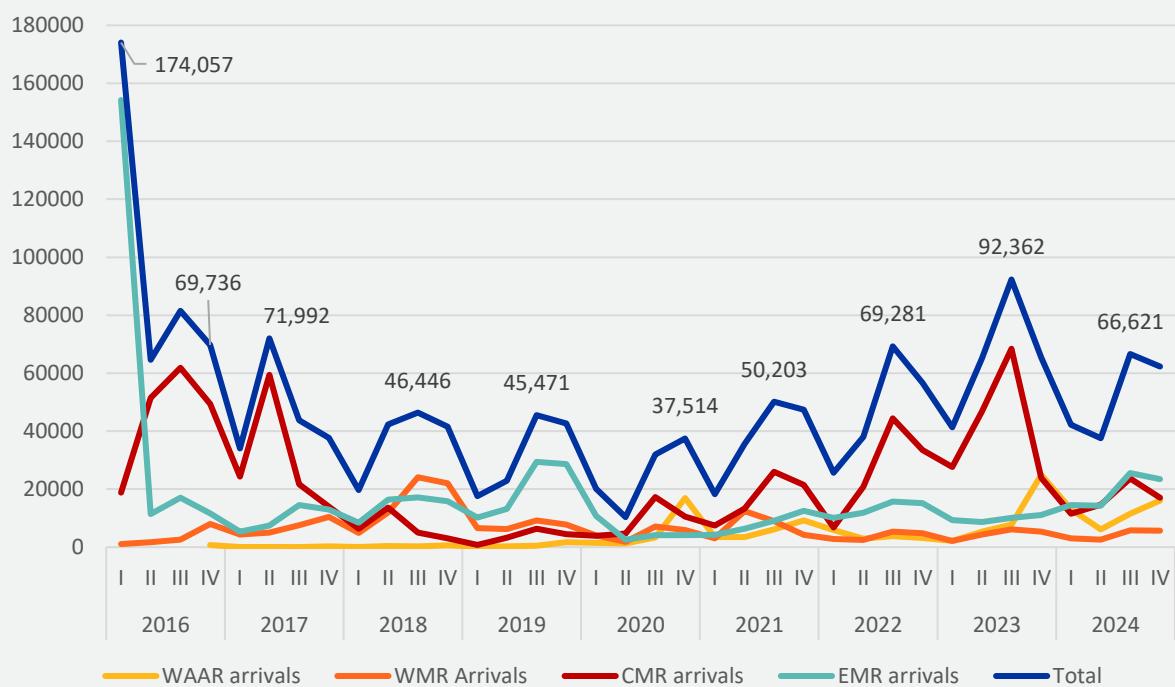
- **Eastern Mediterranean route (EMR):** Bulgaria, Cyprus and Greece
- **Central Mediterranean route (CMR):** Italy and Malta

- **Western Mediterranean route (WMR):** Peninsular Coasts of Spain, Balearic Islands, Ceuta and Melilla
- **Western African Atlantic route (WAAR):** Canary Islands of Spain

DTM also monitors data on migrants in transit through the **Western Balkans (WB)** region (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia, Romania, and Kosovo\*). These are considered separately to prevent to the extent possible the double counting of the same persons that cross multiple borders to reach Europe.

This report presents the latest available data and trends, focusing on all four quarters of 2024, comparing them with the same periods in the previous year.

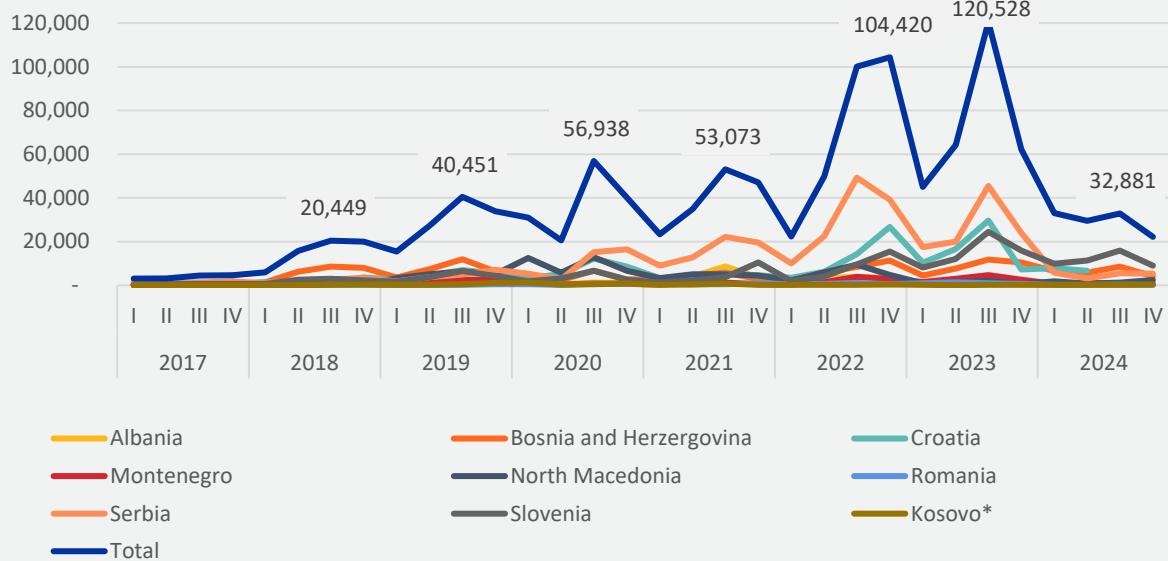
Figure 1: First arrivals to Europe, by route and by quarter, 2016-2024



Data source: National authorities, DTM flow monitoring

\* References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

Figure 2: Registered migrants in transit countries, by country and by quarter, 2017-2024



Data source: National authorities, [DTM flow monitoring](#)

Main developments in trends and policies of mixed migration movement in the region:

- Overall, in 2024, migration to Europe dropped by nearly a third, from 292,985 in 2023 to 208,679 in 2024. EMR is the main route per number of arrivals in 2024 (77,854, 37% of the total). The number of arrivals by sea and by land to Europe decreased in Q4 down to 62,268 from 66,621 in Q3.
- According to [IOM's Missing Migrants Project](#) (MMP), 2024 continues to register high numbers of dead and missing migrants at sea while trying to reach Europe through the Mediterranean and Western African Atlantic routes. Total dead and missing were at least 3,419 in 2024, which is a 17 per cent decline from 2023. Notably, this number has decreased less than the overall arrivals to Europe.
- According to the [European Union Agency for Asylum](#) (EUAA), in 2024, EU27+ countries<sup>1</sup> lodged over 940,000 asylum applications, a decrease of 18 per cent compared to 2023. Germany continued to receive the most applications in absolute terms, 229,695, followed by Spain (164,000) and France (132,825). Cyprus and Greece (6,520 and 69,000 respectively) had the highest number relative to their population size. Syrians continued to lodge most applications, followed by Afghans and Venezuelan applicants.
- In December 2024, the Spanish government announced a plan to grant legal status to 300,000 undocumented migrants annually through 2027, citing migration as lever to sustain economic growth.
- Following the fall of Bashar al-Assad's regime in early December 2024, various EU countries have suspended new applications and decisions on pending asylum claims lodged by Syrian nationals, despite ongoing security concerns.
- At the end of the reporting period, Romania and Bulgaria joined the EU Schengen zone which is expected to have impacts on mixed migration land routes through the WB and Eastern Europe region.
- The EU Commission is drafting a new return directive and started discussing the possibility of off-shore processing of asylum claims and "return hubs" outside the EU territory at the end of 2024.

