

MIGRANTS TRAVELLING TO EUROPE BY LAND AND BY SEA

Journeys, Vulnerabilities and Needs of Migrants Arriving in Greece, Italy, and Spain

FLOW MONITORING SURVEYS
EUROPE REGIONAL REPORT

2023

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Cover photo: Migrant from Côte d'Ivoire just rescued from an iron boat departed from Tunisia, arrived in the port of Lampedusa, Sicily ©IOM Italy 2023

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the main findings from the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Flow Monitoring Surveys (FMS) deployed in Greece, Italy, and Spain in 2023. FMS provide a snapshot of the profiles, experiences, and needs of migrants. The survey asks questions on demographics, education and employment backgrounds, the circumstances of the migration journey and migration factors, as well as future intentions and vulnerabilities to abuse, exploitation and violence.

In 2023, a total of 4,020 surveys were collected in 130 entry and transit points for migrants arriving by land and by sea to Europe. The report explores similarities and differences among migrants travelling along the Eastern Mediterranean Route (EMR), the Central Mediterranean Route (CMR), the Western Mediterranean Route (WMR) and the Western African Atlantic Route (WAAR) (3,626 surveys). A separate section also looks at the evidence from migrants interviewed in the North of Italy, entering by land from Slovenia (394), connecting this with analyses carried out in the Western Balkan (WB) region. A final section addresses the conditions and needs of migrant children (14-17 years old) in the sample.

- The main sample (3,626 surveys) is quite balanced with respondents¹ travelling along different routes: CMR (29%), EMR (25%), WAAR (28%) and WMR (17%).
- The main declared nationalities are Morocco (15%), Senegal (9%), Algeria (7%), Côte d'Ivoire (6%) and Mali (6%), with about other 50 smaller groups comprising 59 per cent of the total. The distribution of respondents by route and by nationality largely mirrors the share of arrivals of by land and sea to Europe as reported by national authorities in 2023.
- Most respondents are men (82%), while 18 per cent are women. Women are more frequent along the EMR (27%), and less so among migrants travelling along the CMR (13%). Among the main nationalities, those with the highest shares of women are Côte d'Ivoire (37%), Afghanistan (37%), Tunisia (35%), Occupied Palestinian Territory (31%) and the Syrian Arab Republic (26%), while Bangladesh, Mali, Senegal, Morocco are those with almost all men.
- The main reported drivers for leaving the country of origin are economic reasons (39%), the presence of war or conflicts in the origin country (32%) and desire to escape from personal or targeted violence (24%). Women tend to report economic reasons less frequently than men (26% versus 42%), while they report more frequently reasons related to safety and security (war and conflict 38% versus 31% among men, personal violence 35% versus 21%).
- Two-thirds of respondents (68%) are travelling alone, while the rest is travelling with family members (17%), with non-family companions (11%) or with facilitators (4%). More men than women travel alone (74% versus 40%), while women more frequently than men are in a group with family members (45% versus 11%).
- WMR registers the shortest and most direct trips, while CMR shows the longest and most complex ones. Migrants pay different amounts depending on their route, departure location, transit countries and payment methods. Shortest and safest journeys – also considering the number of dead and missing migrants reported during the reference period – are also those where migrants of all nationalities pay a similar and consistent amount of money (72% of EMR and 51% of WMR migrants pay between 1 and 5 thousand USD). On the other side, WAAR – increasingly used and with an increasing number of fatal shipwrecks in 2023 – is at the same time much riskier and much cheaper. CMR is more varied in terms of nationality and travel arrangements, with high costs paid by migrants travelling by flight to Libya from the Asian continent, and lower costs of land journeys within the African continent.

¹ The term “respondents” refers to migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers as the reference population is made of persons traveling along mixed migration routes to Europe. These terms are used interchangeably throughout the report.

- Spain (33%), Italy (24%), France (12%), Germany (8%) and Greece (7%) are the top 5 countries of intended final destinations, with differences by route and nationalities.
- About 42 per cent report to have experienced at least one of the problems listed in the questionnaire – financial issues, hunger, robbery, lack of shelter, health issues, issues with documents, attacks by others. Migrants along the CMR and EMR report problems more frequently than those travelling via the WMR and WAAR.
- About 56 per cent experienced at least one of the eight types of abuse, violence and exploitation incidents included in the questionnaire – unpaid work, forced to work, offered marriage, held against will, physical violence, forced to travel, lied to travel, access to identity documents. The share is higher for migrants travelling along the CMR (79%) and the WMR (74%), while it is lower than the average for migrants along the WAAR (41%) and the EMR (33%). Most instances are reported to have happened in one of the last transit countries before arriving in Europe: Libya, Türkiye, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco are the most frequently mentioned overall.
- The main reported needs are support with employment (45%), support with documentation (25%), legal services (13%), health services (10%) and adult education (10%), with some variations across route that testify the different mix of pressing humanitarian and emergency needs for persons who are still considering themselves as in transit, and needs related to the willingness of regularizing their legal position and start a new life at destination.
- Migrants interviewed in the North-East of Italy, at the end of the WB route (394 surveys), are young adult single men: males were 97 per cent, 70 per cent were single and almost half (49%) were between 18 and 24 years old. The main nationalities are Pakistan (46%), Bangladesh (25%), Afghanistan (11%) and Morocco (4%). Most reported to be travelling in a group with non-family members (56%), or with facilitators (21%), while smaller shares were travelling alone (17%) or with some family member (6%). About 84 per cent had financial problems, 54 per cent suffered from lack of shelter, 34 per cent experienced hunger, 31 per cent reported robbery and 26 per cent health issues. Most of these problems were faced in one of the transit countries in the WB. At the same time, physical violence was reported by 43 per cent of the respondents as incidents took place more frequently in transit locations of Croatia, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, and Serbia.
- Children in the sample – interviewed mostly in Italy and Greece – report more frequently than adults any of the experiences covered by the questions on problems and vulnerabilities included in the survey. Three-fourths (73%) them report to have had at least one of the problems listed (91% on CMR, 68% on EMR and 48% on WBR), and particularly hunger (52%), financial problems (47%), lack of shelter (36%) and robbery (31%). Similarly, 73 per cent report at least one of the indicators of violence, abuse, and exploitation. Issues with access and control over identity and travel documents are particularly frequent (61% never had valid documents), while more than one third of children (35%) mention having suffered from physical violence.

KEY FINDINGS

Demographics



4,020
surveys



79%
16%



5%

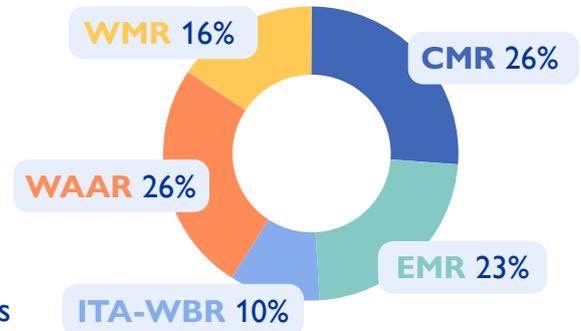
Distribution



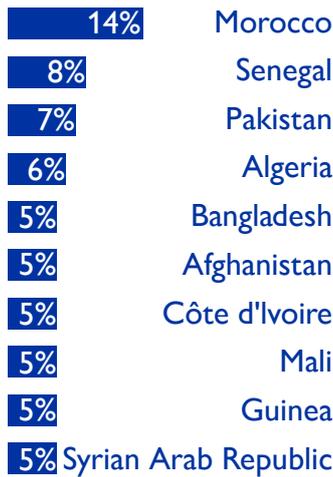
3 Countries
130 FMPs



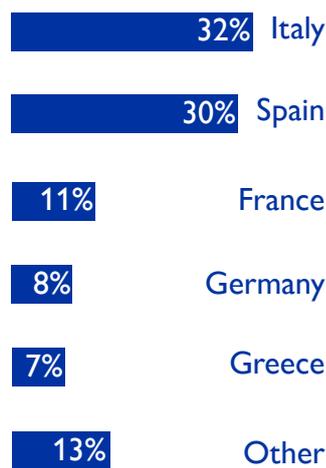
5 migration routes



Top Nationalities

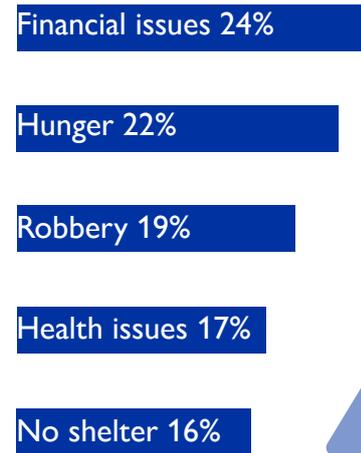


Top Destinations



Problems During Journey

More than one answer possible



Main Current Needs

More than one answer possible



Employment
45%



Documentation
27%



Legal counselling
13%



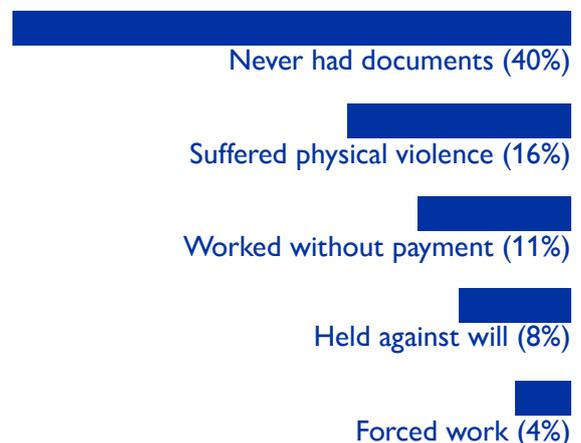
Language support
12%



Health service
10%

Violence, Exploitation, Abuse

More than one answer possible



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 MIGRATION ROUTES TO EUROPE SINCE 2016

Migration routes from countries of the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Africa regions via 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 via the Mediterranean, Western African Atlantic, and Western Balkan routes to Europe. Key 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 Kosovo²). These are considered separately to prevent to the extent possible the double counting of the same individuals that cross multiple borders to reach the European Union (EU).

In 2016, the total number of arrivals reported across the monitored routes was 389,976, with the Central Mediterranean Route (CMR) and the Eastern Mediterranean Route (EMR) having the highest number of arrivals. In the following years, the total number of arrivals to Europe decreased, reaching its lowest point with 99,907 arrivals in 2020, when restrictions related to COVID-19 pandemic were imposed on all types of movements. Since 2021, the total number of arrivals started increasing again, with the CMR having the highest number of arrivals. In 2023, the total number of arrivals reached 292,985, with the CMR still having the highest number of arrivals,³ followed by the EMR. Also, arrivals to the Canary Islands

via the WAAR became more prominent since 2020 and by 2023 represented most of arrivals to Spain surpassing arrivals via the WMR.

The number of reported interceptions and returns back to the departure coasts also has increased over the years, reaching more than 128 thousand attempted crossings which failed in 2023 and resulted with a return back to Libya, Tunisia, Türkiye, Algeria or Lebanon.⁴ Similarly, 2023 marked a tragic year when it comes to the number of migrants who have died or went missing across the same routes, indicating how migrants' journeys to Europe remain dangerous and fatal, with drowning as the first reported cause of the death according to IOM's Missing Migrant Project. In 2023, 4,064 migrants perished while trying to reach Europe: 2,476 along the CMR (61%), 959 along the WAAR (24%), 458 along the WMR (11%), and 171 along the EMR (4%). Additionally, 90 migrants died in the land crossing between Türkiye and Bulgaria and along the Western Balkan route the same year.⁵

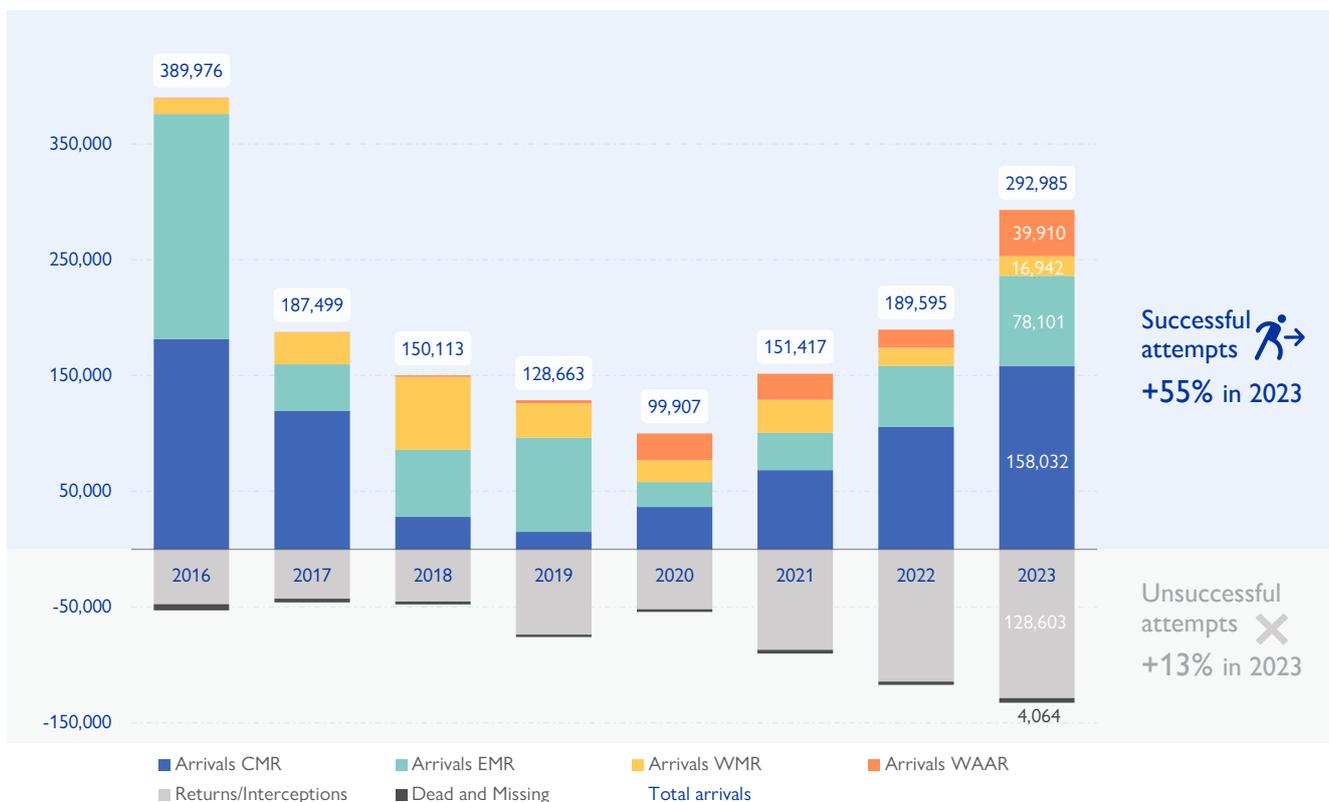
² References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

³ For a more comprehensive analysis of CMR trends and developments in 2023, please see the IOM-UNHCR Factsheet "Migrant and refugee movements through the Central Mediterranean Sea - Joint Annual Overview 2023" (forthcoming).

⁴ Additionally, around 75 thousand migrants were prevented to reach Europe by Moroccan authorities in 2023, according to the Moroccan interior ministry: <https://www.reuters.com/world/morocco-foils-75184-illegal-migration-attempts-europe-2023-2024-01-23/>

⁵ Data extracted on 25 February 2024. For more more on dead and missing migrants along all migration routes tracked by IOM over the last 10 years, please see: <https://missingmigrants.iom.int/decade-deaths-and-disappearances-during-migration-worldwide>

Figure 1. Number migrants arriving to Europe, reported dead and missing or being returned, by route, 2016-2023



Source: DTM Europe from national authorities, MMP and IOM Missions

1.2 SURVEYS WITH MIGRANTS TRAVELLING TO EUROPE

To better grasp the profiles, intentions and needs of migrants travelling along these routes, IOM started deploying dedicated FMS in several countries in the region since late 2015. In 2023, FMS were deployed in Greece, Italy, Spain (EU countries) and in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Kosovo⁶ (WB region), with a total of 5,029 surveys.

