

# **EU's external borders in July: Increased number of crossings on the Central Mediterranean**

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In the first seven months of this year, there were about 155 090 irregular entries to the European Union, according to preliminary calculations. \* This represents an increase of 86% compared with the same period of last year.

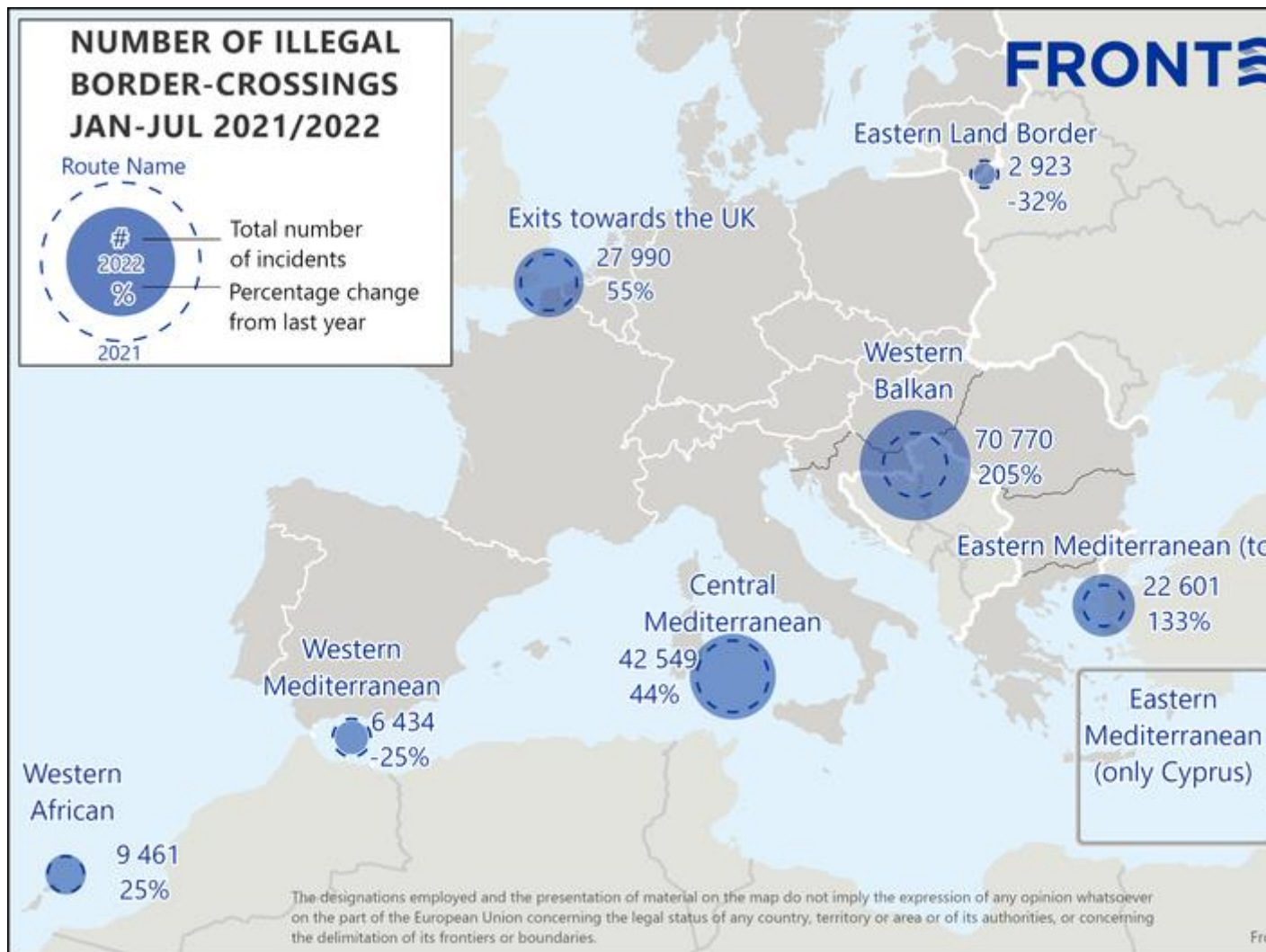
In July, EU Member States recorded about 34 570 irregular crossings, 63% more than in the same month in 2021.

The Western Balkan continues to be the most active migratory route into the EU with 14 866 detections in July, nearly three times more than last year. The high number of illegal border crossings can be attributed to repeated crossing attempts by migrants already present in the Western Balkans.

The pressure remains also high on the Central Mediterranean route with daily arrivals putting strain on the reception capacities in Italy. Frontex supports the Italian authorities with officers for registration and identification of arrivals.

People fleeing Ukraine and entering the EU through border crossing points are not part of the figures of illegal entries detected. According to the latest Frontex data, 7.7 million Ukrainian nationals have fled Ukraine into the EU since the start of the war. At the same time, a significant number of Ukrainian nationals have returned to their country.

Responding to the high migratory pressure, Frontex has more than 2 200 standing corps officers and staff at various sections of the EU external border, as well as in Albania, Serbia, Montenegro and Moldova.



### January - July: Top migratory routes

On the Central Mediterranean route, Frontex registered 42 549 irregular border crossings, 44% more than in the first seven months of 2021

Roughly 14 800 irregular border crossings were reported on the Central Mediterranean route in July, 60% more than in the same month of 2021. Albeit Tunisians (30%) were the top nationality registered on this route in July, overall Egyptians slightly overpassed Tunisians in 2022. The number of Egyptians detected on this route is on the rise; they are departing mainly from Libya and are aided by criminal smuggling.

On the Western Mediterranean route, 6434 irregular border crossings were detected, down 25% from last year. Criminal smuggling networks attempted to use the calm weather conditions to organise simultaneous departures using jet skis. Most migrants detected on this route came from Morocco.

The Western Balkan route accounted for half of all the detections with 70 770 illegal crossings, nearly three times the total from the same period of last year. The main nationalities on this route included migrants from Syria, Afghanistan and Turkey.

On the Eastern land border route, Frontex registered 2 923 irregular crossings, 32% down from last year. The main nationalities on this route were nationals of Ukraine, Iraq and Belarus.

The number of detections on the Eastern Mediterranean route remained high with 22 601 arrivals (more than double compared to last year). The number of arrivals to Cyprus accounted for more than half of the total number of detections. Most migrants came from Syria, Nigeria and Congo (Kinshasa).

The Western African route recorded 9461 detections, 25% more than last year, with 832 crossings in July.

The number of irregular migrants seeking to cross the Channel towards the UK in small boats remained high with roughly 28 000 detections, including both attempts and crossings, which represents a 55% increase on the same period in 2021. The increase in sea crossings is mostly related to the improved seasonal weather conditions and possible impact of the new UK migration plan.

Route	January-July 2022	July 2022	Jan-July 2022/Jan-July 2021	Top nationalities
Central Mediterranean	42 549	14 821	+44%	Bangladesh, Egypt,
Eastern Mediterranean	22 601	2 642	+133%	Syria, Nigeria, Congo (Kinshasa)
Western Mediterranean	6 434	1 204	- 25%	Algeria, Morocco, S
Western African	9 461	832	+25%	Morocco, sub-Saharan Africa
Eastern Border	2 923	259	- 32%	Ukraine, Iraq, Belarus
Western Balkans	70 770	14 866	+205%	Syria, Afghanistan, S
Channel	27 990	5 500	+55%	Afghanistan, Iran, S