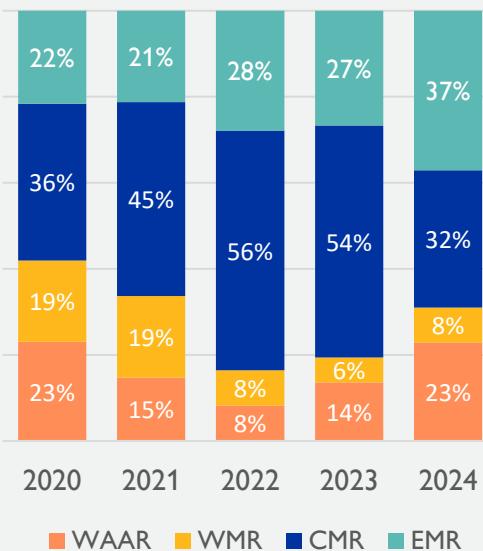
\*References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

<sup>1</sup>EU27+ countries include all 27 EU member states, Norway, Switzerland, Iceland and Liechtenstein. Data source: [migr\\_asyappctzm\\_Eurostat](#).

## 2. MOBILITY OVERVIEW

### MIXED MIGRATION FLOWS TO EUROPE

Figure 3: Arrivals in Europe through the Mediterranean and WAAR, total by year, 2016-2024



Data source: National authorities, [DTM flow monitoring](#)

In 2024, a total of 208,679 migrants and refugees were registered arriving through the three Mediterranean routes and the WAAR to Europe, which is 29 per cent lower than the 292,985 arrivals registered in the entire 2023, and 10 per cent higher than the 189,595 registered in 2022.

Breaking a trend observed in previous years, Q1 registered more arrivals than Q2 (42,162 and 37,628, respectively). This is likely a result of decreased crossings through the Central Mediterranean and elevated registrations in the Canary Islands, as both WAAR and CMR show higher seasonal variance than the EMR and WMR. Over the past years, arrivals on the CMR have peaked in summer, whereas the WAAR has recorded higher volumes in winter.

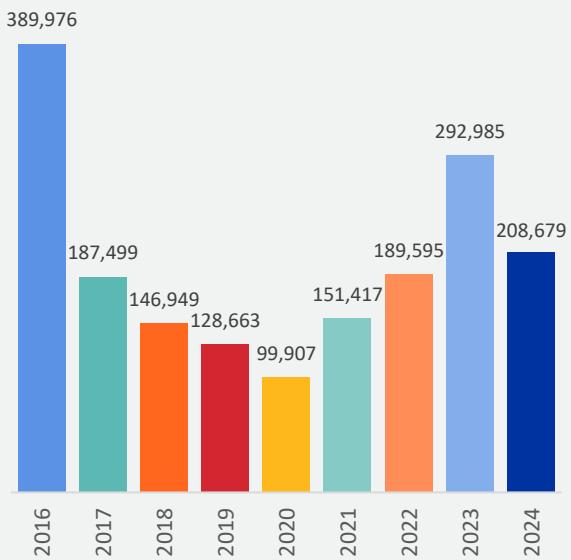
In 2024, 32 per cent of all registered individuals arrived in Europe via the CMR to Italy and Malta

(66,855 arrivals, almost all registered in Italy). Around 37 per cent of arrivals travelled through the EMR to Greece, Cyprus and Bulgaria (77,854). The remaining 31 per cent were registered in Spain (63,970), through the WMR (8%) and WAAR (23%).

Compared to 2023, arrivals in 2024 have dropped sharply along the CMR, declining by 58 per cent to 66,855, while they increased or remained stable on the other routes. Registrations along the EMR and WMR have remained nearly the same as in 2023 (77,854 and 17,127, respectively), while arrivals on the WAAR rose by 18 per cent, totaling at 46,843 in 2024.

According to available data from national authorities, Syrian Arab Republic, Mali, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Senegal, Egypt, Algeria and Morocco are the main countries of origin among all registered arrivals to Europe in 2024.

Figure 4: Arrivals in Europe through the Mediterranean routes and WAAR – by route and by year, 2020-2024



EMR: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece; CMR: Italy, Malta; WMR and WAAR: Spain; Data source: National authorities, [DTM flow monitoring](#)