This report presents the main findings from 4,020 surveys collected in about 130 different flow monitoring points (FMPs) in Greece (Anatoliki Makedonia, Attiki, Dytiki Ellada, Ipeiros, Kentriki Makedonia, Notio Aigaio, Peloponnisos, Sterea Ellada, Thessalia), Italy (Calabria, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Sicily) and Spain (Andalucia, Canarias,

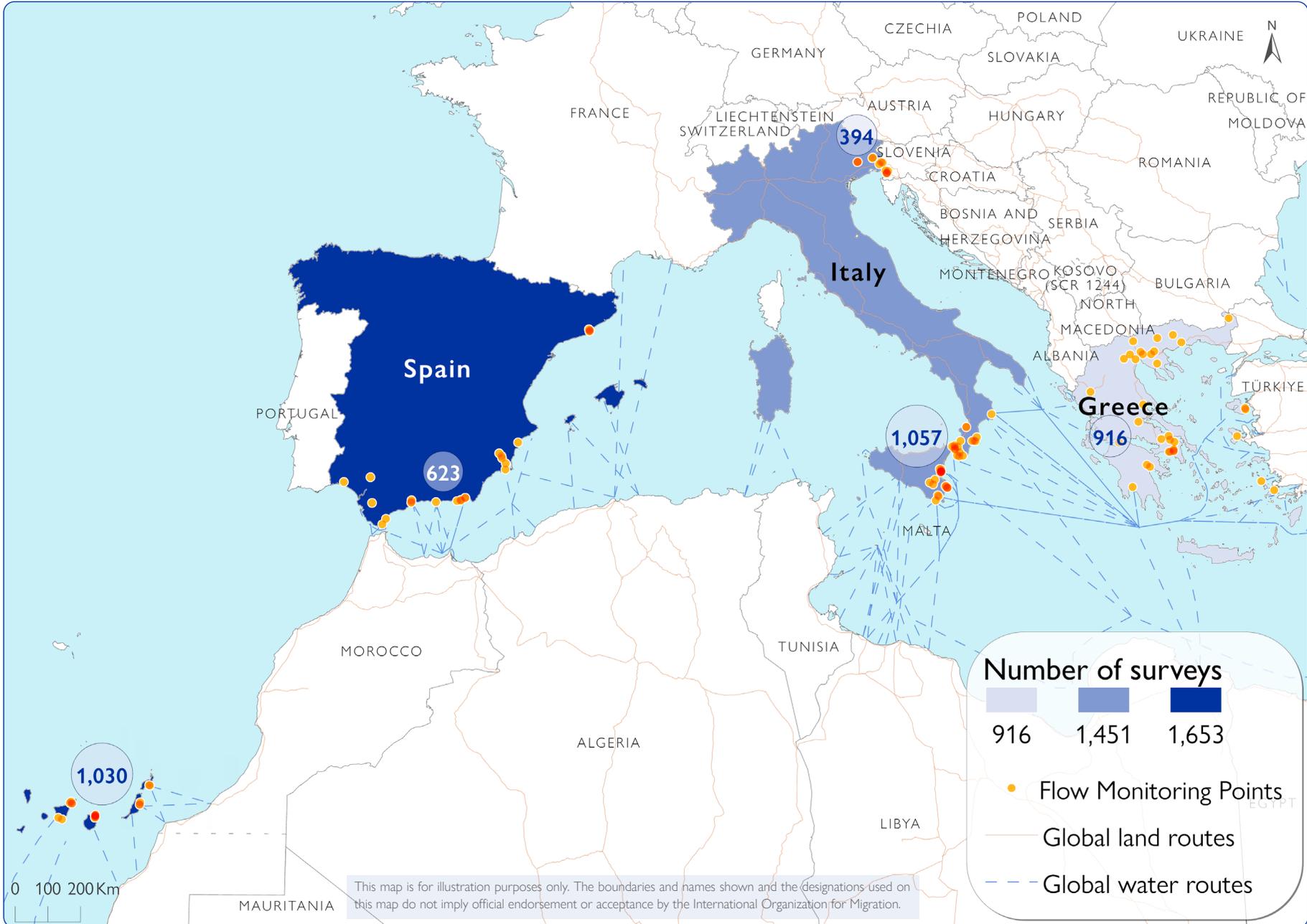
Cataluña/Catalunya, Comunitat Valenciana, Región de Murcia), between April and December 2023.⁷

The main body of the report focuses on migrants travelling along the EMR, CMR, WMR and WAAR (3,626), highlighting the main differences among them (Sections 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7). A separate section also looks at evidence from migrants interviewed in the North of Italy, entering by land from Slovenia (394), connecting this with analyses carried out in the WB region (Section 8). A short focus of the conditions and needs of migrant children in the sample is in Section 9. The report closes with Section 10 on Methodology.

⁶ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

⁷ Please check the reports on FMS collected in the WB here: [Serbia](#) and [Kosovo](#)*.

Map 1. Flow Monitoring Points covered and number of FMS collected in 2023 by country



Source: DTM [mixed migration flows to Europe](#) and FMS in Greece, Italy, and Spain. N=3,626

2 MIGRANTS TRAVELLING TO EUROPE: BASELINE PROFILE AND REASONS FOR MIGRATION

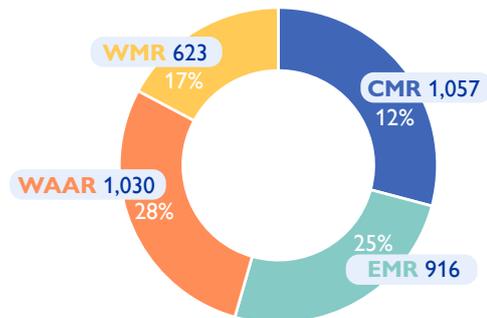
2.1 SAMPLE SIZE AND MAIN NATIONALITIES

The sample is quite balanced among migrants travelling to Europe across different routes: CMR (29%), EMR (25%), WAAR (28%) and WMR (17%). Most migrants declared to have entered the country of the survey by sea (90%), with the highest level of those entered by land being surveyed as expected along the EMR (35%).

The main declared nationalities in the overall sample are Morocco (15%), Senegal (9%), Algeria (7%), Côte d'Ivoire (6%) and Mali (6%), with about other 50 smaller groups comprising 59 per cent of the total.

As expected, and in line with available data on the reference population of migrants arriving by sea and by land to Europe in 2023, the main nationalities vary by route. Along the CMR, the top nationalities of respondents are Bangladesh (10%), Pakistan (9%), Guinea (8%), Côte d'Ivoire (8%), Tunisia (7%). In Greece, top nationalities are Iraq (16%), Afghanistan (16%), Syrian Arab Republic (14%), Occupied Palestinian Territory (10%),

Figure 2. Number and share of respondents by route and total

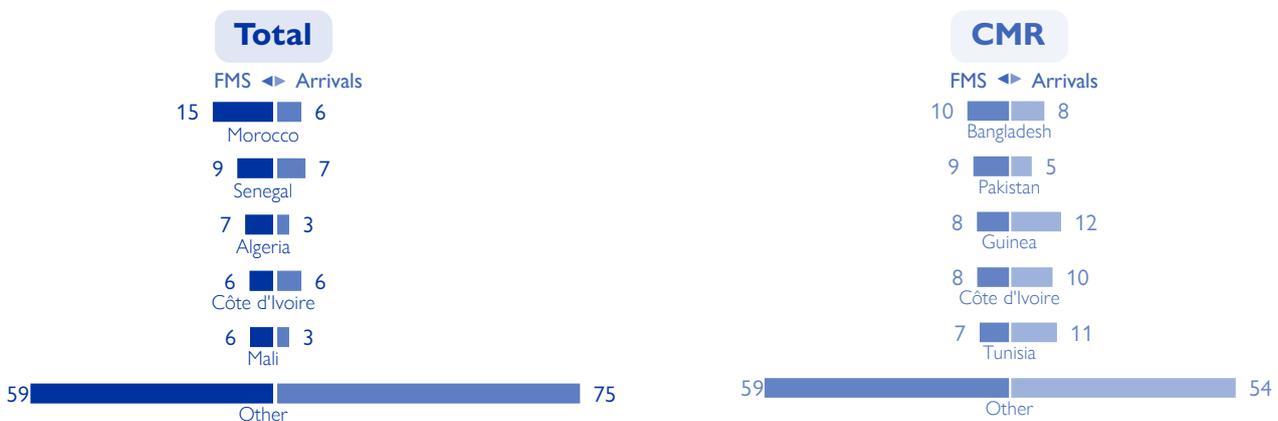


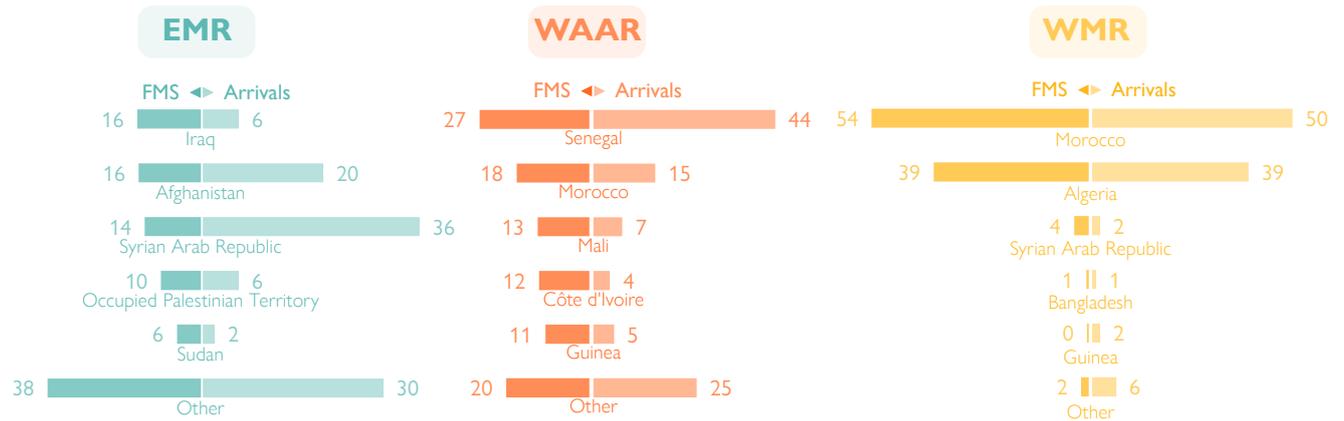
Source: DTM FMS in Greece, Italy, and Spain. N=3,626

Sudan (6%). Migrants travelling along the WAAR are mainly from Senegal (27%), Morocco (18%), Mali (13%), Côte d'Ivoire (12%) and Guinea (11%). Along the WMR, most respondents are from either Morocco (54%) or from Algeria (39%), with few others from Syrian Arab Republic (4%), Bangladesh (1%) and Guinea (<1%).

The nationality breakdown in each country sub-sample is consistent with the nationalities registered by national authorities in 2023. See Figure 3 below for a comparison of nationalities of respondents and of migrants registered at arrival.

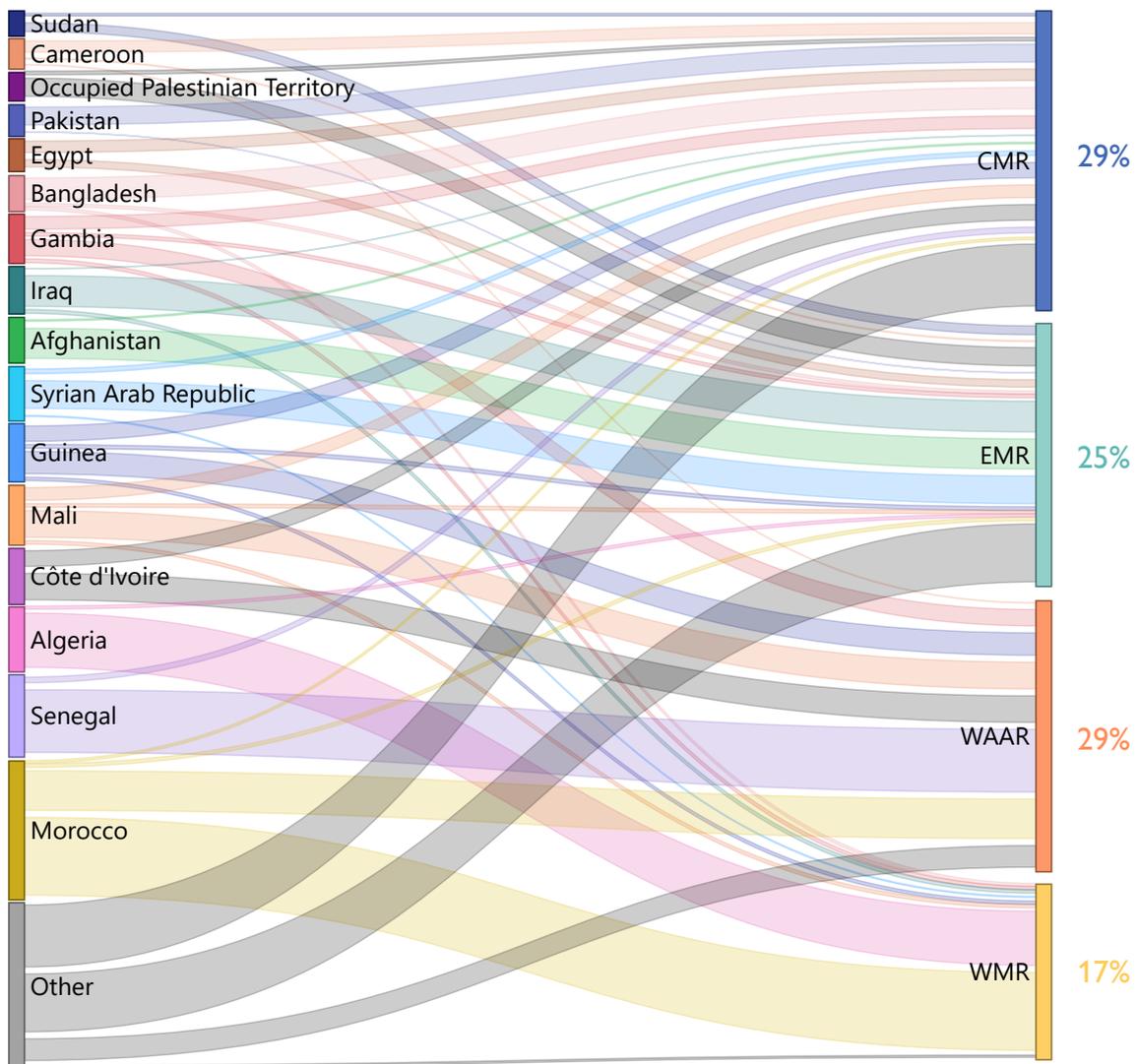
Figure 3. Top 5 nationalities of respondents, share of surveys and of arrivals to Europe, by route and total (%)





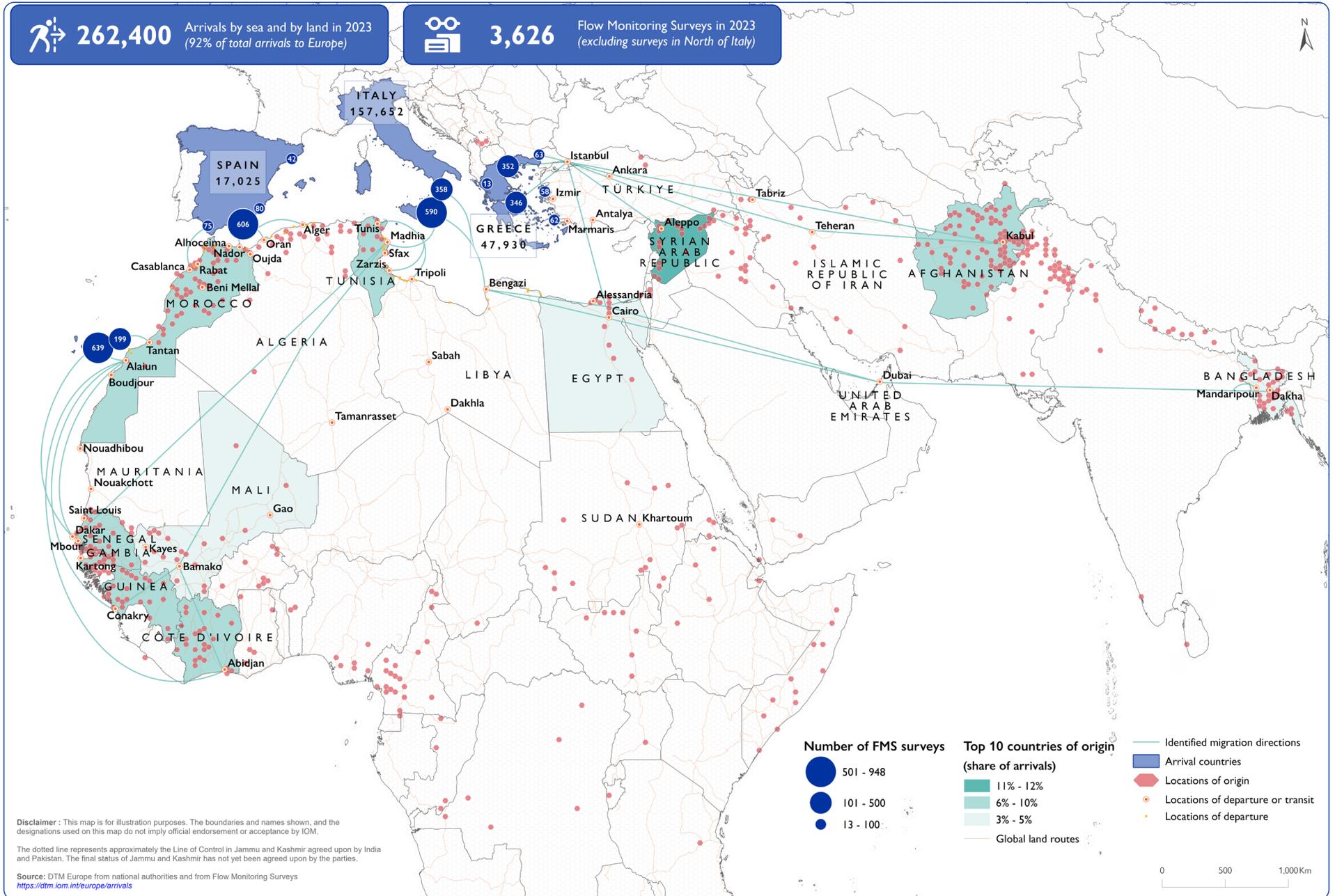
Source: DTM [mixed migration flows to Europe](#) and FMS in Greece, Italy, and Spain. N=3,626

Figure 4. Main nationalities in the sample, by country of the survey and route taken



Source: DTM FMS Europe. N=3,626

Map 2. Mixed migration flows to Greece, Italy, and Spain – flow monitoring and survey data on top 10 nationalities registered at arrival in 2023

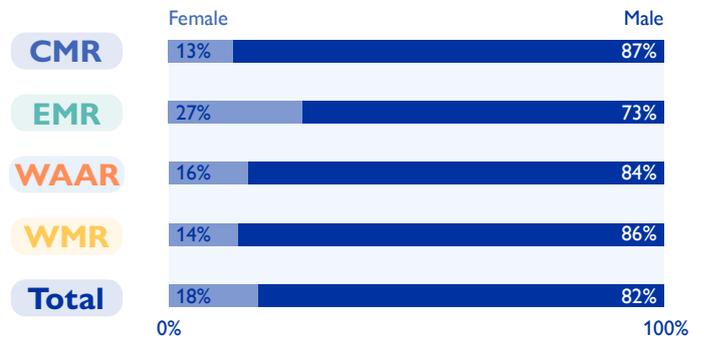


Source: DTM [mixed migration flows to Europe](#) and FMS in Greece, Italy, and Spain. N=3,626

2.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Men represent the majority (82%) of the sample, while 18 per cent are women. Less than 1 per cent (7 respondents) either do not identify with female or male sex, or prefer not to specify. The share of women is the highest among migrants travelling along the EMR (27%) and the lowest among migrants travelling along the CMR (13%). Among the main nationalities in the sample, those with the highest shares of women are Côte d'Ivoire (37%), Afghanistan (37%), Tunisia (35%), Occupied Palestinian Territory (31%) and the Syrian Arab Republic (26%), while Bangladesh, Mali, Senegal, Morocco are those with the highest shares of men (from 99 to 89%).

