

Situation at EU external borders – Detections rise from record lows a year ago

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The number of illegal border crossings at Europe's external borders in the first five months of 2021 reached over 47 100, 47% more than the total from a year ago when irregular migration dropped due to travel limitations linked to the outbreak of COVID, according to preliminary calculations.

In May, the number of illegal border crossings reached 10,500, more than double the figure from the same month of last year.

Central Mediterranean

The number of migrants crossing the Central Mediterranean in May rose to almost 4 200, more than twice the figure from a year ago.

Between January and May of this year, the total number of illegal crossings on this route more-than-doubled to over 15,700.

Nationals of Tunisia and Bangladesh accounted for the two main nationalities on this migratory route.

Western Mediterranean

There were more than 1,350 detections of illegal border crossings in the Western Mediterranean in May, nearly twice as much as in the same month of 2020.

The total for the first five months of 2021 stood at more than 4,550, or 21% higher than in the same period in the previous year.

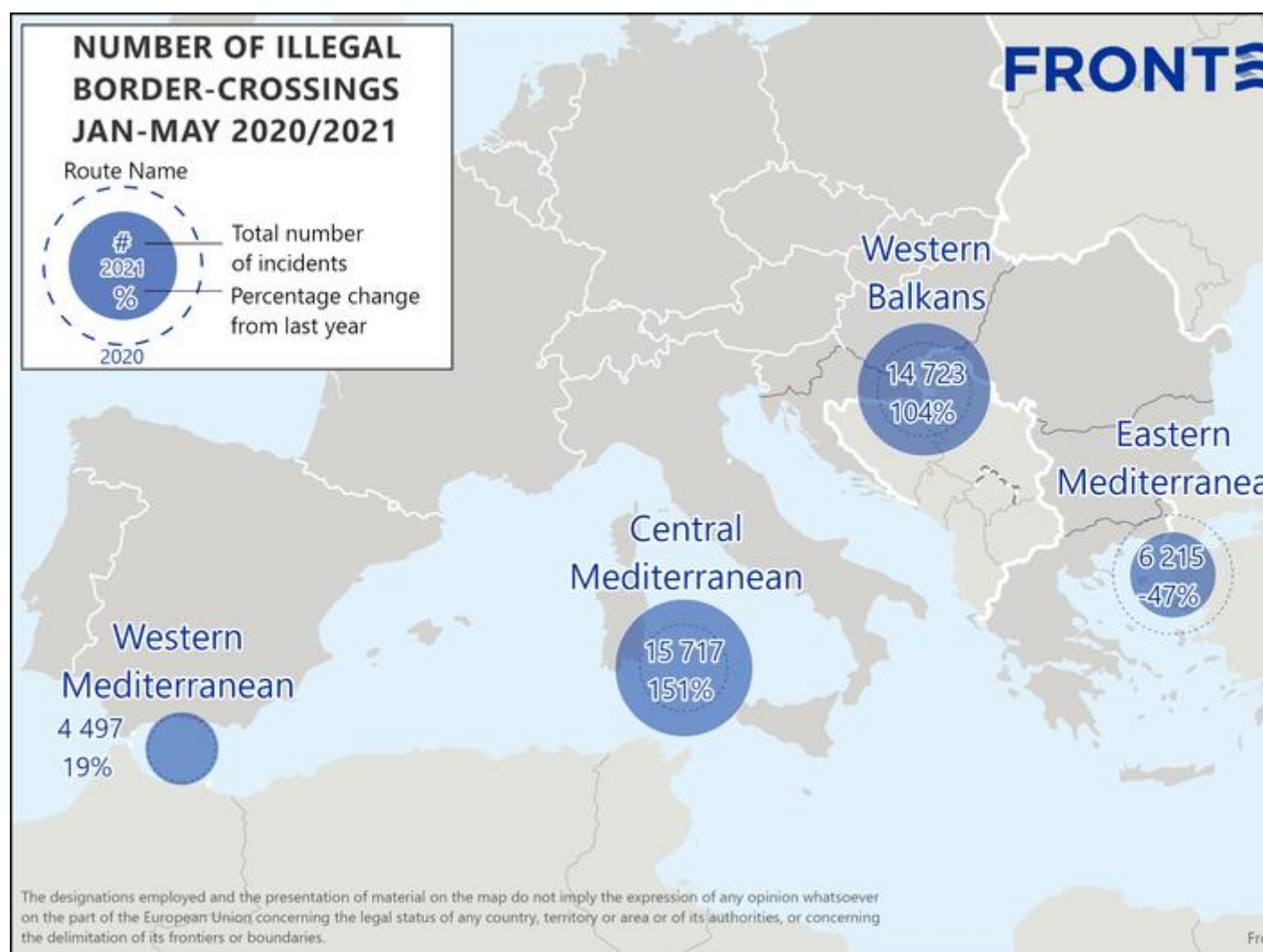
Algerians accounted for three of every four detections on this route this year, while Moroccans made up most of the remaining arrivals.

Eastern Mediterranean

According to the most recent data, there were fewer than 1,400 detections of illegal crossings reported in May on the Eastern Mediterranean route, a three-fold rise from the same month last year.

In the January-May period, the total number of detections nearly halved to 6,200.

Nationals of Syria and Turkey accounted for the largest number of detected migrants.



Western Africa

More than 550 irregular migrants reached the Canary Islands in May, close to the count from the same month of last year.

In the January-May period, nearly 5 250 irregular migrants arrived on the Canary Islands, double the total from the same period of 2020.

Nationals from sub-Saharan countries, most claiming to be from Mali and Ivory Coast, as well as Morocco, accounted for the largest number of arrivals.

Western Balkans

There were an estimated 2,900 detections of illegal border crossings reported so far on the Western Balkan route in May, more than twice the figure from a year ago.

In the first five months of this year, more than 14,700 migrants were detected at EU's border with the Western Balkan countries, double the total from the same period of 2020.

The two main detected nationalities were Syrians and Afghans.

*The figure includes other less active migratory routes not mentioned in this press release. The final figures may be higher due to delayed reporting.

Note: The preliminary data presented in this statement refer to the number of detections of irregular border-crossing at the external borders of the European Union. The same person may attempt to cross the border several times in different locations at the external border.