## MIGRANT FLOWS MONITORING IN THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE

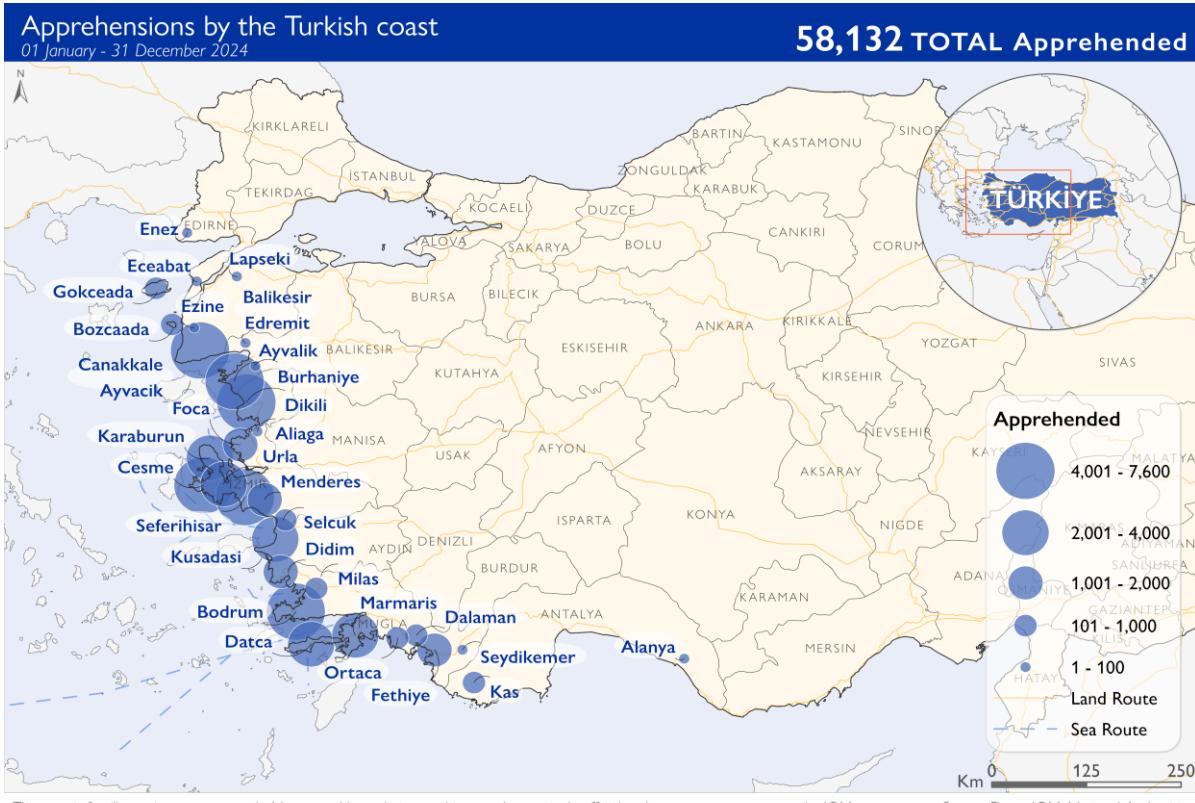
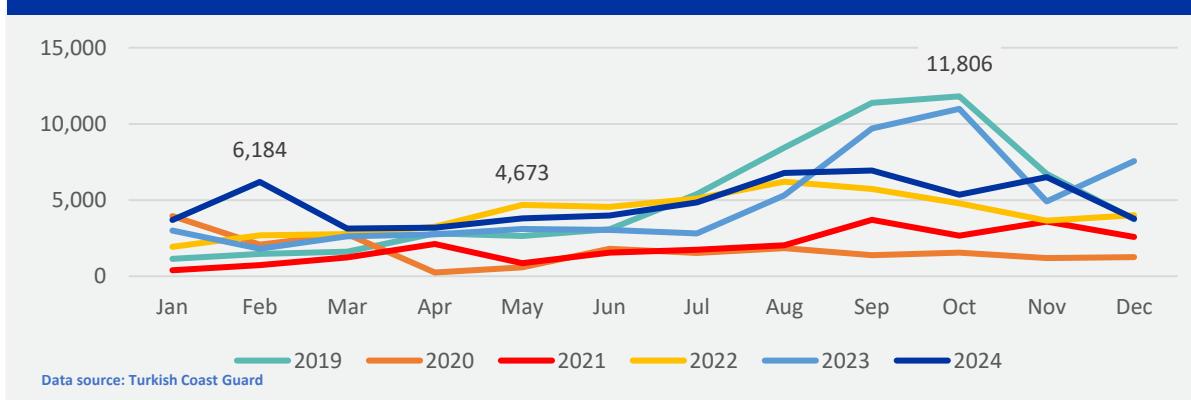
From January to December of 2024, a total of 58,132 migrants were apprehended by the Turkish Coast Guard (TCG), while trying to reach the EU – and mostly Greece – via sea. This is almost equal to the figure recorded in 2023 (57,562). Further, Q4 has seen a 16 per cent decrease in interceptions when compared to Q3 of 2024.

Most individuals who have been apprehended by the TCG were from Afghanistan, the Syrian Arab

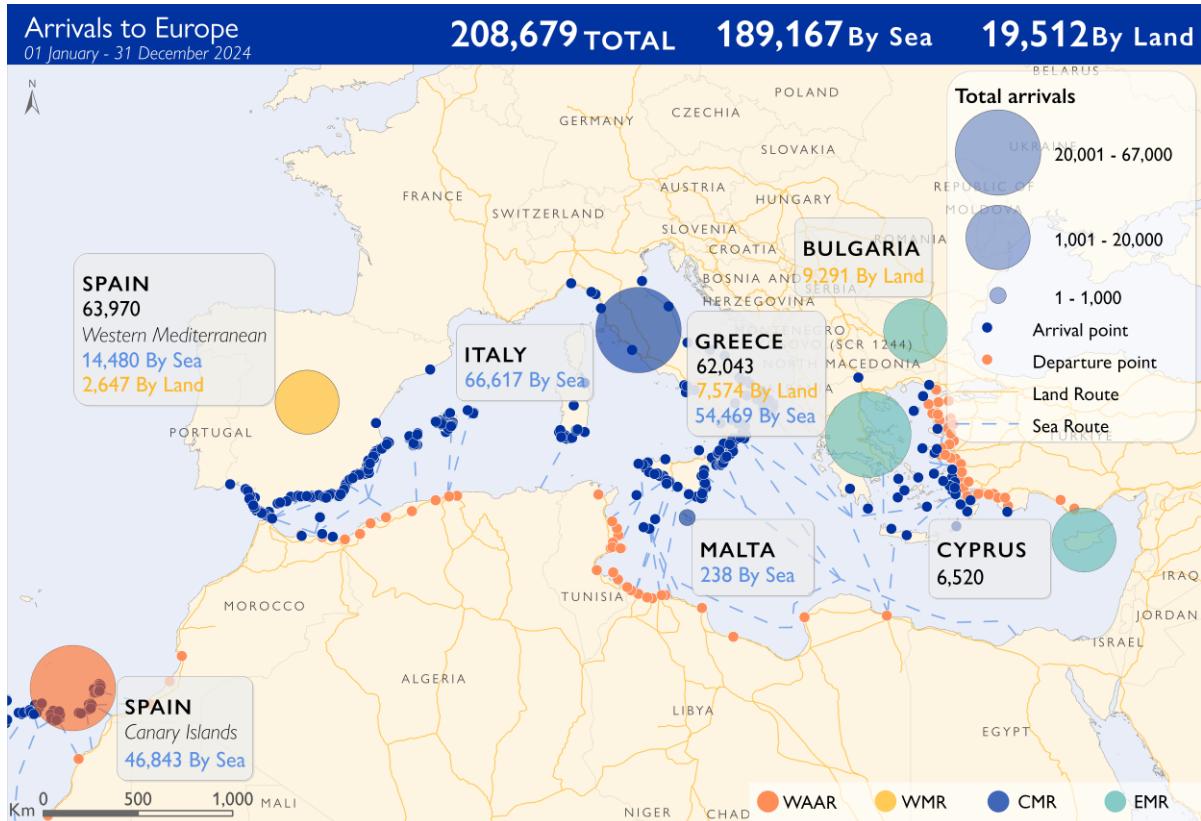
Republic, Sudan, Egypt, and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. According to the TCG, 45 migrants died at sea in 2024. This is more than twice the number recorded in 2023 (20).

Additionally, according to the Turkish Presidency of Migration management (PMM), 225,831 migrants in irregular situation were apprehended at various locations inside Türkiye in 2024 (-11% compared to 2023).