Figure 5. Respondent by sex, by route and total (%)



Source: DTM FMS Europe. N=3,626

The median age of respondents was 26, with the youngest person interviewed being 14 years old and the oldest 78 years old.⁸ Overall, more than two thirds of respondents were below 30 years of age, with women being slightly older than men on average. While no adolescent between 14 and 17 years old was interviewed in Spain, children represent 12 per cent of the sample in Greece and 9 per cent of the sample in Italy.

Overall, migrants travelling along the CMR and along the WAAR are the youngest, with three quarters of them being below 30 years of age. On the other side, the highest share of migrants with more than 30 years is along the EMR.

Figure 6. Age distribution of respondents, by route and total (%)



Source: DTM FMS Europe. N=3,626

⁸ Adolescents between 14 and 17 years old were addressed by enumerators in Italy and Greece only after having obtained written consent from the parent or legal guardian. In Spain, only adults of 18 years old or more were proposed to participate into the survey. IOM staff in the field follows relevant child protection safeguards when engaging with adolescents, and has referral mechanism in place to provide further information and support to vulnerable migrants including children when needed.

About two thirds (68%) of the sample is single, while 27 per cent is married and the rest is either divorced or widowed (5%). The share of respondents in a couple is higher among women (41%) than among men (25%). Similarly, women are divorced or widowed (15%) more frequently than men (2%).

More than half of women are mothers (53%), while only one fourth of men (25%) are fathers. While some have children left behind and others intend to reach children who are already at destination, 40 per cent of women in the sample (76% of those who are mothers) are traveling with at least one child. This is far less common among men (7% of them is travelling with a child).

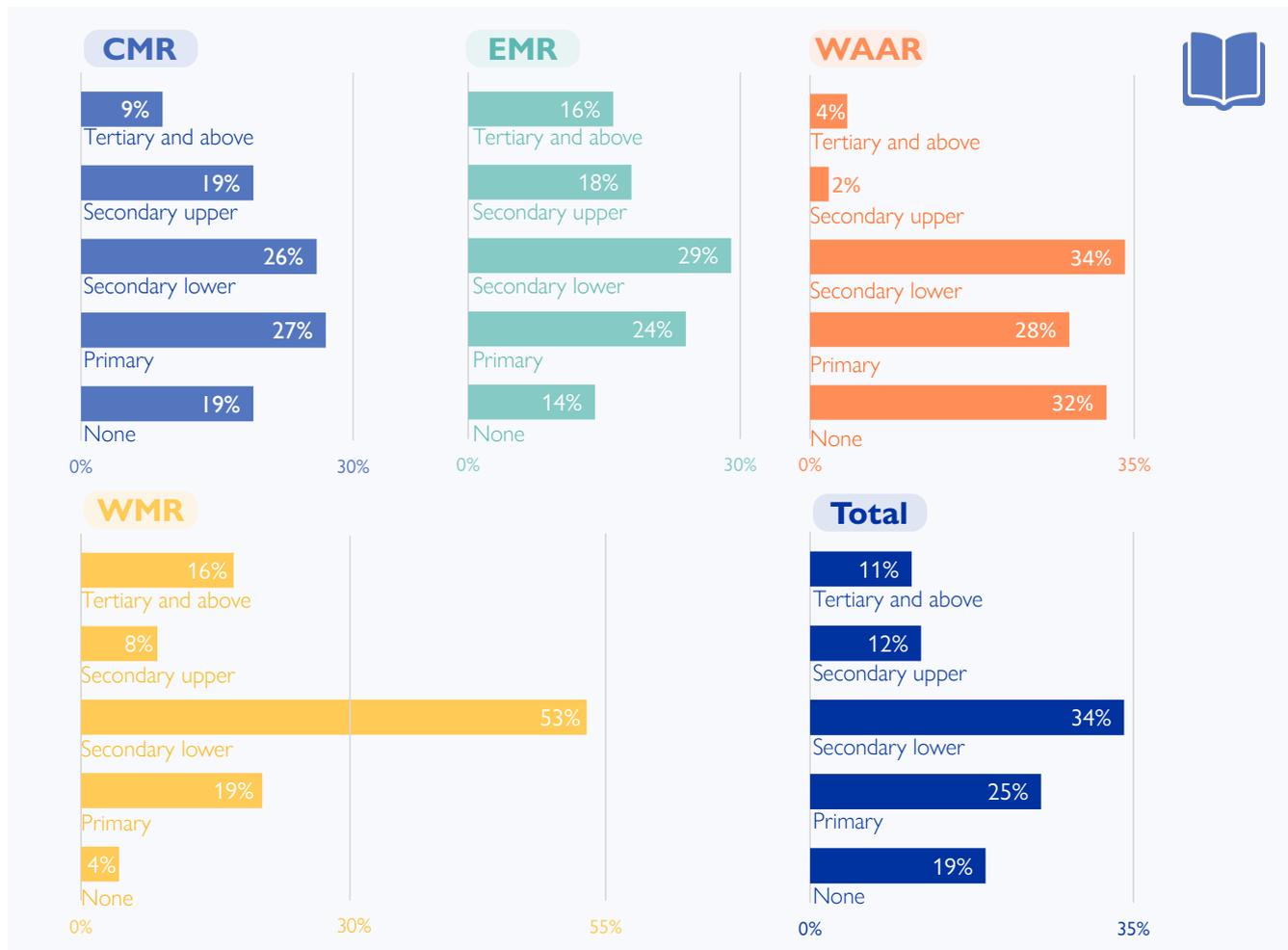
2.3 EDUCATION

One third (34%) of respondents reported having completed lower secondary education, 25 per cent to have completed primary education, 19 per cent to have no formal education, while smaller shares have higher secondary education (12%) or tertiary education (11%).

Migrants along the EMR. Women tend to have higher shares of both extremes: more of them with no education (22% versus 18% among men), more of them with tertiary education (13% versus 10%).

Migrants on the WMR have the lower level of no education (4%) in the sample and the highest share of

Figure 7. Highest level of educational achievement, by route and total (%)



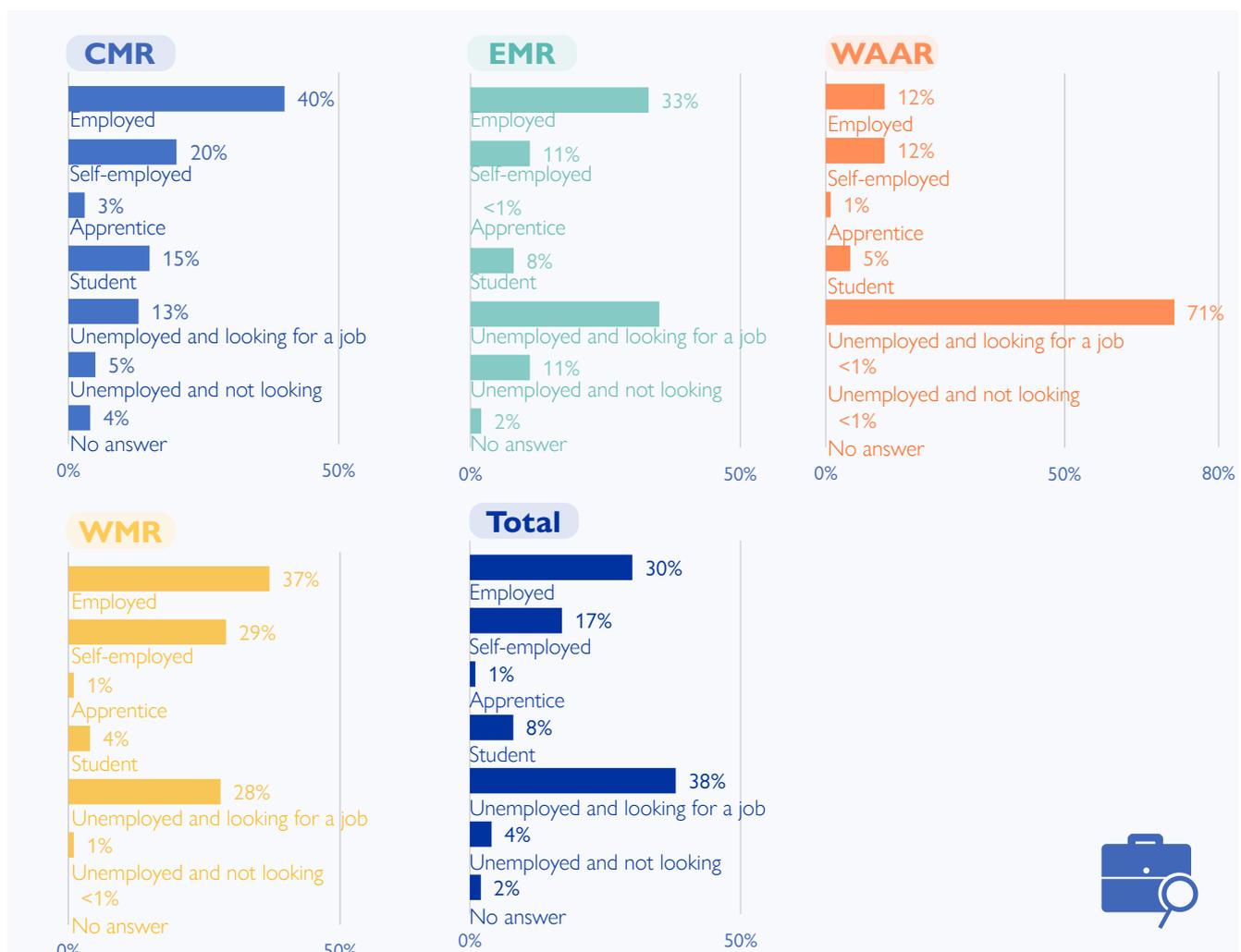
Source: DTM FMS Europe. N=3,626

2.4 EMPLOYMENT STATUS BEFORE DEPARTURE

Forty-seven per cent of respondents declared they had been employed or self-employed before leaving their country of origin, followed by 38 per cent who were unemployed and looking for a job. Others were students (8%), unemployed but not looking for a job (4%), apprentice (1%) or did not answer (2%).

The share of unemployed was the highest among migrants on the WAAR (71%) and the lowest among migrants on the CMR (13%). On the contrary, migrants along the WMR and the CMR were employed or self-employed more frequently than the average (66% and 60% respectively).

Figure 8. Employment status before departure, by route and total (%)



Source: DTM FMS Europe. N=3,626

Among respondents who declared they had been employed before leaving their country of origin, skilled manual occupations (20%), elementary ones (17%), craft and related trade workers (17%) and service and sales workers were the most frequently mentioned. Agriculture and forestry (15%), manufacturing (14%) and construction (10%) were the most frequently reported sectors of occupation.

Along the CMR, most respondents who were employed before migration had elementary occupations (32%) or skilled manual occupations (23%), prevalently working in the agricultural sectors (23%), in the construction sector (11%) and manufacturing (11%).

Along the EMR, most employed migrants were previously in service and sales occupations (21%), in skilled manual occupations (18%) and in craft and related

trade occupations (16%). Main sectors of activity were agriculture and forestry (12%), wholesale and retail (10%), construction (10%).

More than one third of those employed before travelling along the WAAR were in services and sales activities (34%), followed by skilled manual workers (23%) and craft and related trade occupations (20%). Main sectors were wholesale and retail (22%), fishing (12%), transportation and storage (11%).

Along the WMR, migrants were mostly working in craft and related trade occupations (34%) and as plant and machine operators (21%), working in manufacturing (28%), agriculture and forestry (9%) and in transportation and storage (9%) as main sectors.

Migrants from Bangladesh who were in employment, prevalently worked in agriculture and forestry (27%) and in manufacturing (21%). Guineans reported to be employed mostly in wholesale and retail (23%) and in agriculture and forestry (15%). The most common sectors where Iraqis had jobs before migration were construction (16%), wholesale and retail (16%) and agriculture and forestry (15%). Afghans often worked in agriculture and forestry (20%) and manufacturing (17%). Senegalese migrants had jobs in wholesale and retail sectors (25%) and in fishing sector (20%). Moroccans worked mostly in manufacturing (24%) and construction (12%) sectors. Migrants from Algeria mainly had jobs in manufacturing (31%) and construction (8%). More than a third of Malians said they had jobs in the agriculture and forestry sector (38%), followed by 13 per cent who also worked in wholesale and retail.

2.5 REASONS FOR LEAVING THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

The survey investigates on the main migration drivers, by asking the two main reasons for leaving the country of origin and starting the migration journey and few follow-up questions.

Overall, the main reported driver for moving is economic reasons (39%), closely followed by reasons related to

the presence of war or conflicts in the origin country (32%) and desire to escape from personal or targeted violence (24%). Women in the sample tend to report less frequently than men economic reasons (26% versus 42%), while they report reasons related to safety and security (war and conflict 38% versus 31%, personal violence 35% versus 21%) more frequently.

Table 1. Main reasons for leaving the country of origin, by sex, route and total (%)

Reasons	CMR	EMR	WAAR	WMR	Total		
 Economic reasons	26%	13%	63%	61%	39%	42%	26%
 War and conflict	40%	65%	12%	4%	32%	31%	38%
 Personal violence	29%	30%	24%	5%	24%	21%	35%
 Limited access to basic services	13%	11%	4%	16%	11%	11%	8%
 Slow environmental change	15%	2%	4%	41%	10%	11%	8%

Source: DTM FMS Europe. N=3,626 , more than one answer possible

2.6 REASONS FOR LEAVING THE COUNTRY OF DEPARTURE

A small share (6%) of migrants report to have left from a country different from that of origin after having spent there more than one year.¹³ This is slightly more frequent among migrants along the EMR (9%) and the WAAR (7%) than among those on the CMR (5%), while it is almost never the case for migrants along the WMR (1%).¹⁴

Understandably, among them, the main countries of stay for one year or more before moving again are those countries which are neighbouring the European region or the last on the route before reaching Europe: Türkiye (30%), Senegal (13%), Algeria (8%), Mauritania (8%), Morocco (7%), Libya (5%), Tunisia (4%).

The reasons why these migrants decided to move again after having been resident in another country may differ

from the initial reasons they had to leave their origin country. The difficult economic conditions (47%) is the main reported reason for moving again, from Türkiye as much as from North African countries with growing inflation, rising prices for rents and overall economic deterioration – induced by COVID-19 pandemic restrictive measure first,¹⁵ and then by the earthquakes that struck southern and central Türkiye and northern and western Syrian Arab Republic in February 2023.¹⁶ Other reasons cited for leaving again were relative to the limited access to basic services (26%), war and conflict (17%), but also the fear of being repatriated (10%) from countries which tightened controls and promoted new migration policies aimed at increasing returns to origin countries.¹⁷



IOM staff assisting migrants disembarking in Lampedusa from a boat departed from Libya. ©IOM Italy 2023

¹³ This is much lower than the share reported in previous rounds of FMS in Europe, where the share of migrants who have re-started the journey after having spent in a country different than origin one year or more ranged from 10 to 30 per cent depending on the route.

¹⁴ This is coherent with the fact that most migrants along the WMR are Moroccans and Algerians, who leave their origin countries and directly arrive in Spain without transiting through any other country.

¹⁵ United Nations. Economic Commission for Africa. Subregional Office North Africa (SRO-NA) (2020). [COVID-19 Crisis in North Africa: The Impact and Mitigation Responses](#).

¹⁶ IOM Türkiye (2024). Türkiye and Northwest Syria Earthquake Response and Recovery. [2023 Achievements Report, IOM: Ankara](#).

¹⁷ See for example, Turkish Ministry of Interior press releases on 03 February 2023: <https://www.goc.gov.tr/il-goc-idaresi-mudurleri-istisare-degerlendirme-toplantisi-gerceklestirildi> and on 31 January 2024: <https://www.goc.gov.tr/cisleri-bakani-ali-yerlikayanin-baskanliginda-14-goc-kurulu-toplantisi-gerceklestirildi>.

¹⁸ The question “Who are you travelling with (with whom did the respondent start the journey)?” presented two options namely a. Alone, b.) With a group. If b (with a group), a follow-up question followed “The group was made of, a) non-family/non-relatives, b) Family/Relatives, c) Facilitators (agents/employer/smugglers).

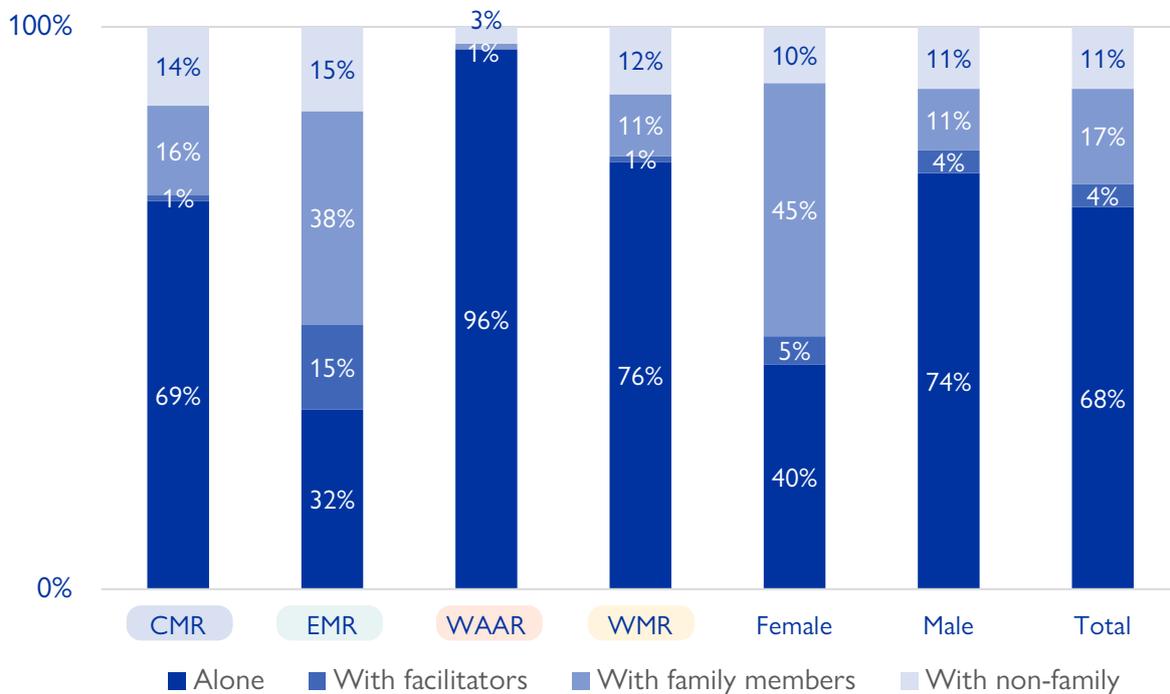
3 JOURNEYS: MODALITIES, COSTS, ROUTES

3.1 MODE OF TRAVEL

Most respondents (68%) are travelling alone, while the rest is travelling in a group (32%) and more specifically with family members (17%), with non-family companions (11%) or with facilitators (4%). More men than women travel alone (74% versus 40%), while women more frequently than men are in a group with at least one other family member (45% versus 11%).

Migrants along the WAAR are almost exclusively travelling alone (96%). This travel mode is also prevalent among migrants along the WMR (76%) and the CMR (69%), but it is far less common among migrants along the EMR (32%) who more often travel with family members (38%) but also with other non-family members (15%) and with facilitators (15%).

Figure 10. Mode of travel by route, sex and total (%)



Source: DTM FMS Europe. N=3,626

3.2 READMISSIONS, PUSHBACKS, AND TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

About 7 per cent of respondents report to have been readmitted or pushed-back at least once from a country to another one during the journey. This is more commonly reported by migrants along the EMR (15%) and CMR (10%) and practically not reported by migrants interviewed in Spain.¹⁹

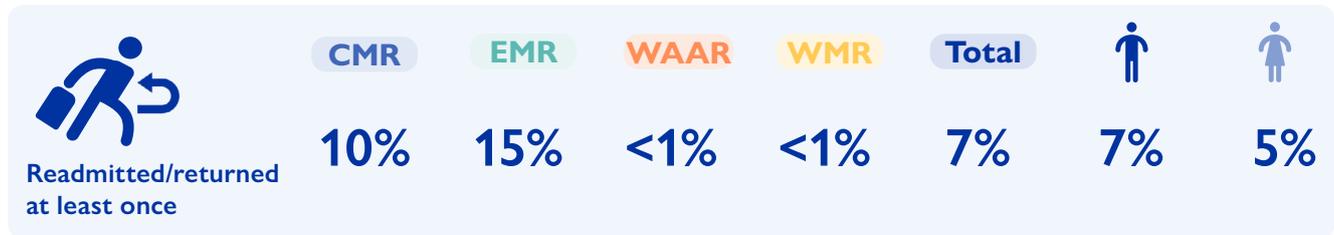
Moreover, migrants along the EMR seem to have relied more frequently than others on services or recruitment agencies to organize the journey in full or in part (45% versus 15% on average for the total sample), while others resorted to information and support from family and friends in their community of origin (18%) and less than

¹⁹ This question refers to returns to another country, with migrants crossing a border. It is worth noticing that removals and transfers from northern to southern parts of most North African countries are also reported (see for example [Algeria: Sub-Saharan migrants are exposed to violence and expulsions](#); [IOM and UNHCR Joint Appeal for Urgent Solutions to Migrants and Refugees Stranded in Tunisia and Libya Borders](#)).

a third received no help. On the contrary, most migrants travelling along WMR, CMR, and WAAR (87%, 72% and 70% respectively) reported to have received no help to organize the journey, while others relied on information and help from family and communities in the country of origin or at destination.

These observed differences in the way to organize the stages of the journey is also reflected in number of transited countries, the overall reported length and cost.

Figure 11. Share of respondents readmitted/returned at least once during the journey, by route, sex and total (%)



Source: DTM FMS Europe. N=3,626

3.3 LENGTH AND COST OF JOURNEY

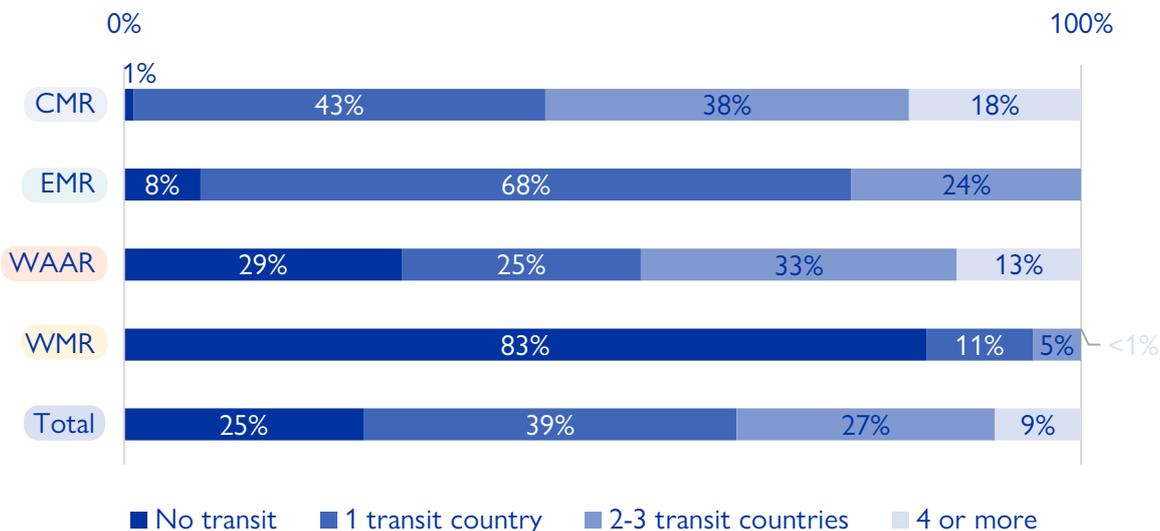
Migrants travelling along the WMR are those with the shortest and most direct journeys: about 83 per cent of them departed directly from Morocco or Algeria, with more than two thirds of them reporting to have arrived in Spain the same day they left their departure location.

Zero transit countries are also reported by 29 per cent of those landing to the Canary Islands and directly departing from the coasts of Senegal, Morocco, Mauritania, the Gambia, while it is much rarer among migrants interviewed to Greece (8%) and Italy (1%).

Two thirds of those travelling along the EMR report to have transited only one country – Türkiye – to reach Greece from their departure location, either entering by land from its southern and eastern borders with Syrian Arab Republic, Iraq, and the Islamic Republic of Iran, or by flying directly to Istanbul or Ankara from farther African and Asian countries.

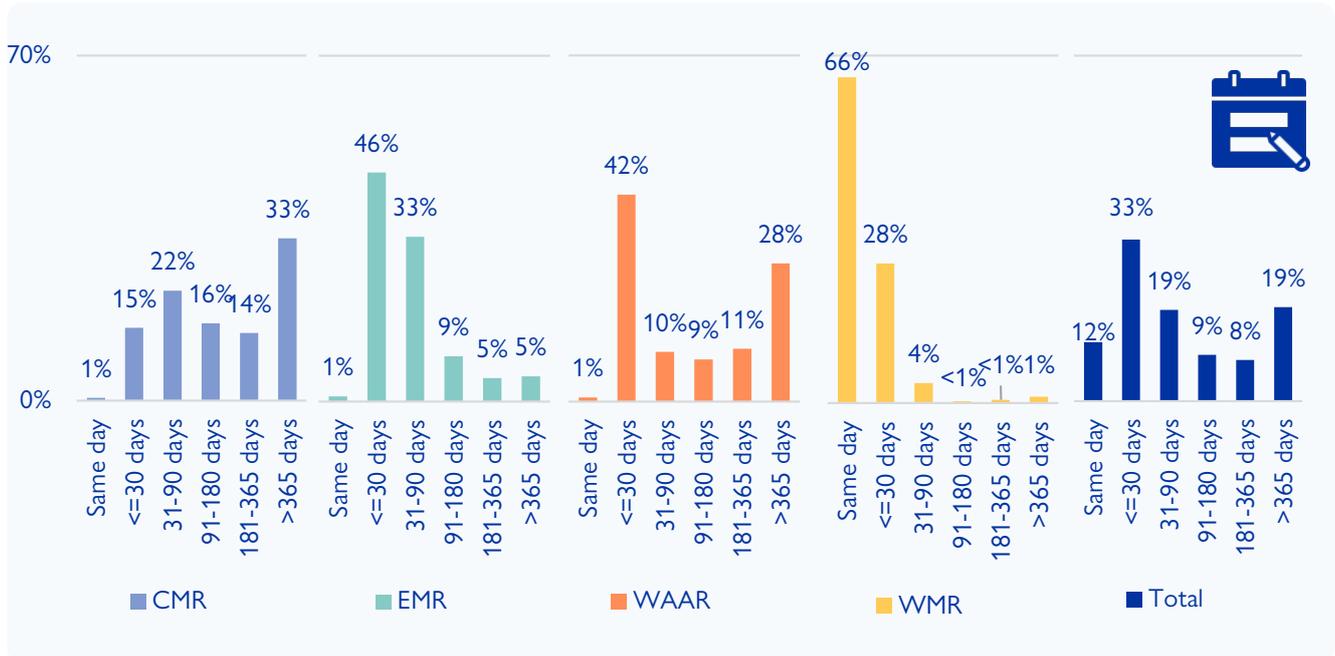
Longer journeys with more transit countries are reported by migrants in Italy: 56 per cent of them transited through 2 countries or more and about a third of them have journeys' durations longer than one year.

Figure 12. Number of transited countries to reach the country of the survey, by route and total (%)



Source: DTM FMS Europe. N=3,626

Figure 13. Days spent in transit from the departure location to the arrival in country of the survey, by route and total (%)

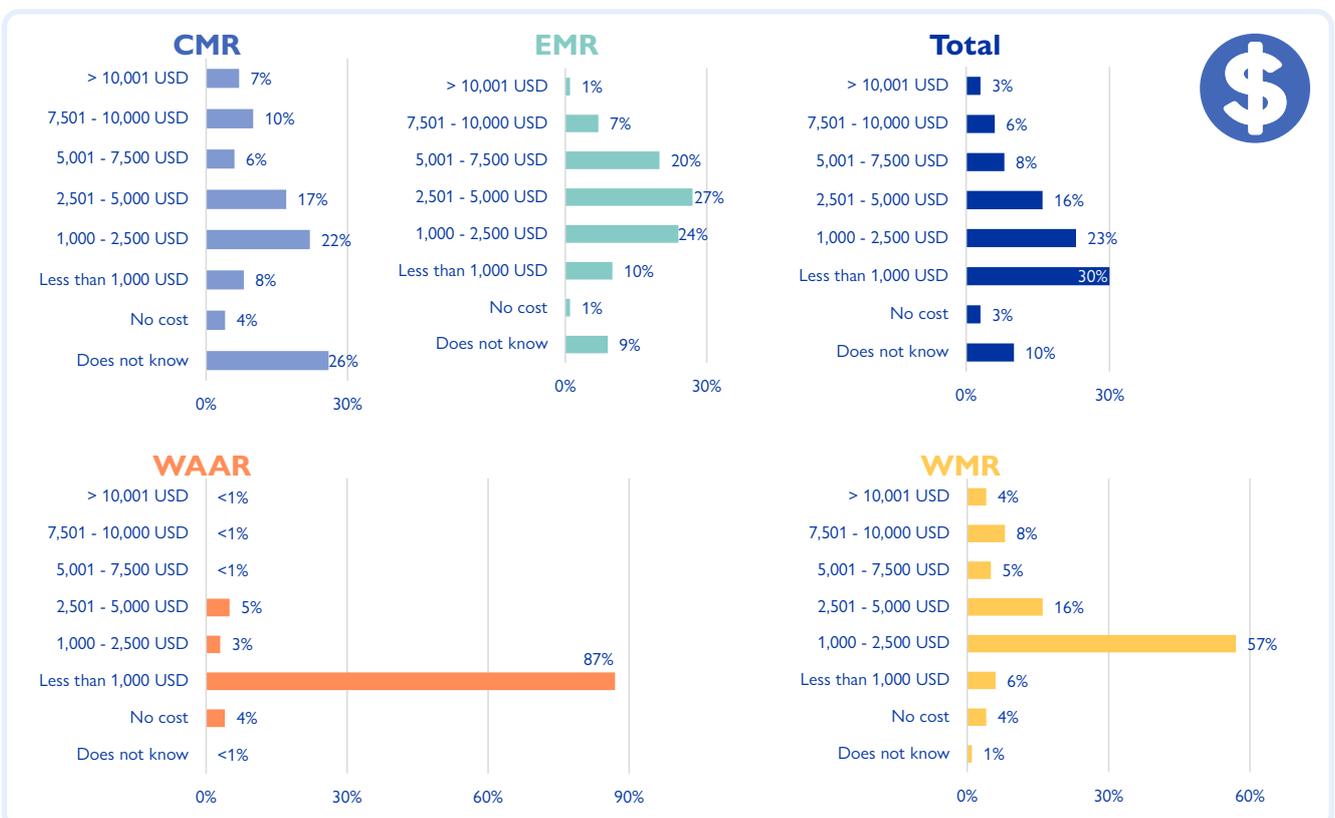


Source: DTM FMS Europe. N=3,626

Migrants provided an estimate of the cost of the entire journey from departure until the country of the survey. This varies by a great deal depending on the route taken

and by the number of countries transited through, while is quite similar between men and women on average.

Figure 14. Estimated total cost of the journey since departure in USD, by route, sex and total (%)



Source: DTM FMS Europe. N=3,626

Along the CMR, more than a quarter of respondents (26%) could not provide any estimate about the incurred costs, while other 22 per cent report have paid between 1 and 2.5 thousand USD. Also on this route, the share of those who paid more than 7.5 thousand USD is the highest (17% versus 9% on average). The median amount spent for the last leg to reach Italy is 2,000 USD (3,408 USD on average), with higher reported costs for Bangladeshis, Syrians, Afghans, and lower costs for migrants from African countries. Almost half (48%) of migrants say they paid each leg separately, while another 13 per cent paid in cash instalments and 21 per cent paid the full amount upfront.