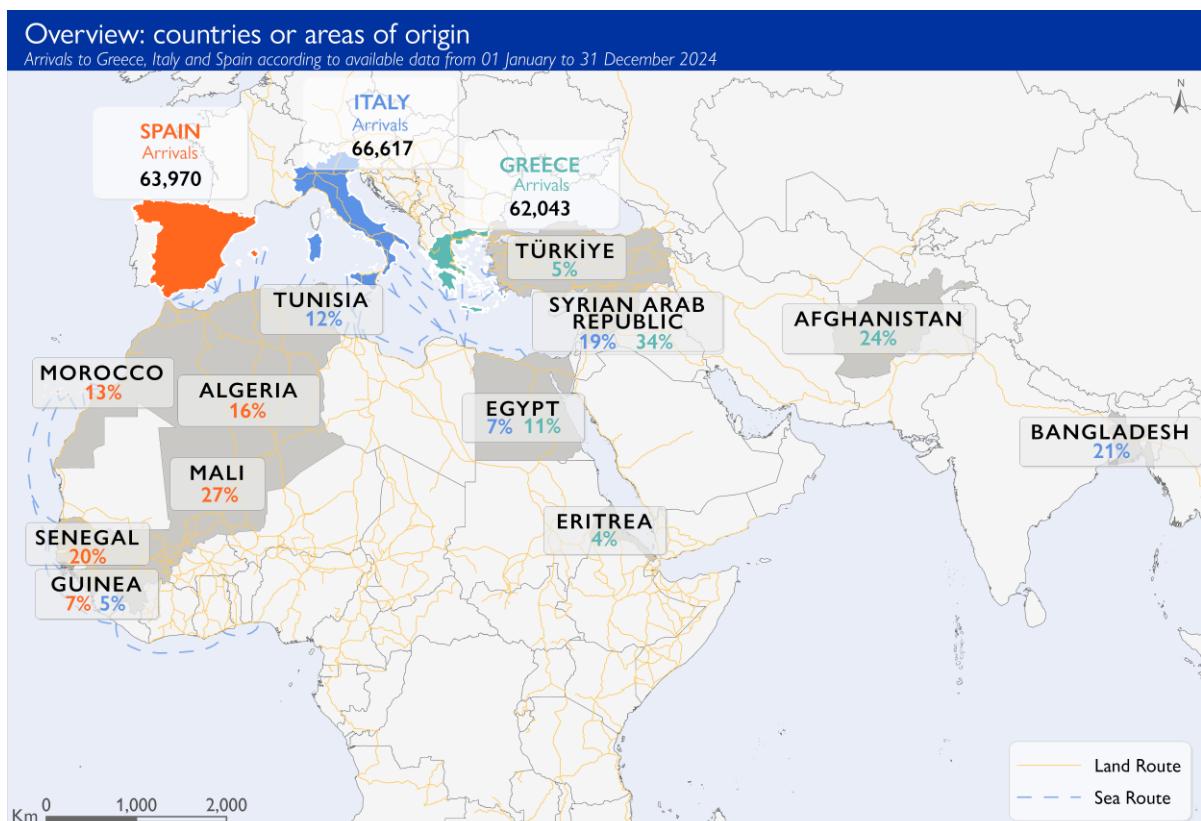
Figure 5: Apprehensions by the TCG, all maritime regions, by month, 2019–2024



Map 1: Apprehensions by the Turkish coast January-December 2024



Map 2: Arrivals to Europe, January – December 2024



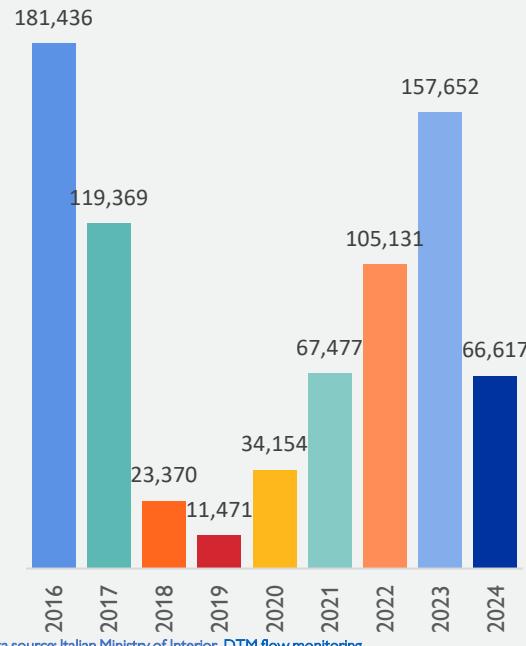
Map 3: Overview: countries or areas of origin, January – December 2024

### 3. MIXED MIGRATION FLOWS

#### FIRST ARRIVAL COUNTRIES

##### ITALY

Figure 6: Arrivals in Italy – total by year, 2016 – 2024

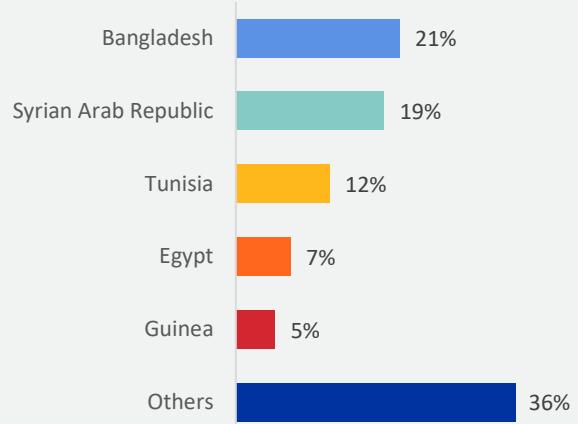


Italian authorities registered a total of 66,617 migrants and refugees arriving in the country by sea in 2024. This is 58 per cent lower than the figures in 2023 (157,652), marking a significant drop. Arrivals in Q4 of 2024 decreased by 29 per cent compared to Q3 of 2023, from 23,676 to 16,926, confirming Q3 as quarter registering the most arrivals of the year, following previous annual trends.

In 2024, 63 per cent of migrants arriving by sea to Italy were reported to have departed from Libya, followed by departures from Tunisia (29%), Türkiye (5%) and Algeria (2%).

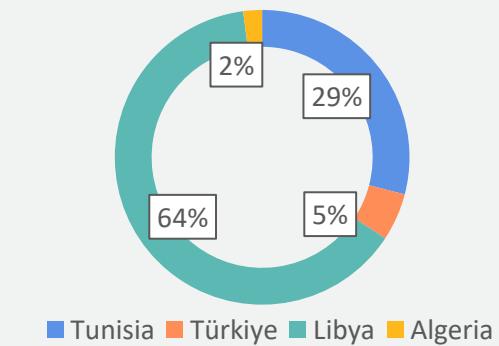
Main nationalities registered at arrival in 2024 were Bangladesh (21%), Syrian Arab Republic (19%), Tunisia (12%), Egypt (7%) and Guinea (5%).

Figure 7: Arrivals in Italy – total by nationality, 2024 (%)



Data source: Italian Ministry of Interior.

Figure 8: Arrivals in Italy – departure countries in 2024



Data source: Italian Ministry of Interior.

In 2024, at least 1,678 migrants perished while crossing the CMR, down from 2,526 the previous year.<sup>2</sup> While this is a 34 per cent decrease, it lags behind the 58 per cent decline in arrivals to Italy. As a result, relative to the number of individuals registered upon reaching Italian shores, the proportion of those reported dead or missing has risen.

<sup>2</sup> [IOM's Missing Migrant Project](#) (Accessed 15 February 2025).