Along the EMR, more than a quarter (27%) report to have paid between 2.5 and 5 thousand USD and almost one quarter (24%) report to have paid between 1 and 2.5 thousand USD. The median amount spent for the last leg to reach Greece is 1,500 USD (1,711 USD on average). About 41 per cent of migrants say they paid each leg separately, while another 12 per cent paid in cash instalments to same provider and 21 per cent paid the full amount upfront. On this route only, the hawala system²⁰ to transfer money is also mentioned by some (9%).

Along the WMR, more than half (57%) report to have paid between 1 and 2.5 thousand USD and about 16 per cent paid between 2.5 and 5 thousand USD. The median amount spent for the last leg to reach Spain is 2,000 USD (3,119 USD on average). Most (84%) migrants report to have paid the full amount upfront, which is coherent with the fact that they mostly have one leg only moving directly from Morocco or Algeria to Spain.

Along the WAAR, the vast majority report to have paid less than 1 thousand USD. Also, the median amount spent for the last leg is 1,000 USD (1,709 USD on average), which means that the sea crossing to the Canary Islands represent the main part of the overall costs for those travelling along this route. Most (79%) migrants report to have paid the full amount upfront, while other were not able to tell (11%).

Overall, migrants travelling along the WMR have the shortest and most direct trips, while those travelling along the CMR have the longest and most complex ones. Findings from this section shows that migrants pay different amounts depending on their route, departure location, transit countries and payment methods. Shortest and safest routes – also considering the number of dead and missing migrants reported during the reference period – are also those where migrants of all nationalities pay a similar and consistent amount of money (72% of EMR and 51% of WMR migrants pay between 1 and 5 thousand USD), often with some facilitation especially on the EMR. Migrants along the WAAR, increasingly used and with an increasing number of fatal reported shipwrecks in 2023, is at the same time much riskier and much cheaper. Migrants travelling along the CMR are more varied by nationality and by travel arrangements, with some especially high costs paid by migrants travelling by flight to Libya from the Asian continent, and lower costs incurred by land journeys within the African continent.

²⁰ “The hawala system refers to an informal channel for transferring funds from one location to another through service providers—known as hawaladars—regardless of the nature of the transaction and the countries involved.” (IMF, 2003). See [here](#) a recent publication by UNODC on the use of the hawala system in migrants’ smuggling.

4 INTENTIONS

4.1 INTENDED DESTINATION

Spain (33%), Italy (24%), France (12%), Germany (8%) and Greece (7%) are the top 5 countries of intended destinations overall at the moment, with some differences across routes and sex of the respondents.

Most migrants arrived in Italy say that Italy is their final destination for the time being (79%), with a minority mentioning Germany (6%), France (6%) and the United Kingdom (3%) as desired final destination.

Migrants in Greece are more evenly split between those who intend to stay in Greece (29%), those who mention

they want to reach another European country (28%) and those who mention Germany (21%) as final intended destination.

Migrants travelling along the WMR are more frequently intending to remain in Spain (73%), with some 21 per cent intending to reach France and another 4 per cent mentioning Germany.

Migrants arrived via the WAAR also intend to remain in Spain in most cases (71%), with others mentioning France (21%), Italy (3%) or Germany (2%).

Table 2. Top countries of intended destination, by route, sex and total (%)

Destination	CMR	EMR	WAAR	WMR	Total		
Spain	<1%	<1%	71%	73%	33%	35%	22%
Italy	79%	2%	3%	<1%	24%	26%	17%
France	6%	4%	21%	21%	12%	11%	18%
Germany	6%	21%	2%	4%	8%	8%	12%
Greece	0%	29%	0%	0%	7%	7%	10%
Europe	<1%	28%	0%	0%	7%	7%	10%
United Kingdom	3%	3%	<1%	0%	1%	2%	1%
Belgium	1%	3%	<1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Netherlands	1%	3%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Others	3%	8%	3%	<1%	4%	3%	7%

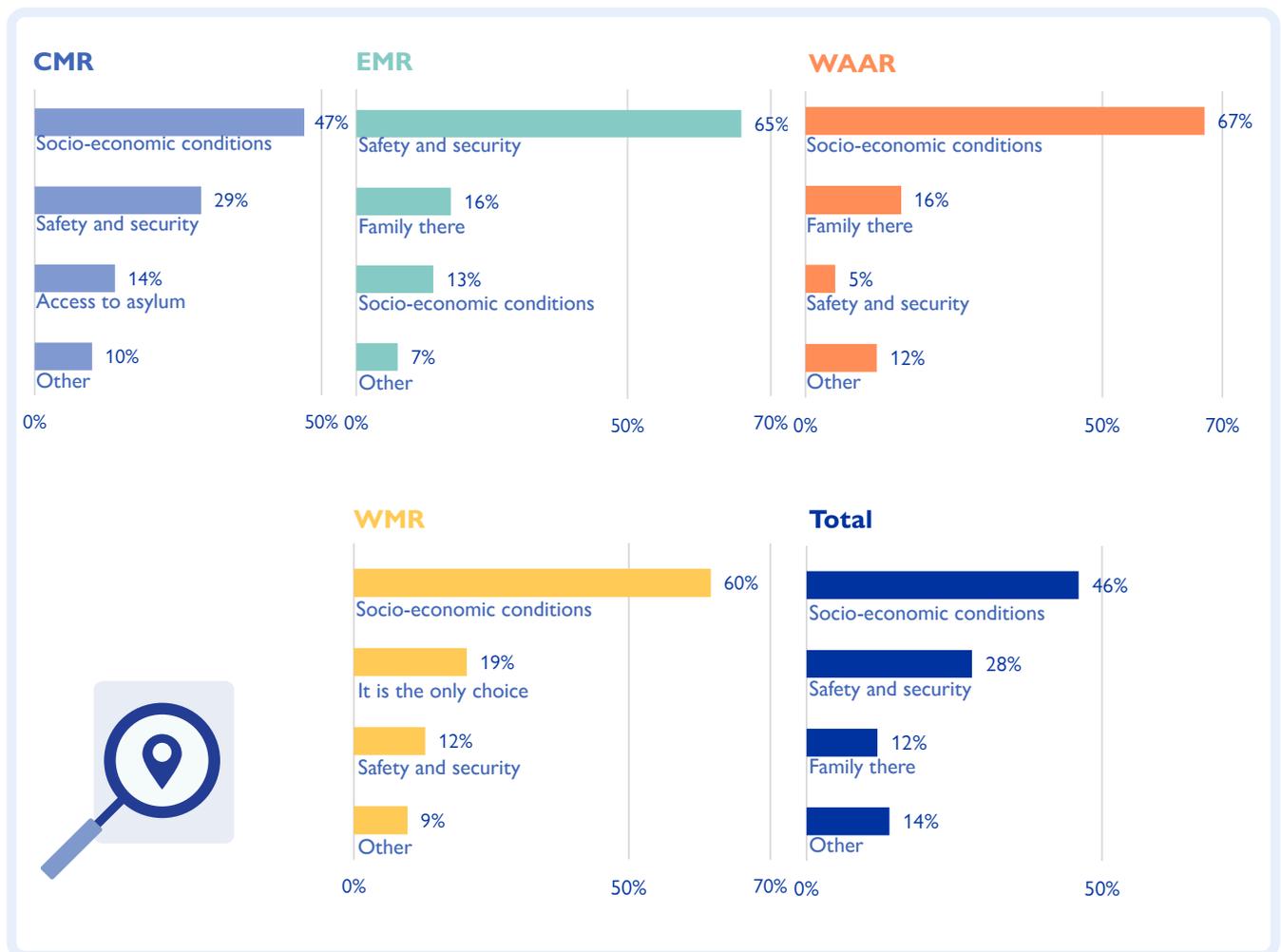
 Remain in current country

Source: DTM FMS Europe. N=3,626

As to why migrants specifically chose the country of destination, less than half (46%) state that this is for the appealing socio-economic conditions, including the education and welfare system, social security, and job opportunities. Twenty-eight per cent say that the choice is made due to safety reasons, while 12 per cent report

to have some members of the (extended) family already in the intended destination. About 40 per cent overall reports to have information about how to access the asylum system or how to regularize the status once at destination.

Figure 15. Main reasons to choose the intended destination, by route, sex and total (%)



Source: DTM FMS Europe. N=3,626

For migrants along the EMR, safety reasons are by far the predominant ones (65%). Migrants in Italy mentioned the ease of access to the asylum procedures more frequently than the average (14% versus 6%), while the present of some family members seem more frequent than the average among migrants travelling along the EMR and the WAAR (16% versus 12%). Migrants arriving in Spain via the WMR report also that the intended destination is “the only choice” quite frequently (19%, compared to 5% overall).

Additionally, regardless of the main reason to choose a destination, 33 per cent of respondents say they have family

members either in the country of intended destination or some other European country. In particular, 18 per cent have at least one family member at destination, while 7 per cent have someone elsewhere in Europe and 9 per cent say they have family members both at destination and somewhere else. Most often, these contacts are with persons belonging to the extended family. Overall, migrants along the WMR seem to have more frequently connection with family members already at destination (40%), while this is far less common among migrants travelling along the CMR (18%).

5 VULNERABILITY AND PROTECTION RISKS DURING THE JOURNEY

5.1 PROTECTION PROBLEMS DURING THE JOURNEY

Interviewees were asked about a list of specific incidents and problems they could have faced during the journey. About 42 per cent of them report to have experienced at least one of the problems listed: financial issues, hunger, robbery, lack of shelter, health issues, issues with documents, attacks by others. Migrants along the CMR and EMR report more frequently problems than those travelling via the WMR and WAAR on average.

In particular, travelling along the CMR is associated with financial issues, hunger, and robbery for more than half of the sample and with lack of shelter and health issues for more than a third of them. Financial issues (22%), robbery (16%) and health issues (16%) are also reported by migrants along the EMR in high shares.

Table 3. Share of migrants reporting problems during the journey, by route, sex and total

Problems	CMR	EMR	WAAR	WMR	Total		
At least 1 of the below	74%	49%	21%	12%	42%	42%	44%
Financial	56%	22%	7%	1%	24%	24%	23%
Hunger	51%	16%	7%	7%	22%	22%	20%
Robbery	50%	8%	7%	1%	19%	20%	11%
No shelter	35%	15%	7%	1%	16%	17%	14%
Health issues	34%	16%	7%	4%	17%	15%	22%
Issues with documents	29%	7%	4%	1%	12%	13%	7%
Attacks from others	11%	9%	1%	1%	6%	7%	6%
Others	13%	4%	2%	2%	6%	6%	5%

Source: DTM FMS Europe. N=3,626

Among those who say they have been robbed, most of them mentioned that it happened in Libya (37%), Algeria (18%), Tunisia (14%), Türkiye (11%) and Morocco (5%). Similarly, the theft or loss of documents happened more frequently in Libya (37%), Algeria (17%), Türkiye (13%), Tunisia (12%) and Morocco (6%). The reported lack of shelter happened often in Libya (28%), Türkiye (21%), Tunisia (17%), Algeria (13%), and Western Sahara (8%). Health issues happened in Libya (18%), in Italy (17%), Tunisia (13%), Türkiye (11%) and Greece (10%): some are related to living and travelling in precarious circumstances, with no, scarce or dirty food and water (skin problems, cold and rushes, leg and feet pain and problems, dehydration and sunburst) while others are linked to violence experienced (body pains, broken arms, injuries from beating by smuggler and border police). Financial issues happened in Libya (31%), Tunisia (16%),

Greece (14%), Algeria (12%) and Türkiye (10%). Migrants suffered from hunger more frequently in Libya (31%), Tunisia (17%), Türkiye (14%), Algeria (13%), Morocco (5%). Attacks by others are reported to have happened more frequently in Türkiye (33%), Libya (22%), Tunisia (19%), Algeria (7%) and the Islamic Republic of Iran (2%).

Results presented in this section are consistent with previous FMS rounds in Europe.²¹

Overall and with few exceptions, incidents reported happened in the last transit countries, those which are closer to Europe and from where migrants eventually arrive in a European country. Even though in 2023 it is not the main country of departure of migrants travelling along the CMR, Libya remains the country with the highest numbers of reports of incidents by migrants overall.

²¹ Please see an IOM's DTM report with a focus on CMR and EMR in 2017: Galos, E., L. Bartolini, H. Cook and N. Grant (2017) [Migrant Vulnerability to Human Trafficking and Exploitation: Evidence from the Central and Eastern Mediterranean Migration Routes](#). International Organization for Migration (IOM): Geneva.

5.2 INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCES OF VIOLENCE, ABUSE, AND EXPLOITATION

The questionnaire also included a module which gathers data on migrants' vulnerability and the forms of abuse, violence, and exploitation they may have experienced or witnessed during the journey. More specifically, the survey includes eight questions that aim to capture information about whether the respondent had worked without getting the expected payment, was forced to work against their will, was offered a marriage (for them or close family member – child or sibling), was kept closed against their will, had experienced physical violence, was forced to travel, was deceived into travel, had access to travel documents during the journey.

While these questions are not meant to identify potential victims of trafficking or abuse and exploitation, they provide indications about recurrent instances and risks to which migrants are exposed during their journeys. If interviewers came across respondents who requested further support, they referred these cases to the relevant protection actors.²²

About 56 per cent report to have experienced at least one of the eight types of incidents described in the questions.

The share of reported incidents is higher for migrants travelling along the CMR (79%) and the WMR (74%), while it is lower than the average for migrants along the WAAR (41%) and the EMR (33%). Female respondents, on average, report less frequently to have experienced experiences of abuse, violence, and exploitation. This can be partially explained by the fact that the list of indicators pertains more to the sphere of travel and work, while does not specifically target types of violence which are more frequently associated with girls and women like sexual violence, but also by the fact that women tend to travel more frequently with other family members and that being in a family group could act as a protective factor. While those travelling with non-family group reported at least one incident in 61 per cent of the cases, and solo travellers in 57 per cent of the cases, the share is lower (45%) among those who were travelling with at least one family member.

Unpacking this summary indicator, the type of incidents that seem to be more frequent vary sensibly across routes too.

Table 4. Share of positive responses to indicators of abuse, violence, exploitation, by route, sex, and total (%)

	CMR	EMR	WAAR	WMR	Total		
1. Unpaid work	31%	7%	2%	<1%	11%	12%	8%
2. Forced work	13%	2%	0%	0%	4%	5%	3%
3. Offered marriage	2%	1%	0%	<1%	1%	0%	3%
4. Held against will	27%	2%	<1%	<1%	8%	10%	3%
5. Physical violence	44%	12%	<1%	1%	16%	18%	9%
6. Forced to travel	9%	5%	0%	0%	4%	4%	5%
7. Lied to travel	6%	7%	<1%	1%	4%	4%	5%
8. Access to identity document							
Never had	42%	6%	52%	77%	40%	42%	29%
Controlled by others	13%	3%	2%	0%	6%	6%	3%
Lost	14%	3%	3%	5%	7%	8%	3%
Stolen	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%	2%
At least one of 8 indicators	79%	33%	41%	74%	56%	59%	43%

Source: DTM FMS Europe. N=3,626

²² For more information, please refer to the [Methodology](#).

5.2.1 UNPAID LABOUR

About 11 per cent of the migrants report that they have worked at least once during the journey without receiving the expected payment. The share is the highest along the CMR (31%) and the lowest along the WMR (<1%).



About 39 per cent of the reported experiences happened in Libya. Other countries frequently mentioned are Algeria (19%), Tunisia (18%), Türkiye (14%) and many others.

Respondents describe instances of unpaid labour in various kinds of manual and hard works in the construction sector (masons, painters, carpenters, stoneworkers), in farming, gardening and agriculture and in the cleaning sector (inside private houses as well as in restaurants or in the streets).

“When I was released from detention, I started working in a farm where they gave me a place where to sleep together with other migrants in Tripoli. They gave us water and a little food but they never paid us.”

Man from Bangladesh, 25 years old, interviewed in Sicily, Italy

5.2.2 FORCED LABOUR

About four per cent reported having been forced to work or conduct activities against their will. This almost exclusively happened to migrants along the CMR (13% of them) and to a lesser extent along the EMR (2%).

Two thirds of the incidents happened in Libya (65%), while others are reported to have happened in Tunisia (11%), Algeria (11%), Türkiye 6%) and other transit countries. As for unpaid labour, also in the case of forced labour the most frequently mentioned sectors are construction, farming, and cleaning, although few instances of female respondents also mention sex work and or hard manual work done while being detained by armed groups and facilitators.



“To be released from prison, they obliged me to do very hard jobs, breaking stones in construction sites.”

Men from Ghana, 21 year old, interviewed in Sicily, Italy



5.2.3 OFFERS OF AN ARRANGED MARRIAGE

One per cent of respondents (31 respondents) reported they had been approached by someone offering a marriage. Offers of arranged marriage for the respondents or close family members are reported to have happened mostly in Libya, Tunisia, Greece, Türkiye, Albania, and Algeria.