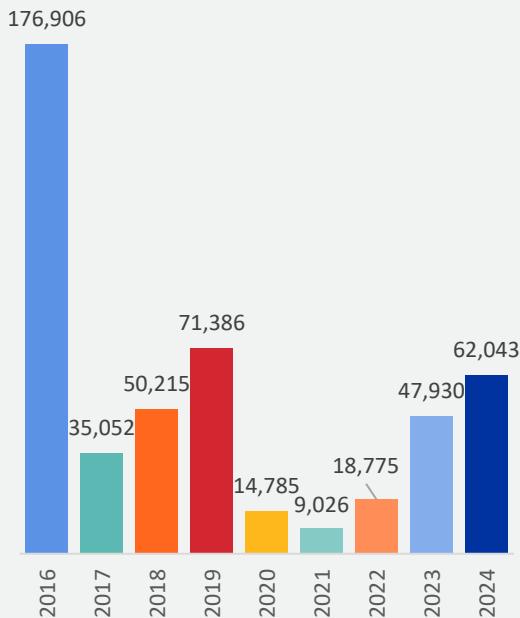
## GREECE

In 2024, the Hellenic authorities registered<sup>2</sup> a total of 62,043 migrants and refugees arriving by land and by sea to the country – an increase of 29 per cent compared to the previous year (47,930). Most arrivals were registered in Q4 (21,089), followed by Q3 (20,235). Arrivals in 2024 are the highest recorded by Greece since 2019.

According to the Hellenic Coast Guard and Police, 92 per cent of the arrivals departed from Türkiye, while the remaining 8 per cent of all arrivals were reported to have departed from Libya, landing in the region of Crete, including smaller surrounding islands. Among the individuals who travelled through Türkiye, 13 per cent crossed the border at the river Evros while the remaining 87 per cent travelled by boat, primarily arriving in the islands of Lesbos, Samos, Xios and Kos.

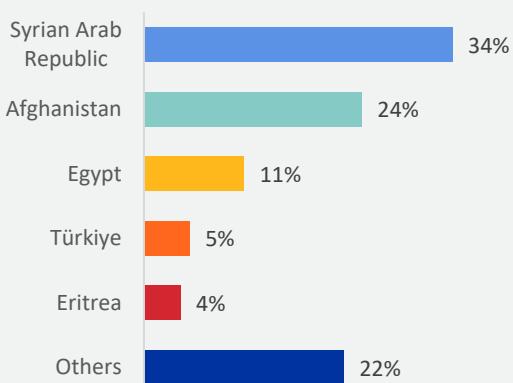
Main reported nationalities in 2024 were Syrian Arab Republic (34%), Afghanistan (24%), Egypt (11%), Türkiye (5%) and Eritrea (4%).

Figure 9: Arrivals by land and by sea in Greece – total by year, 2016–2024



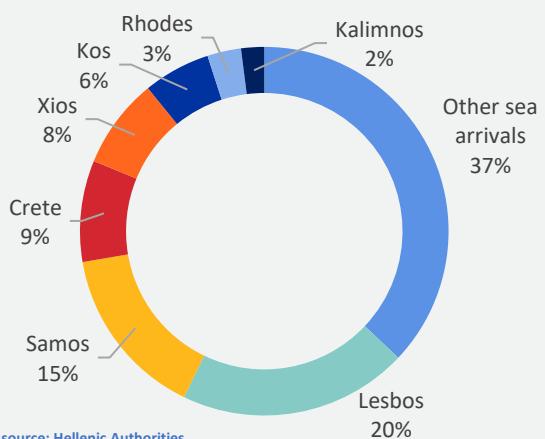
Data source: Hellenic Authorities, DTM flow monitoring

Figure 10: Arrivals in Greece – total by nationality, 2024 (%)



Data source: Hellenic Authorities.

Figure 11: Arrivals to Greece – main entry points in 2024



Data source: Hellenic Authorities.

Along the EMR, at least 175 migrants disappeared or died in 2024, which is similar to the figure that reported in 2023 (171).<sup>3</sup> At least 44 of those perished or lost can be attributed to a single shipwreck off the coast of Gavdos, near Crete, in December 2024. Given the close proximity of islands at the Greek-Turkish border, seaborne crossings from Türkiye to Greece can be rather short, while those crossing from Libya to Crete and Gavdos may need to sail more than 300 kilometres, elevating the risks of the journey.

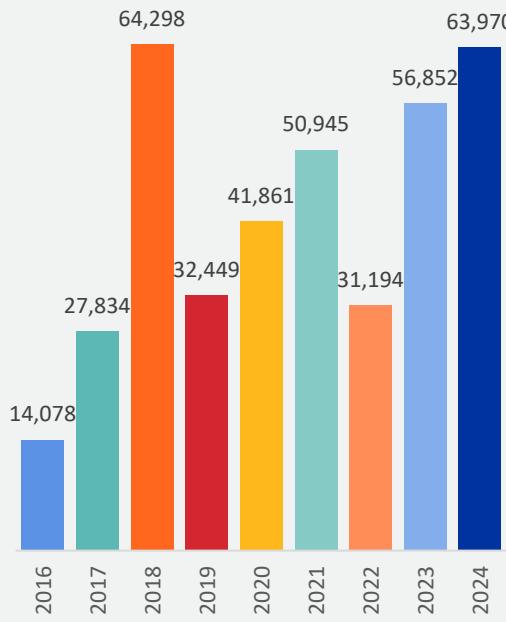
<sup>2</sup> As additional data have been made available to IOM, this report includes data on non-Aegean sea arrivals to Greece. In previous releases of the report, these were not available and not included. Consequently, comparisons over time should be made with caution.

<sup>3</sup> [IOM's Missing Migrant Project](#) (Accessed 15 February 2025).

## SPAIN

In 2024, authorities in Spain registered a total of 63,970 arrivals. This is a 37 per cent increase to the 46,843 registered in 2023. Similar to the previous year, arrivals in Spain, in particular along the WAAR, see higher volumes in Q1 and Q4 then in the central part of the year.

Figure 12: Arrivals by land and by sea in Spain – total by year, 2016–2024



Data source: Spanish Ministry of Interior, [DTM flow monitoring](#)

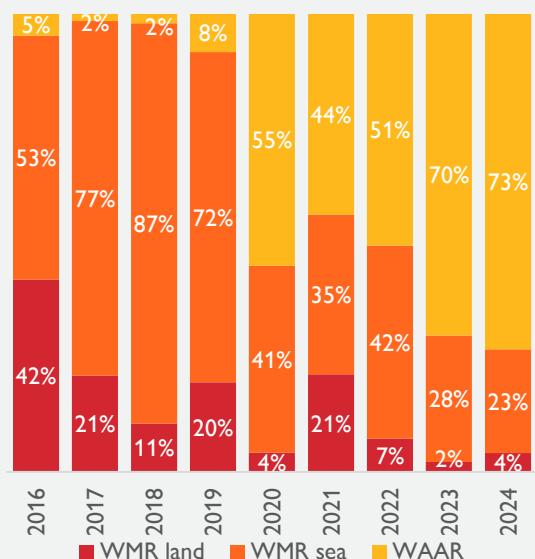
Frontex data shows that in 2024, most arrivals to Spain via the WAAR were nationals of Mali (36%), followed by Senegal (27%) and Guinea (9%).<sup>4</sup> Via the WMR, most individuals reaching Spain held Algerian nationalities (59%), followed by Morocco (27%).