5.2.4 HELD AGAINST WILL

Eight per cent of respondents report they had been held in a location against their will during their journey by individuals or groups that were not part of official authorities. This type of violence is almost never reported by migrants along the WAAR and WMR and seldomly reported by migrants along the EMR (2%), while it is reported by more than a fourth (27%) of all migrants interviewed along the CMR.



Libya (64%) is by far the country where transiting migrants more frequently report to have spent periods in detention-like conditions, kept closed against their will. This was linked to the periods spent waiting for the transportation to be arranged from cities in the desert to the northern part of the country (for example from Kufra to Tripoli), or accounts of “kidnapping for ransom” or “detention” by smugglers to obtain more money to be freed and to be able to reach coastal cities and board vessels of various kind (rubber boats, wooden fishing boats) to cross the Mediterranean.²³ Fewer migrants mentioned Algeria (12%), Tunisia (34%), Türkiye (24%) and other countries.



They took me from Misrata and took me to Tripoli. I stayed there 2 weeks, and I had to pay to be released. Then I paid again to be brought back to Misrata to get on the boat.

Man from Bangladesh, 31 years old, interviewed in Calabria, Italy



5.2.5 EXPERIENCED SOME FORM OF PHYSICAL VIOLENCE



About 16 per cent of the sample report to have experienced some form of physical violence during their journeys. Sometimes, respondents describe in the open comments experiences that also involve sexual and gender-based violence. Similarly, as for other indicators, physical violence is reported mostly among migrants travelling along the CMR (44%), and to a lesser extent among migrants on the EMR (12%) while rarely among migrants on the WMR and WAAR (1 and <1% respectively). Coherently, instances of physical violence (613 in total) were reported to have happened mostly in Libya (42%), Tunisia (18%), Türkiye (14%), Algeria (13%), alongside many other transit countries.

Some accounts are relative to practices of smugglers and facilitators at some point of the journey, while others refer to the activities of police and other authorities especially while patrolling border areas.



Smugglers at the borders beat some people and stole all our things, documents, money.

Men from Afghanistan, 35 years old, interviewed in Friuli Venezia Giulia, Italy



²³ This is in line with existing evidence from UN agencies and academic studies. Please see the latest Secretary-General's annual report on migrant smuggling and human trafficking off the coast of Libya, covering developments from 30 August 2022 to 10 August 2023 at this [link](#).

5.2.6 FORCED TO TRAVEL OR MOVE²⁴

Four per cent of respondents report that they been forced to travel or to move (9% on the CMR, 5% on the EMR, less than 1% on WMR and WAAR). This happened in Türkiye (27%), Libya (25%), Islamic Republic of Iran (8%) and Syrian Arab Republic (8%).



5.2.7 DECEIVED INTO TRAVEL²⁵



Four per cent of respondents state that they been lied to, tricked, manipulated, indebted, given false promises, or otherwise deceived to get to travel or to move (7% on the EMR, 6% on the CMR, 1% on the WMR and <1% on the WAAR). False information and indebtedness are described both in relation to the journey (logistics, organization) and in relation to the type of work/occupation to be found at destination. This is reported to have happened in Libya (30%), Türkiye (27%), Pakistan (5%) and Bangladesh (4%).



I was told the boat was going to Italy, not to Greece.

Boy from Egypt, 17 years old, interviewed in Greece



5.2.8 TRAVEL DOCUMENTS²⁶

Only 41 per cent of respondents' state to have access to their travel documents and that they had control over them during the journey. Almost the same share (40%) report that they never had their own travel documents. Also, 7 per cent report they lost them during the journey, 6 per cent say that someone else had control over them and 2 per cent say they had been stolen. About 5 per cent prefer not to answer to the question.

Overall, the share of those who never had documents is higher on the WMR (77%), on the WAAR (52%) and on the CMR (42%), while it is low among migrants on the EMR (6%). On the other side, migrants on the CMR report more frequently than those on the other routes that someone else had control over their own travel documents (13%).

Issues of any kind with documents are reported to happen in Libya (33%), Türkiye (16%), Algeria (15%), Tunisia (13%) and Morocco (6%) more frequently.



The smugglers at the border beat some people and stole all our things: backpacks, money, documents.

Woman from Afghanistan, 35 years old, interviewed in Greece



²⁴ This question has been included in the FMS questionnaire for the first time in 2023.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

6 MIGRANT NEEDS

Respondents were asked their two most important needs at the time of the survey. Overall, the main reported needs are support with employment (45%), support with documentation (25%), legal services (13%), health services (10%) and adult education (10%), with some variations across route that testify the different mix of pressing humanitarian and emergency needs for persons who are still considering themselves as in transit, and needs related to the willingness of regularizing their legal position and start a new life at destination.

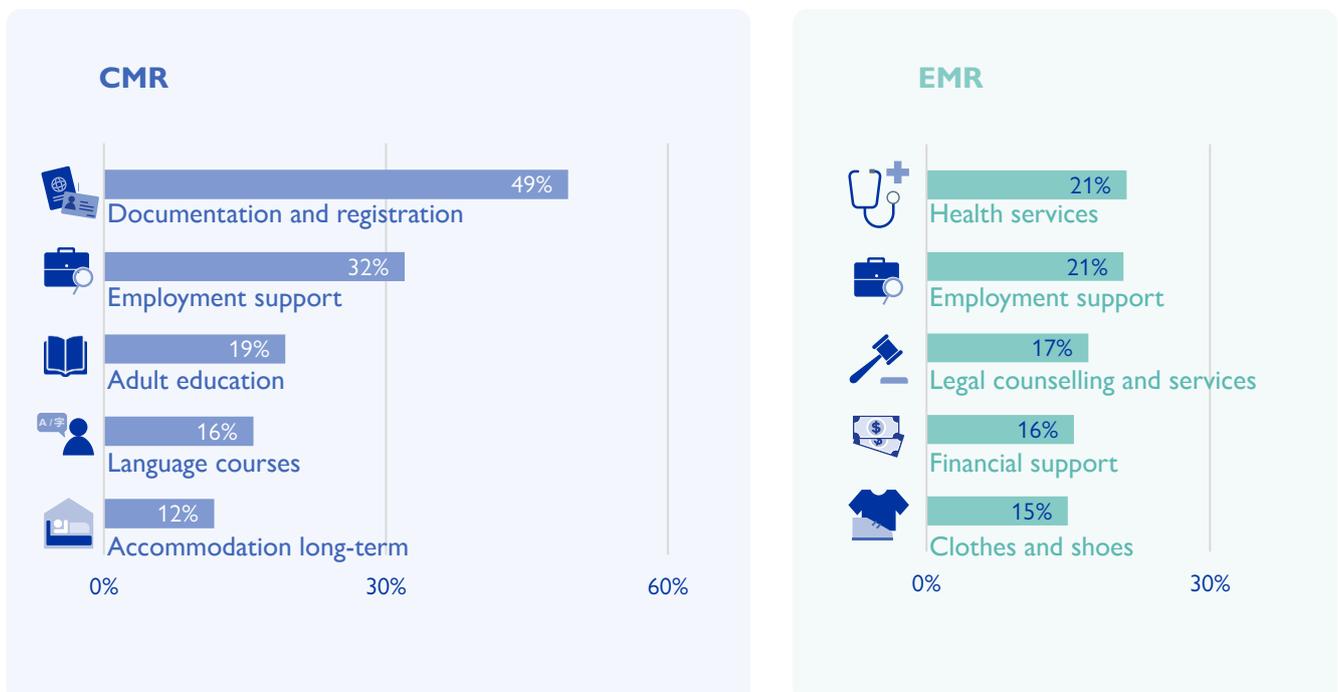
Along the CMR, migrants mentioned in half of the cases the need of support with documentation (49%), followed by support with employment (32%), access to adult education (19%), to language courses (16%) and to long-term accommodation solutions (12%).

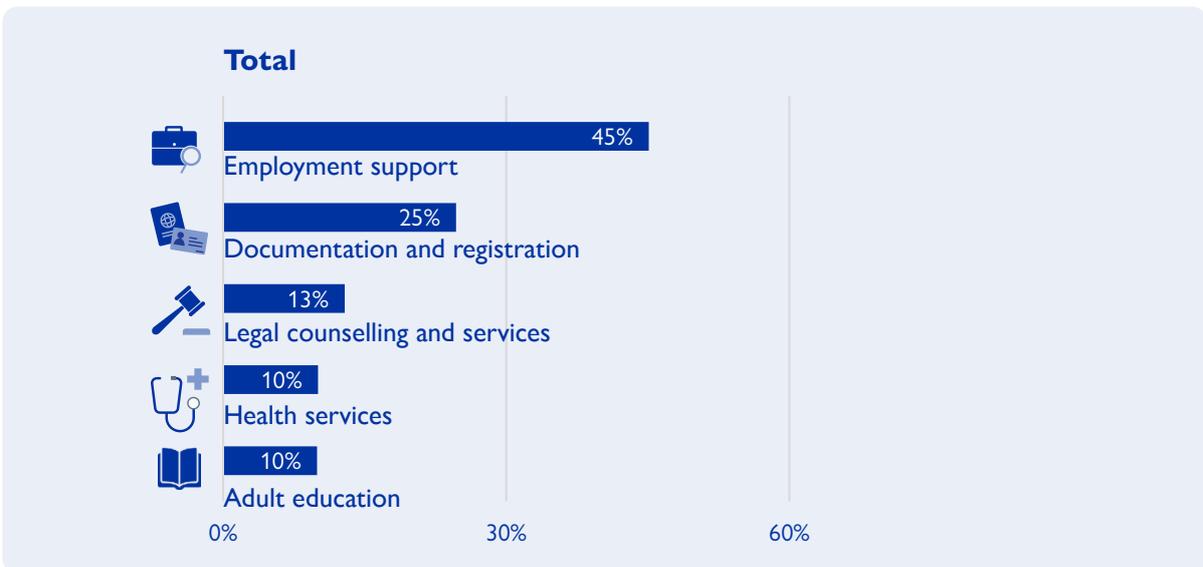
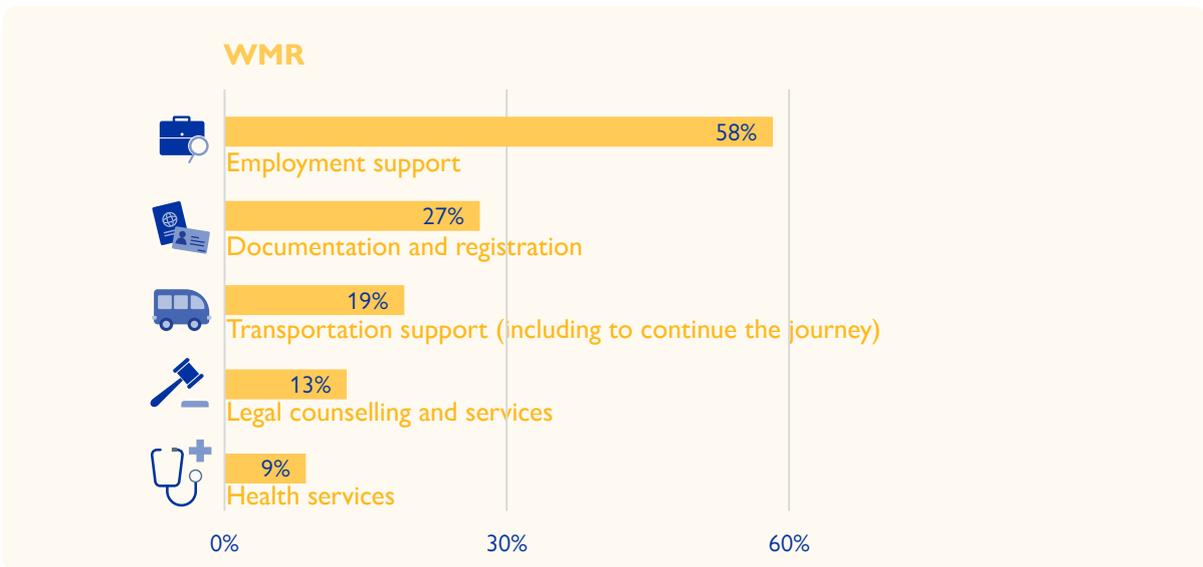
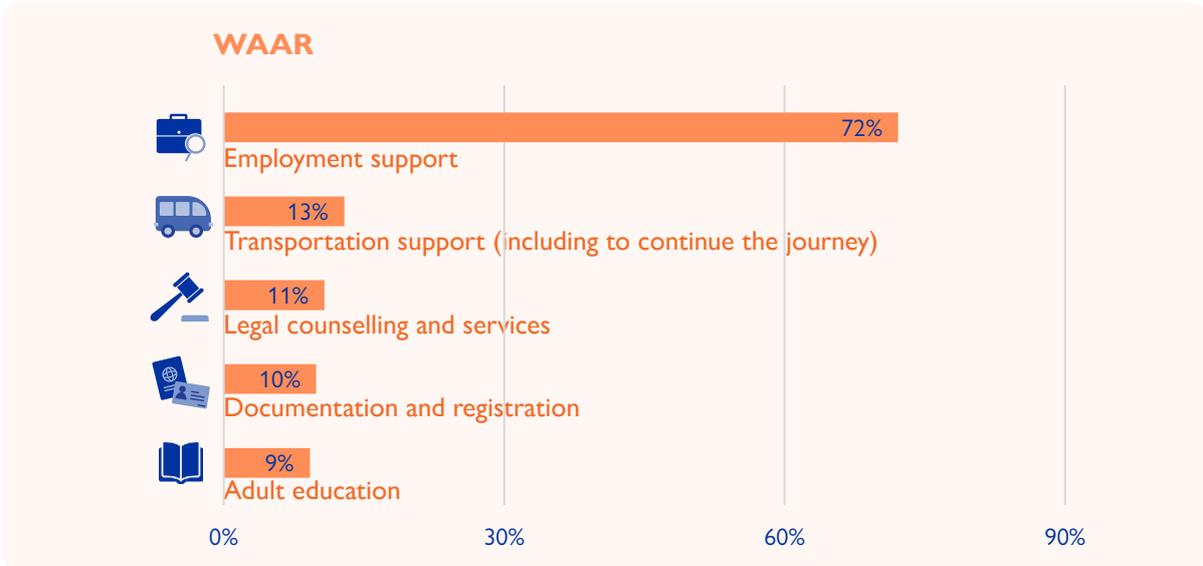
Along the EMR, migrants mentioned health services and employment support as main needs (21%), followed by legal services (17%) but also financial support (16%) and support with non-food items such as clothes and shoes (15%).

Along the WMR, employment support is mentioned in more than half of the cases (58%), followed by support with documentation (27%) but also transportation support (19%), legal services (13%) and health services (9%).

Along the WAAR, employment support is mentioned by three fourth of migrants (72%) with others also mentioning transportation support to continue the journey (13%), legal services (11%) and support with documentation (11%), and adult education (9%).

Figure 16. Top 5 needs at the moment, by route and total (%)





Source: DTM FMS Europe. N=3,626 - more than 1 answer possible

7 MIXED MIGRATION ROUTES TO EUROPE - SELECTED NATIONALITIES

This section of the report outlines the different routes taken by migrants (i.e. through which countries they transit before reaching the arrival country) and the percentage of migrants who use these routes by country of origin, and the means of transportation migrants use.

Country of nationality

- 📍 Departure country
 - Transit country
 - Arrival country
- % of migrants who travel this route **XXX**
Route

ISO3 country code for the countries mentioned: here.