In 2024, arrivals to the Canary Islands represented 73 per cent of all arrivals in Spain, with most of the remainder being represented by a variety of locations in Andalucía, the region of Murcia, the Comunidad Valenciana and the Balearic Islands (23%). Land arrivals only represented 4 per cent of total.

The total number of dead and missing migrants on their way to Spain were 466 along the WMR and

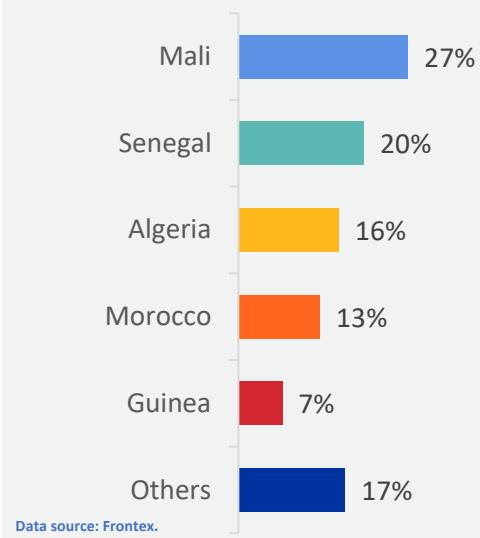
1,086 along the WAAR). Overall, this represents a 10 per cent increase compared to 2023.<sup>5</sup>

Figure 13: Arrivals in Spain – by route and by year, 2020–2024 (%)



Data source: Spanish Ministry of Interior,

Figure 14: Arrivals in Spain – total by nationality, 2024 (%)



Data source: Frontex.

<sup>4</sup> Please see [Frontex](#).

<sup>5</sup> [IOM's Missing Migrant Project](#) (Accessed 15 February 2025).

## OTHER COUNTRIES OF FIRST ARRIVAL

### BULGARIA, CYPRUS, AND MALTA

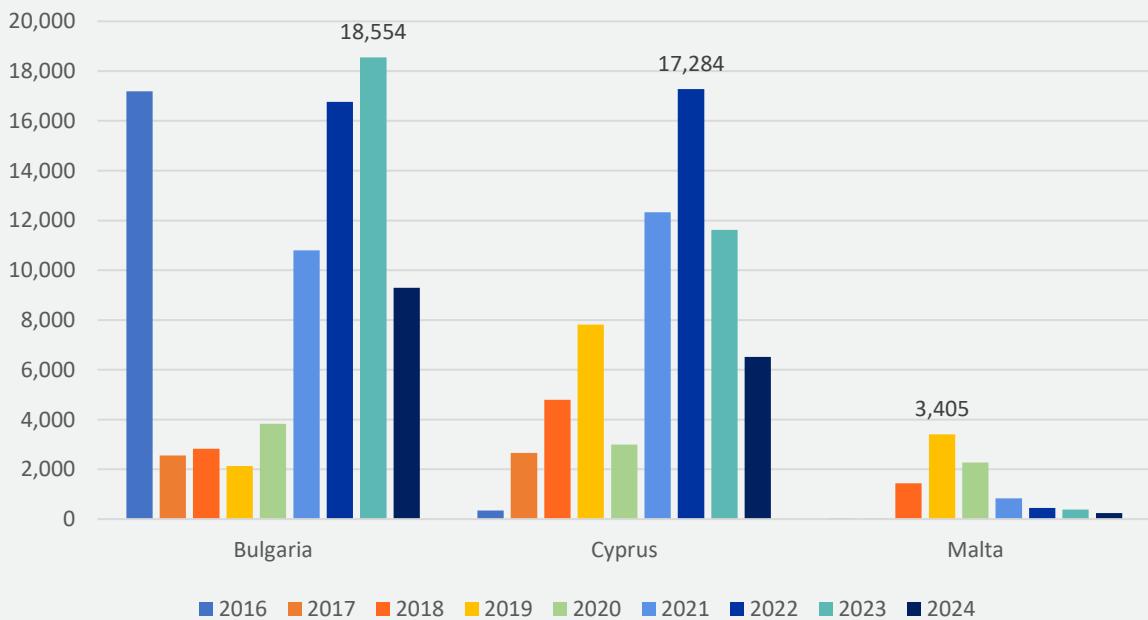
According to the **Bulgarian** Ministry of Interior, 9,291 migrants were apprehended on entry, inside and on exit from the country in 2023, a drop of 50 per cent when compared to the previous year. Main reported nationalities registered in 2024 in Bulgaria were Syrian Arab Republic (56%), Afghanistan (19%), and Morocco (4%).<sup>6</sup>

According to the Eurostat, **6,520** first-time asylum applicants were registered in 2024 in Cyprus.<sup>7</sup> More than two thirds of arrivals are estimated to have been sea arrivals while the remainder is presumed to have entered Cyprus through the green border with the northern part of the island.

Main nationalities reported in 2024 were Syrian Arab Republic (64%), Afghanistan (6%), Islamic Republic of Iran (5%), and Somalia (5%).

In **Malta**, 238 migrants or refugees arrived by sea in 2024, which represents a 37 per cent decrease compared to 2023. According to available data, the main nationality at arrival in Malta was Bangladesh (47%), followed by Syrian Arab Republic (20%) and Pakistan (13%). Migrants reportedly departed from Libya.

Figure 15: Arrivals to Bulgaria, Cyprus, and Malta – total by year, 2016 – 2024



Data source: National authorities, [DTM flow monitoring](#)

<sup>6</sup> Data for Bulgaria include entries from Greece, North Macedonia, Serbia, Romania, air and maritime borders with no previous registration in another EU country.

<sup>7</sup> Data for Cyprus are sourced from Eurostat. In previous reporting periods, data were sourced from the NGO CODECA which manages the main reception centre where registrations are recorded upon arrival. Comparisons with previous periods shall be made with caution. At the time of writing, December 2024 data for Cyprus have not yet been published.

## TRANSITS THROUGH THE WESTERN BALKAN REGION

Along the Western Balkans<sup>8</sup> (WBs), **Serbia** previously recorded the highest number of reported transits. Reflecting a shift in this dynamic, in 2024, a total of 19,603 migrants and refugees were registered at reception centres<sup>9</sup> in the country. This marks a substantial decline of 82 per cent compared to the 106,886 registrations recorded in 2023. Data on the nationalities of registered migrants in Serbia is not available.

**Slovenia** registered 46,162 migrants and refugees in 2024, down from 60,587 in 2023 – a 24 per cent decrease. Main nationalities reported were Syrian Arab Republic (33%), Afghanistan (16%), and Türkiye (9%).

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, authorities registered 25,147 migrants in 2024, which is 27 per cent less than the 34,409 registered in 2023. The main nationalities of those transiting were Syrian Arab Republic (33%), Afghanistan (21%) and Morocco (11%).