DEMOGRAPHIC	MAIN ROUTE	TRANSPORTATION
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Algeria

Main migration routes: WMR (98%), EMR (2%)

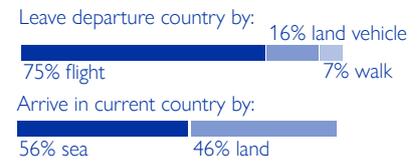
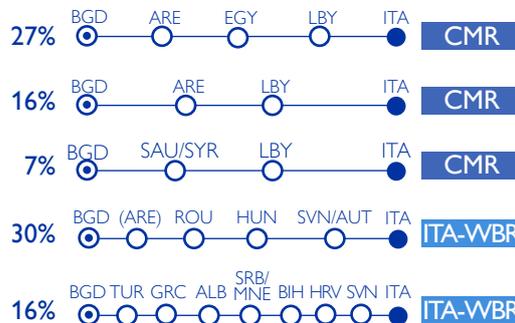
📄 246 respondents
81% M 19% F
Average age 29



Bangladesh

Main migration routes: CMR (50%), ITA-WB (46%)

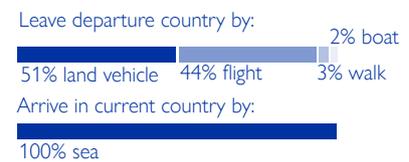
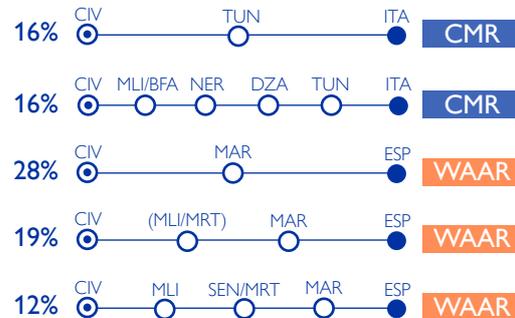
📄 212 respondents
99% M 1% F
Average age 25



Côte d'Ivoire

Main migration routes: CMR (39%), WAAR (61%)

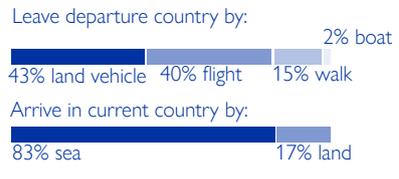
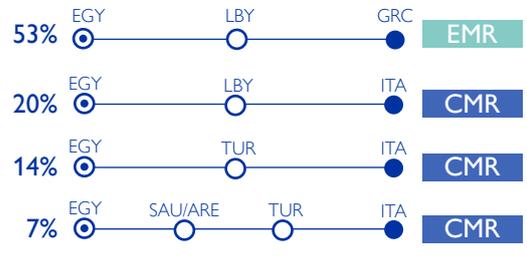
📄 209 respondents
63% M 37% F
Average age 25



DEMOGRAPHIC MAIN ROUTE TRANSPORTATION

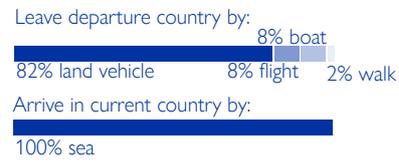
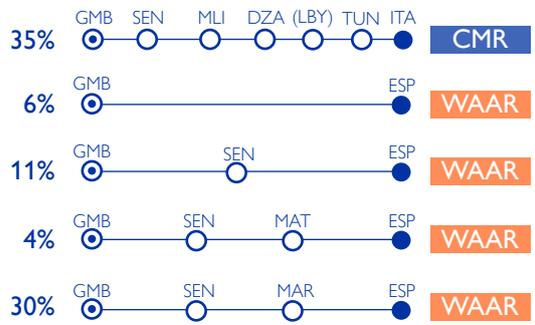
Egypt Main migration routes: CMR (56%), EMR (41%), ITA-WB (3%)

117 respondents
99% M 1% F
Average age 24



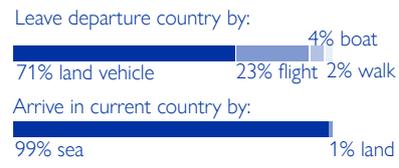
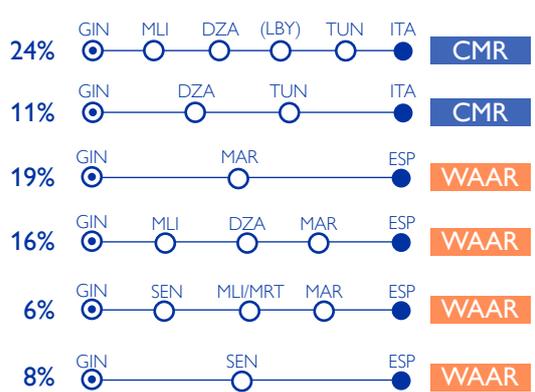
Gambia, The Main migration routes: WAAR (54%), CMR (44%), EMR (1%), WMR (1%)

158 respondents
96% M 4% F
Average age 23



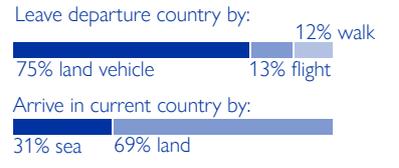
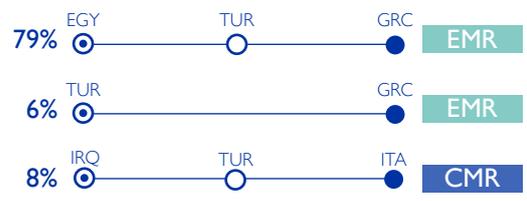
Guinea Main migration routes: WAAR (56%), CMR (42%)

195 respondents
83% M 16% F 1% Other
Average age 23



Iraq Main migration routes: EMR (85%), CMR (9%), ITA-WB (5%)

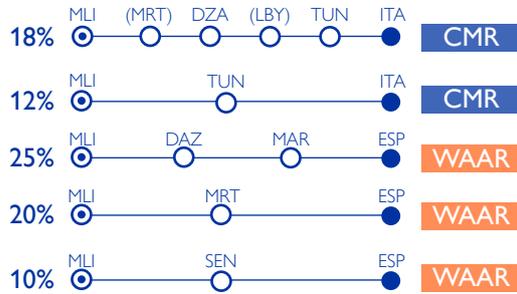
170 respondents
75% M 25% F
Average age 31



DEMOGRAPHIC MAIN ROUTE TRANSPORTATION

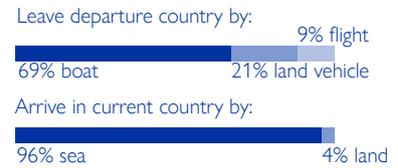
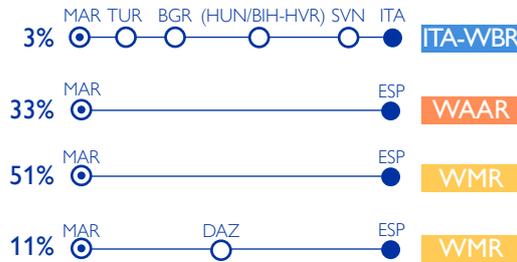
Mali Main migration routes: WAAR (63%), CMR (35%)

202 respondents
95% M 5% F
Average age 25.5



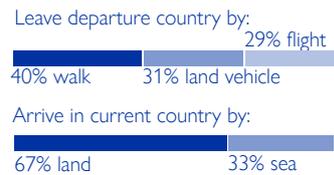
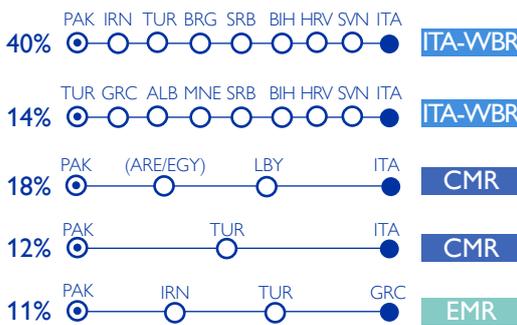
Morocco Main migration routes: WMR (62%), WAAR (33%), ITA-WB (3%)

546 respondents
89% M 11% F
Average age 28



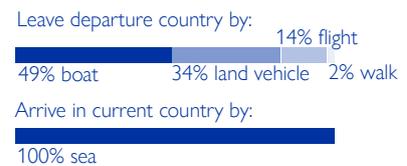
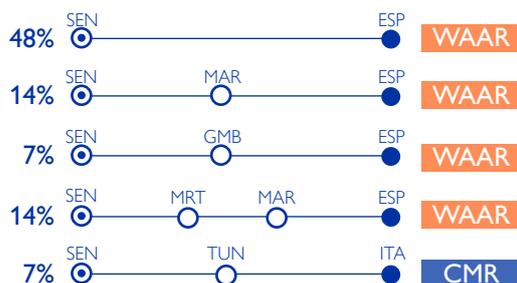
Pakistan Main migration routes: ITA-WB (63%), CMR (31%), EMR (6%)

170 respondents
98% M 2% F
Average age 26



Senegal Main migration routes: CMR (13%), WAAR (87%)

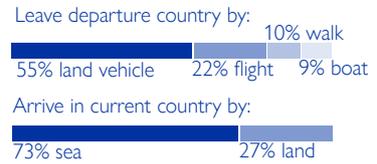
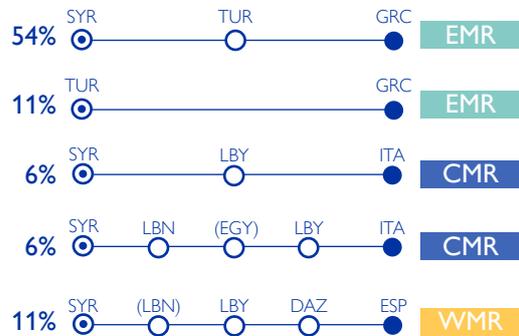
195 respondents
92% M 8% F
Average age 27



DEMOGRAPHIC MAIN ROUTE TRANSPORTATION

Syrian Arab Republic Main migration routes: EMR (69%), CMR (19%), WMR (12%)

170 respondents
75% M 25% F
Average age 30



FYI: ISO3 Country Code for above

ALB	Albania	ITA	Italy
ARE	United Arab Emirates	LBN	Lebanon
AUT	Austria	LBY	Libya
BFA	Burkina Faso	MAR	Morocco
BGD	Bangladesh	MLI	Mali
BGR	Bulgaria	MNE	Montenegro
BIH	Bosnia and Herzegovina	MRT	Mauritania
CIV	Côte d'Ivoire	NER	Niger
DZA	Algeria	PAK	Pakistan
EGY	Egypt	ROU	Romania
ESP	Spain	SAU	Saudi Arabia
GIN	Guinea	SEN	Senegal
GMB	Gambia	SRB	Serbia
GRC	Greece	SVN	Slovenia
HRV	Croatia	SYR	Syrian Arab Republic
HUN	Hungary	TUN	Tunisia
IRN	Islamic Republic of Iran	TUR	Türkiye
IRQ	Iraq		

8 NORTH-EAST OF ITALY: MIGRANTS AT THE END OF THE WB ROUTE

In 2023, Slovenian authorities registered more than 60 thousand migrants entered by land from Croatia while travelling through at one of the ends of the so-called Western Balkan route.²⁷ Almost three thirds of them are Afghans (29%), Moroccans (15%), Pakistan (9%), Bangladeshis (6%) and Syrians (6%). Data on registrations of entries by land from Slovenia to Italy are not available from Italian authorities but migrants are reported to move towards Italy, being hosted in transit and reception centres of various kind of the Friuli Venezia Giulia region.

Hence, DTM Italy deployed FMS also in that region and surveyed 394 migrants with an average profile very different from those who arrive by sea after crossing the Mediterranean Sea. Most of them were young adult single men: males were 97 per cent, 70 per cent were single and almost half (49%) were between 18 and 24 years old. Vast majority (88%) were coming from Pakistan (46%), Bangladesh (25%), Afghanistan (11%) and Morocco (4%). Most reported to be travelling in a group with non-family members (56%), or with facilitators (21%), while smaller shares were travelling alone (17%) or with some family member (6%).

Main reasons for leaving the country of origin among migrants arriving to Italy via the Western Balkan route in 2023 were escaping personal or targeted violence (50%), economic reasons (40%) and war and conflict (10%). Two thirds (66%) of them reported to have left their origin country within 3 months prior to the interview, paying overall about 5 and 7.5 thousand USD (30%) or between 2.5 and 5 thousand USD (29%).

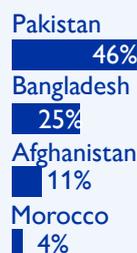
The share of those reporting some issue or problem during the journey is quite high: 84 per cent had financial problems, 54 per cent suffered from lack of shelter, 34 per cent experienced hunger, 31 per cent reported robbery and 26 per cent health issues. Most of these problems were faced in one of the transit countries mostly used in the Western Balkan region (Bulgaria, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia). At the same time, physical violence was reported by 43 per cent of the respondents as incidents took place more frequently in transit locations of Croatia, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, and Serbia. Working without getting the expected payment is also reported by almost a quarter (23%) of respondents, happening those countries where the transit period is longer on average: Romania, Greece, Türkiye, and Bulgaria.

Almost all (98%) had Italy as intended final destination and had lodged or intending to lodge an asylum application in the country (90%). That choice was driven by the perceived possibility of reaching safety and security (46%), the good socio-economic conditions (40%) and the accessibility of the asylum system (13%) in Italy. Coherently with the intention to remain in Italy, most of them reported needs relative to the possibility of settling in the country: support in finding employment (63%), provision of language courses (37%), support with documentation (37%) and with long-term accommodation solutions (29%).

Demographics



Top Nationalities



Main Current Needs



²⁷ See the DTM Europe arrival data <https://dtm.iom.int/content/europe-migration-arrivals-dashboard>.

9 CHILDREN ON THE MOVE TO EUROPE

9.1 MIGRANT AND REFUGEE CHILDREN TRAVELLING TO EUROPE

Data on mixed migration flows to Europe are rarely available disaggregated by age, sex, and nationalities at the same time. IOM, together with UNHCR and UNICEF, monitors available data on children on the move to Europe by sea and by land since 2015.²⁸ Children with less than 18 years, including adolescents travelling alone and separated from any family member or responsible adults, are known to represent an important share of total arrivals by sea in Italy (17% of total arrivals, with 69% of them considered

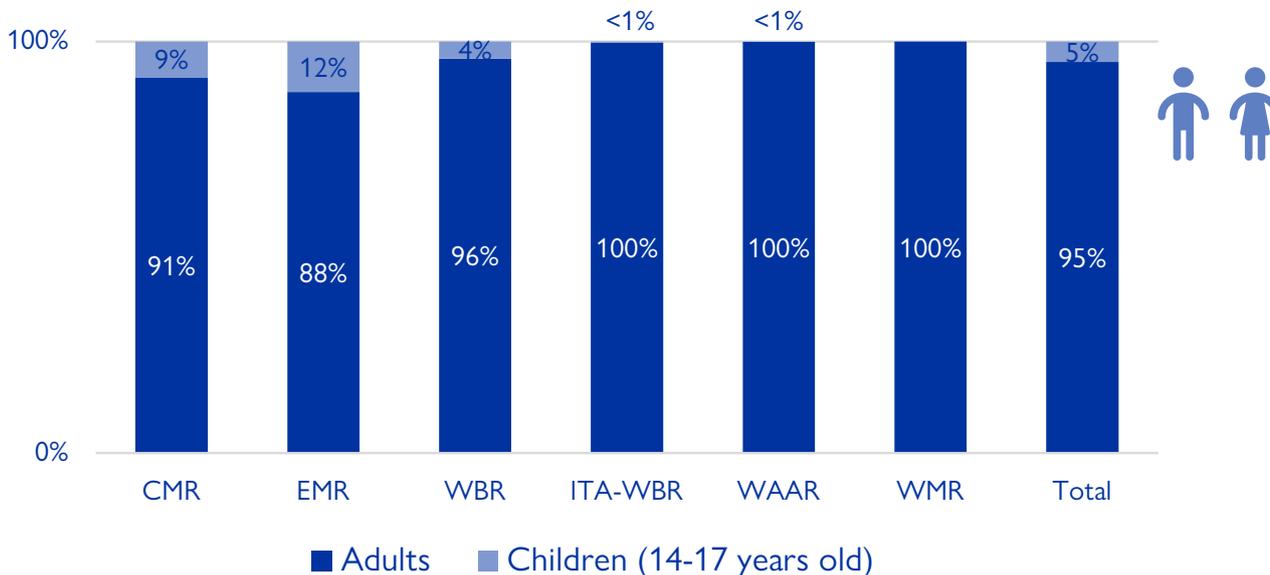
to be UASC),²⁹ and of total arrivals to Greece (23% of total arrivals).³⁰ No age-disaggregated data are available for arrivals to Spain along the WMR or WAAR. Also, 24 per cent of first-time asylum applications in Greece in 2023 were lodged by children, as well as 19 per cent of applications in Spain and 8 per cent of applications in Italy³¹ (Eurostat).³² The share of UASC among child asylum applicants ranges from 21 per cent in Italy to 19 per cent in Greece and 8 per cent in Spain.³³

9.2 FMS SURVEYS WITH ADOLESCENTS IN EUROPE

In 2023, DTM in Europe also targeted adolescents between 14 and 17 years of age in Italy, Greece, and the Western Balkans.³⁴ A total of 248 surveys were collected with respondents between 14 and 17 years of age: 112 in

Greece (12% of surveys along the EMR), 94 in Italy (9% of surveys along the CMR) and 42 in the WB (4% of surveys along the WB route). Most of them are boys (96%), while girls represent 4 per cent (11 surveys).

Figure 17. FMS collected in Europe by age of the respondent, by route and total (2023)



Source: DTM FMS Europe and the Western Balkans. N=5,029

²⁸ Please see the latest [Refugee and Migrant Children in Europe - Accompanied, Unaccompanied and Separated 2022 Factsheet](#).

²⁹ DTM Europe from Italy's Ministry of Interior data for 2023.

³⁰ DTM Europe from Greece's Ministry of Migration and Asylum data for January-September 2023.

³¹ According to Italy's legislation, a specific protection permit can be granted to UASC even without lodging an asylum claim.

³² Eurostat migr_asyappctzm accessed on 27 February 2024: [Asylum applicants by type, citizenship, age and sex - monthly data \[migr_asyappctzm_custom_10107300\]](#)

³³ Eurostat migr_asyumactm accessed on 27 February 2024: [Unaccompanied minor asylum applicants by type, citizenship, age and sex - monthly data \[migr_asyumactm_custom_10107831\]](#)

³⁴ Adolescents between 14 and 17 years old were addressed by enumerators in Italy and Greece only after having obtained written consent from the parent or legal guardian. In Spain, only adults of 18 years old or more were proposed to participate into the survey. IOM staff in the field follows relevant child protection safeguards when engaging with adolescents, and has referral mechanism in place to provide further information and support to vulnerable migrants including children when needed.