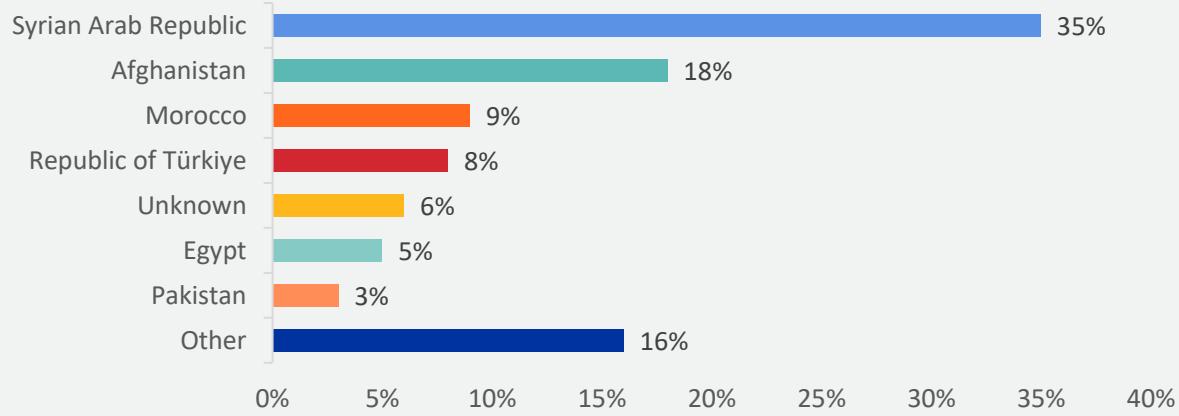
In the other countries along the transit corridor (**Albania**, **Montenegro**, **North Macedonia**, **Romania**, and **Kosovo\***), a total of 12,254 migrants and refugees have been officially

registered at entry or exit in 2024, representing a decrease of 53 per cent compared to the 26,147 of 2023. The main nationalities registered for these countries in 2024 are Syrian Arab Republic (37%), Morocco (9%), Egypt (9%) and Afghanistan (7%).

During the reported period, IOM's DTM carried out several assessments at key flow monitoring points within the Western Balkans.<sup>10</sup> In 2024, 13,679 flow monitoring surveys (FMS) were collected in the 6 WB countries.

According to the available evidence, most migrants travel through Türkiye before crossing into Greece (by land or sea) or Bulgaria. Migrants and refugees from Central and South Asia (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan) and the Middle East (Iraq, Syrian Arab Republic) tend to travel mostly by land, walking and using several land transportation means during their journey. In contrast, most migrants and refugees from the African continent start their journeys by plane either directly to the WB region or to the Republic of Türkiye before moving on via land.<sup>11</sup>

Figure 16: Transits in the WB region – nationality breakdown, 2024 (%)



Data source: National authorities of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Kosovo\*, [DTM flow monitoring](#)

<sup>8</sup> Transits through the WB region are considered separately to prevent, to the extent possible, the double counting of the same persons that cross multiple borders to reach other parts of Europe.

<sup>9</sup> National authorities use registrations at reception centres as a proxy indicator to estimate the migration flows in and through Serbia.

<sup>10</sup> IOM, January 2025. [DTM Western Balkans — Migrant Mobility Situation Report \(December 2024\)](#). IOM, Europe and Central Asia.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

\* References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

## 4. UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPTS

### DEAD AND MISSING MIGRANTS, RETURNS AND INTERCEPTIONS

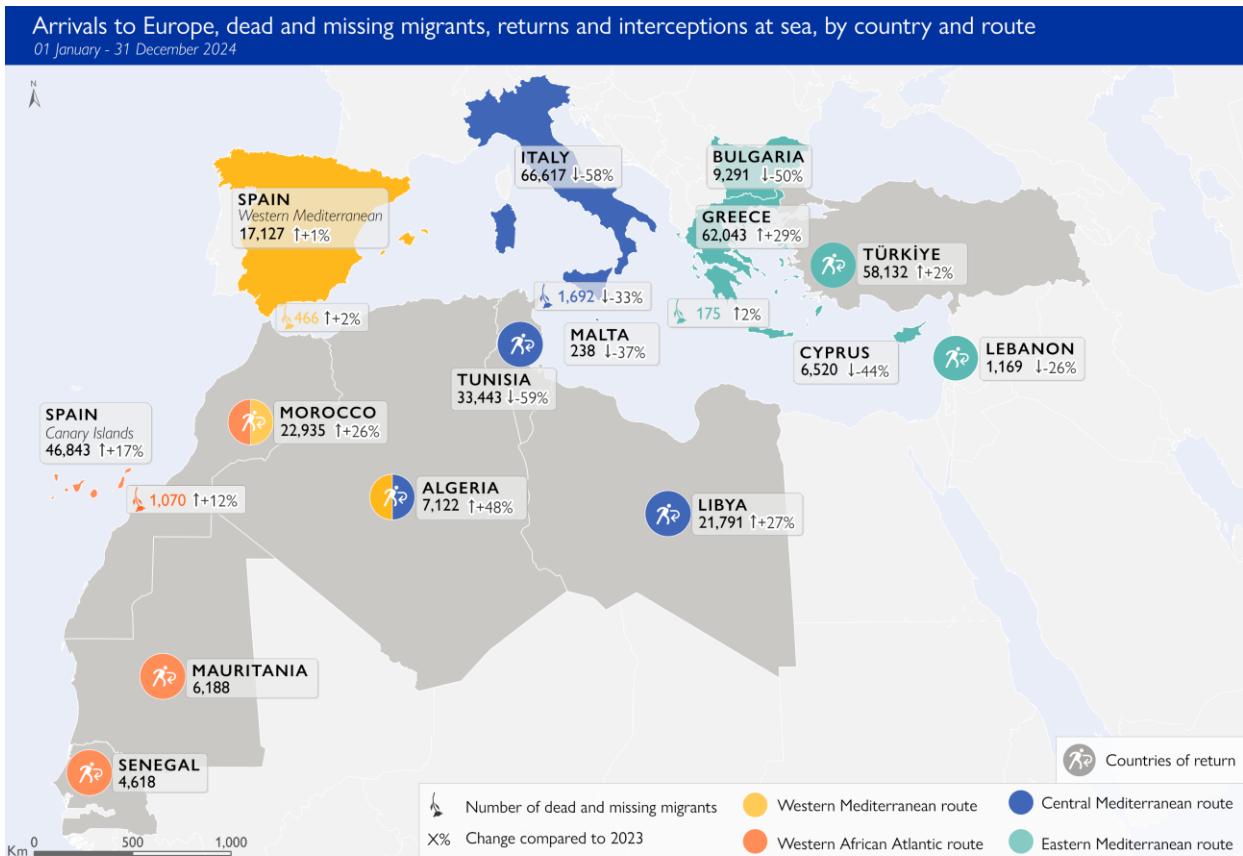
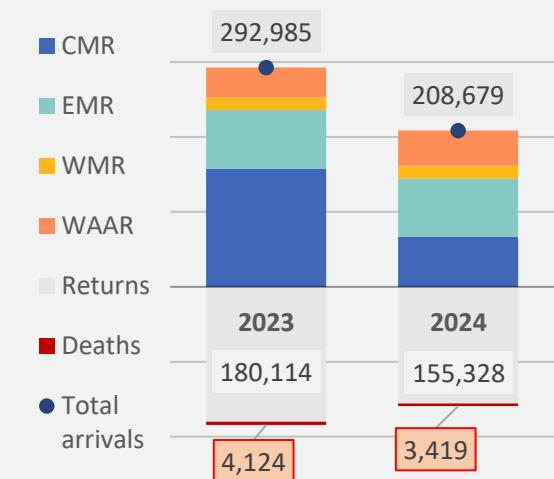
According to available data and information compiled by IOM's DTM Europe from various national authorities, IOM country offices, NGOs and media reports, the total number of returns or interceptions at sea to countries of departures (Algeria, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Senegal, Tunisia and Türkiye) were at least 155,328 in 2024. This is 13 per cent less than what was reported in 2023.

At the same time, the estimated number of dead and missing migrants according to the IOM Missing Migrant Project was 3,419 in 2024, which is 17 per cent lower than the 4,124 of 2023.

Overall, the decrease in returns and interceptions, and in migrants dying while trying to reach Europe was smaller than the decrease in arrivals registered in Europe. This makes the overall rate of unsuccessful attempts higher in 2024 than in 2023, with about 43 per cent of all attempted

crossings resulting either in a fatal event or in a return to the departure country.

Figure 17: Arrivals to Europe, returns, deaths and disappearances at sea, by route, 2023-2024



This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM. Sources: IOM's DTM Europe compilation from national authorities, IOM MMP and country offices, media, NGOs.

Map 4: Arrivals to Europe, dead and missing migrants, returns and interceptions at sea, by country and route, 2024

## 5. MIGRANT PRESENCE

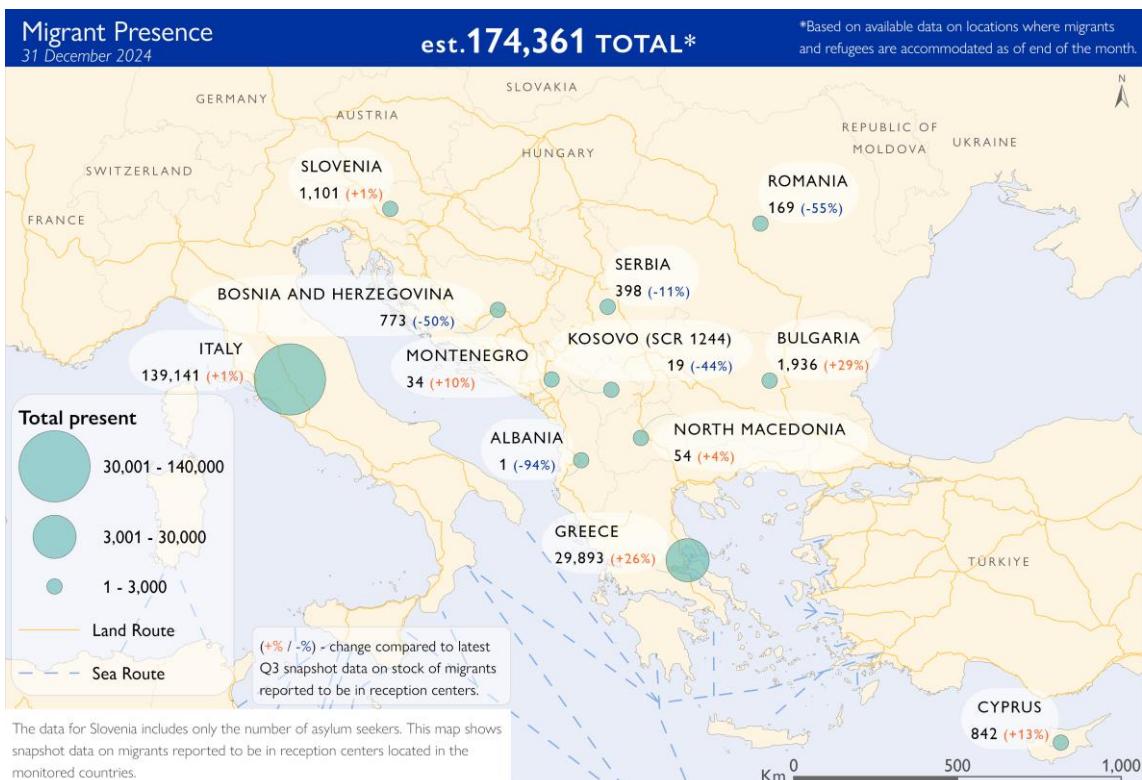
### EUROPE AND THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE

At the end of Q4 2024 an estimated 174,361 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers were present in different facilities in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, and Kosovo\*. No data is available on migrants in reception in Spain and Malta. The estimated migrant presence at the end of Q4 2024 is almost as much as the 173,967 reported at the end of Q3, and 8 per cent lower than at the end of 2023 (190,182).

Similarly to previous reporting periods, Italy and Greece report the largest shares of migrant presence overall (80% and 17% of the total, respectively). The number of migrants in reception in Italy remained stable between Q3 and Q4 2024 (-0.3%) reaching 139,141, nearly equal to the

139,388 reported at the end of Q4 2023. On the contrary, the number of migrants in reception in Greece has decreased in 2024, reaching 29,893 in Q4 2024, which is 21 per cent less than the 37,750 in Q4 2023. In the WB region, numbers of migrants in reception are decreasing in parallel with the decrease in transits and interceptions made by the authorities. Slovenia is reporting the highest number of migrants in reception at the end of Q4 2024 (1,101), followed by Bosnia and Herzegovina (773) and Serbia (398).

Additionally, according to the latest available data from the Turkish PMM, there are more than 4.1 million foreign nationals present in Türkiye as of the end of Q4 2024, 3.1 millions of whom are seeking international protection.<sup>12</sup>

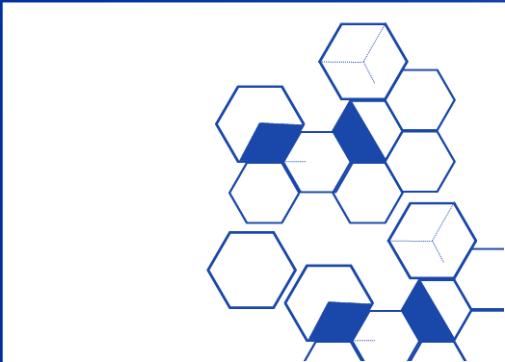


Map 5: Migrant presence at the end of 2024

\* References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

<sup>12</sup>IOM, Feb 2025. DTM Türkiye — [Migrant Presence Monitoring - Quarterly Migrant Presence Monitoring \(Oct-Dec 2024\)](#) IOM, Republic of Türkiye.

## 6. LATEST PRODUCTS AND PUBLICATIONS



**Europe — Mixed Migration Flows to Europe, Yearly Overview Dataset (2024)**



**Türkiye — Migrant Presence Monitoring - Quarterly Migrant Presence Monitoring (Q4 Oct – Dec 2024)**



**Europe — Impacts of Environmental Changes on Mixed Migration - Surveys in Italy, Malta and Spain (Jun – Sep 2024)**



**Europe — Youth on the move – Travelling by sea and by land to Europe in 2023**

For more information, please refer to the DTM Europe Mixed Migration Flows to Europe [Methodological Note](#) and the page <https://dtm.iom.int/europe/arrivals>

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