The top nationalities are Afghanistan (23%), Egypt (15%), Guinea (8%), Syrian Arab Republic (8%) and Côte d'Ivoire (7%). The top three nationalities of children interviewed along the CMR are Guinea (23%), Côte d'Ivoire (19%), and the Gambia (16%). The main nationalities of children along the EMR are Egypt (30%),

Afghanistan (21%) and Syrian Arab Republic (14%). Along the WBR route, three fourths of children interviewed are from Afghanistan (76%), followed by Syrian Arab Republic (12%) and Morocco (7%).

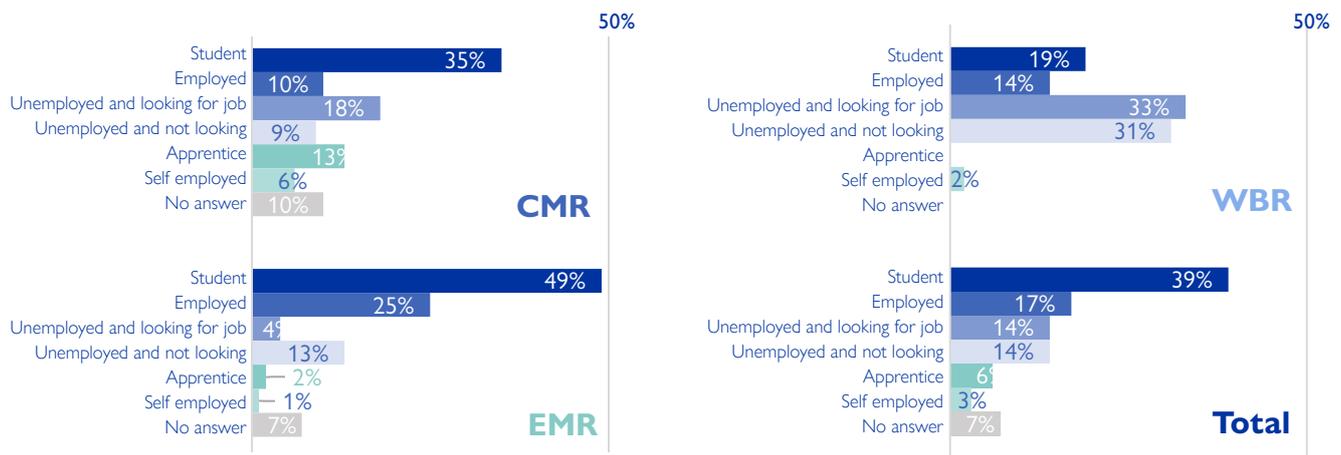
Child respondents reported to have primary education in 38 per cent of the cases (35% in CMR, 30% in EMR, 67% in WBR), secondary lower education in 30 per cent of the cases (19% in CMR, 44% in EMR and 17% in WBR) and secondary upper education in 5 per cent of the cases (11%

in CMR, 2% in EMR and <1% in WBR). The remaining 27 per cent did not attend school or have non-formal education.

Almost half (48%) of them report to have left school since more than 2 years at the moment of the interview, while 24 left school less than 1 year prior the interview and 19 per cent between 1 and 2 years. Another 8 per cent never went to school, and 2 were not sure.

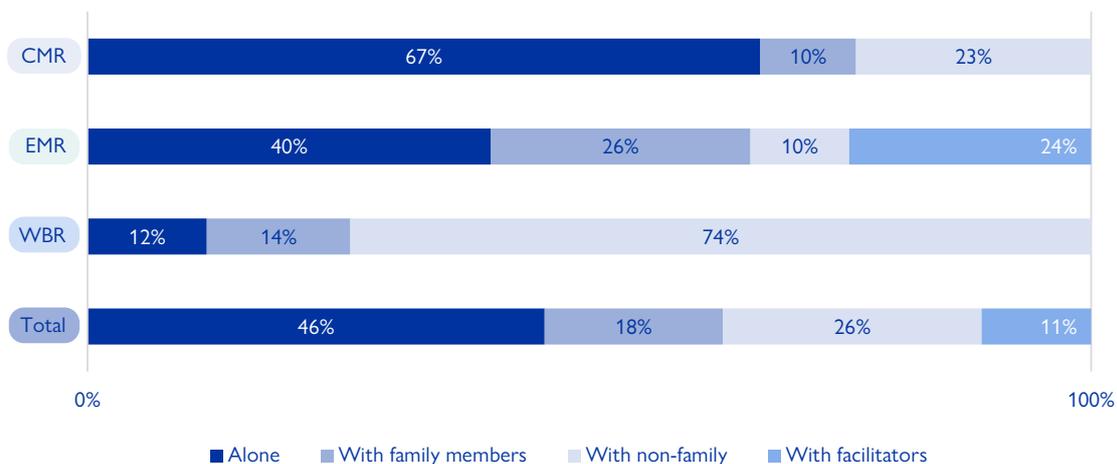
About 39 per cent of them were students before leaving the country of origin, while 20 per cent were employed or self-employed, 14 per cent were looking for a job and 14 per cent were unemployed but not looking for a job. The remaining were either apprentice (6%) or did not answer (7%).

Figure 18. Employment status before leaving among children, by route and total, 2023 (%)



Source: DTM FMS Europe, N=248

Figure 19. Mode of travel among children, by route and total, 2023 (%)



Source: DTM FMS Europe, N=248

Less than half (46%) travelled alone, while 37 per cent travelled with a group of non-family persons or facilitators and only 18 per cent with at least one family member. The share of those travelling alone is higher among children

on the CMR (67%) than those on the EMR (40%) and WBR (12%). Also, about 24 of those travelling with someone report they have been separated from other family members during the journey.

9.3 REASONS AND INTENTIONS

Reasons for leaving the country of origin vary depending on the route and nationality of the respondents. Along the CMR, children report economic reasons as primary motivation to leave their country in 44 per cent of the cases, followed by limited access to basic services (32%) and being subject to or threaten by personal, targeted violence (23%). Along the EMR, war and conflict is mentioned by 43 per cent of the children, followed by economic reasons (38%) and personal violence (25%). Children interviewed in the WB mentioned most frequently war and conflict (67%), followed by limited access to basic services (24%) and economic reasons (21%).

Table 5. Reasons for leaving the country of origin among children, by route and total, 2023 (%)

Reasons	CMR	EMR	WBR	Total
Economic reasons	44%	38%	21%	38%
War and conflict	17%	43%	67%	37%
Limited access to basic services	32%	19%	24%	25%
Personal violence	23%	25%	7%	21%
Education	12%	3%	2%	6%
Slow environmental change	3%	3%	5%	3%
Family	0%	4%	0%	2%
Avoid military service	0%	4%	0%	2%
Sudden natural disaster	1%	1%	0%	1%

Source: DTM FMS Europe, N=248

Table 6. Top countries of intended destination among children, by route and total, 2023 (%)

Destination	CMR	EMR	WBR	Total
Italy	90%	12%	21%	43%
Greece	0%	48%	0%	22%
Germany	2%	18%	60%	19%
Europe	0%	10%	0%	4%
France	3%	0%	2%	2%
Belgium	0%	3%	2%	2%
Netherlands	0%	4%	0%	2%
Others	5%	5%	15%	6%

Source: DTM FMS Europe, N=248

At the time of the interview, most children seem to be willing to remain in the country where they are. About 90 per cent of those interviewed in Italy report the intention to stay in Italy, while a minority intend to reach France (3%), Germany (2%) and few other countries. In Greece, almost half of the children (48%) mention the intention to stay in Greece, while others mention Germany (18%) or Europe in general (10%) as final intended destination. Germany (60%) and Italy (21%) are the main countries of intended destination for adolescents interviewed along the WBR.

9.4 VULNERABILITY TO ABUSE, VIOLENCE, EXPLOITATION

Three third (73%) of children report to have had at least one of the problems listed in the survey (91% on CMR, 68% on EMR and 48% on WBR).

Hunger (52%), financial problems (47%), lack of shelter (36%) and robbery (31%) are the most frequently reported problems by child respondents overall.

Similarly, very high shares of positive responses among children are found also for the indicators of violence, abuse and exploitation included in the survey, with 73 per cent reporting at least one of them.

The most frequently reported among children are issues related to the access and control over identity and travel documents: 61 per cent of them never had valid travel documents, while others report to have lost them (14%), to them stolen (3%) or that someone has or had control

over them during the journey (2%). Lies, tricks, deception to make them travel are also reported (9%), while a smaller share (4%) affirm to have been forced to move.

More than one third of children overall (35%) mention to have suffered from physical violence (54% along the CMR, 26% along the EMR and 14% along the WBR). Unpaid work, forced work and being kept against will in a detention-like conditions are also reported by a significant number of children especially among the CMR, and to a lesser extent among those in Greece.

Overall, children report more frequently than adults any of the experiences covered by the indicators included in the survey, hence providing some evidence of their vulnerabilities to different types of abuses and violence during these irregular journeys, especially for those who travel alone or without family members.

Table 7. Share of children reporting experiences of abuse, exploitation, and violence, by route and total, 2023 (%)

	CMR	EMR	WBR	Total
1. Unpaid work	44%	7%	2%	20%
2. Forced work	19%	8%	0%	11%
3. Offered marriage	0%	0%	0%	0%
4. Held against will	31%	15%	0%	19%
5. Physical violence	54%	26%	14%	35%
6. Forced to travel	4%	5%	0%	4%
7. Lied to travel	9%	12%	2%	9%
8. Access to identity document				
Never had	70%	43%	88%	61%
Controlled by others	3%	2%	0%	2%
Lost	21%	13%	2%	14%
Stolen	1%	5%	0%	3%
At least one of 8 indicators	91%	68%	48%	73%

Source: DTM FMS Europe, N=248

10 METHODOLOGY

Flow Monitoring Surveys are part of the IOM’s DTM activities in the Mediterranean and WB region. These started in October 2015 and are conducted within the framework of the IOM’s research on populations on the move through the Mediterranean, Western Balkan, and

Western African Atlantic routes to Europe. All analyses, together with the latest information on arrivals to Europe, can be accessed via DTM’s portal on mixed migration Flows to Europe: <https://dtm.iom.int/europe/arrivals>.

10.1 DEPLOYMENT

The survey is designed to profile third country (non-European) nationals who are moving to Europe by land and by sea. Only migrants aged 14 and above are approached, and the questionnaire is proposed only to migrants and refugees who have arrived in the country of the survey no more than one year prior to the interview. Respondents were approached in a simple random sample, with those who give their consent to be interviewed proceeding with the remaining questions. The written consent of a parent or legal guardian is required to propose potential respondents between 14 and years of age to take the survey.

The interviews are voluntary and anonymous and conducted one-on-one with respondents, in safe and isolated spaces. Migrants could decline to respond to

individual questions or to interrupt the interview if they wish to do so.

In 2023, the FMS questionnaire was available in e-format in Kobo (English, French, Arabic) and in paper forms translated into Arabic, English, Farsi, French, Italian, Greek, Pashto, Spanish and Urdu.

The fieldwork was conducted by teams of DTM 56 enumerators (28 men, 28 women), with a variety of profiles and linguistic skills including the most spoken by migrants travelling to Europe along the monitored routes, depending on the country. DTM enumerators were trained on the content of the questionnaire, Kobo use, data protection, child protection safeguards and referral mechanisms for vulnerable cases.

Table 8. Number of respondents by country of survey and month of data collection in 2023.

Country of survey	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total 2023
Albania			32	43	28	25				128
Bosnia and Herzegovina			41	154	118					313
Greece						1	258	298	359	916
Italy					99	245	467	326	314	1,451
Montenegro			87	17	22					126
North Macedonia			19	54	110					183
Serbia			22	97	89					208
Spain	127	235	457	365	122	36	136	145	30	1653
Kosovo ³⁵				22	29					51
Total	127	235	658	752	617	307	861	769	703	5,029

Source: DTM FMS Europe and the Western Balkans. N=5,029

³⁵ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

10.2 SAMPLING

Although total number of arrivals and new registrations in the countries covered by the FMS is available for the reference period, in almost no country the information shared by national authorities about the reference population is disaggregated by sex, age, and single location of entry. Considering this and due to limited resources and access to different locations depending on the country, IOM's DTM mapped a list of locations – flow monitoring points (FMPs) – that are known to be involved in registration, transit and stay of migrants

arriving by land and by sea over the reference period. A selection of FMPs to be covered by the data collection has been made considering the access to land and sea border crossing points and disembarkation areas, registration centres, reception centres of various kind for irregular migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, transit points and connection hubs (train and bus stations) and alike. DTM enumerators applied a non-random convenience sampling procedure in each of the selected FMPs for the data collection.

Table 9. Number of regions (admin1) and FMPs covered, number of enumerators by sex, by country of survey

	Admin1 regions covered	FMPs	Enumerators	Enumerators - Female	Enumerators - Male
Total	29	214	56	28	28
Greece	10	38	6	5	1
Anatoliki Makedonia, Thraki		3			
Attiki		7			
Dytiki Ellada		1			
Ipeiros		1			
Kentriki Makedonia		11			
Notio Aigaio		2			
Peloponnisos		3			
Stereia Ellada		6			
Thessalia		1			
Voreio Aigaio		3			
Italy	3	57	5	4	1
Calabria		18			
Friuli Venezia Giulia		14			
Sicilia		25			
Spain	5	91	6	3	3
Andalucía		15			
Canarias		21			
Cataluña/Catalunya		4			
Comunitat Valenciana		1			
Región de Murcia		50			
Albania	5	13	7	1	6
Durrës		2			
Gjirokastër		1			

► continue on the next page

	Admin1 regions covered	FMPs	Enumerators	Enumerators - Female	Enumerators - Male
Korçë		2			
Shkodër		1			
Tiranë		7			
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1	4	9	3	6
Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina		4			
Montenegro	1	1	7	3	4
Central		1			
North Macedonia	2	2	7	5	2
Northeast		1			
Southeast		1			
Serbia	1	3	7	3	4
Central Serbia		3			
Kosovo*	1	5	2	1	1
Pristina		5			

Source: DTM FMS Europe and the Western Balkans. N=5,029

10.3 THE QUESTIONNAIRE

DTM's FMS aims at gathering information about migrants' profiles, their background in the country of origin, their journeys, reasons for moving and intentions. It also includes questions that may provide indication about risks and vulnerabilities of migrants during their journeys.

More specifically, the FMS baseline module captures data on the demographic profile of the respondents, their education and employment background, the circumstances of their migration journey and migration drivers, their place of origin or their last country of habitual residence, and their intended countries of destination.

The second FMS module contains questions that refer to experiences of exploitation, violence and abuse that may amount to human trafficking, lived by the respondents during the journey. The module was developed together with IOM's Migrant Protection Unit and gathers information on events and practices, experienced directly by the respondent or by his/her family member(s), or that are witnessed by the respondent during the journey. The module is composed of eight questions that aim to capture information about whether the respondent, during their journey:

1. Worked or performed other activities without getting the expected payment
2. Was forced to perform work or other activities against their will
3. Was approached by someone offering a marriage (for them or a close family member – child or sibling)
4. Was kept at a certain location against their will (by persons other than the authorities of the country)
5. Had experienced any form of physical violence
6. Was forced to travel/move
7. Was lied to, tricked, manipulated, indebted, given false promises, or otherwise deceived to get to travel/move
8. Had access to their travel documents and has currently control over them

These questions relate to an event, that might indicate exposure to human trafficking, exploitation and abuse practices, physical and sexual violence, experienced by the respondent. The experiences described in these questions do not aim to identify cases of human trafficking as defined by international and national legal instruments.

The third module contains questions related to return intentions, that connects with outreach activities on the existence and functioning of Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) program in several countries where the survey is deployed. Findings from this module are not shown in this report.

10.4 LIMITATIONS

The findings presented in this document are representative of the individuals surveyed in the covered locations and during the indicated timeframe. The data should not be generalized and should not represent a full picture of regional mixed migration flows to Europe.

From the information available about the target population of migrants arriving by sea and by land to Europe in the period covered, some groups or profile may be over or underrepresented depending on the access to different types of locations. Migrants can also have different attitudes in being interviewed, depending on the location, the overall context and the specific migrant characteristics, availability of time and sense of safety. Although data collectors were trained before and throughout the data collection, other selection biases cannot be completely ruled out. Migrants' willingness to share their experiences may depend on issues relative

to the sensitivity of certain topics, the existence of different cultural norms, level of trust and interest in sharing personal stories, the possible fatigue among the targeted migrants with interviews, the specific conditions of each locations of transit and stay where surveys were conducted, in terms of overall management and physical space to allow privacy, the gender and the language spoken of both migrants and interviewers.

Also, women overall provided a lower rate of positive responses than men to questions related to abuse, violence, and exploitation. This might also be due to their lower propensity to share their stories compared to men, and from the fact that FMS do not include questions on sexual exploitation or gender-based violence, besides the one on arranged marriage, which are abuses disproportionately reported by women and girls in migration.

