

— QUARTERLY REGIONAL REPORT

# DTM Europe

Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)

— July - September 2023 —

<https://dtm.iom.int/europe/arrivals>

[dtmmediterranean@iom.int](mailto:dtmmediterranean@iom.int)



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Publisher International Organization for Migration  
**Regional Office for South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia**

Dampfschiffstrasse 4 / 10-11, 1030 Vienna, Austria

+43 1 581 22 22

Website: <https://rovienna.iom.int/>

For feedback, please contact

✉ [dtmmediterranean@iom.int](mailto:dtmmediterranean@iom.int)

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

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

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

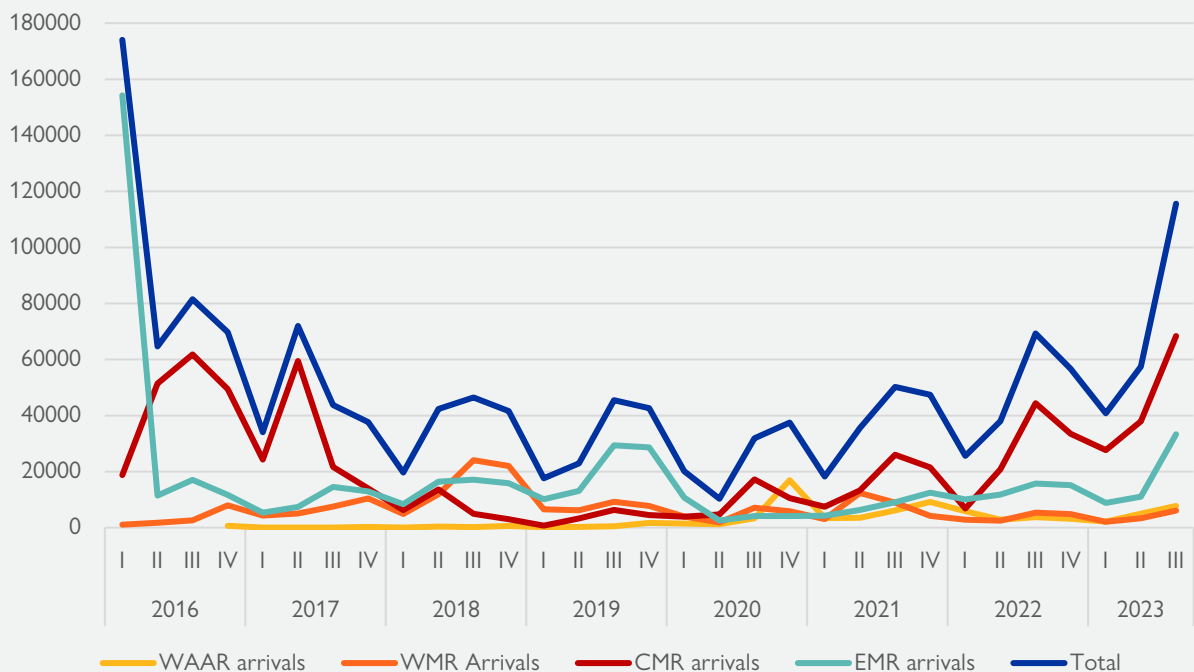
- **Eastern Mediterranean route (EMR):** Bulgaria, Cyprus and Greece
- **Central Mediterranean route (CMR):** Italy and Malta

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

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

This report presents the latest available data and trends, focusing on the first three quarters of 2023, comparing them with the same periods in the previous year and other relevant time frames.

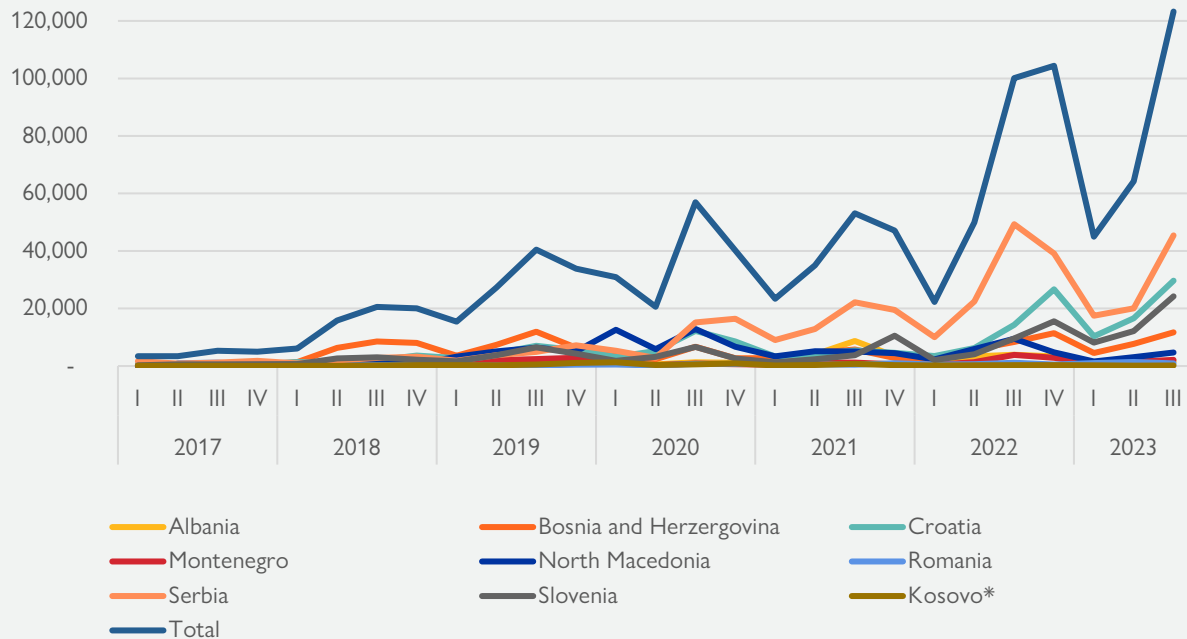
## First arrivals to Europe, by route and by quarter, 2016-2023



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

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

Registered migrants in transit countries, by country and by quarter, 2017-2023



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

The third quarter of 2023 were characterized by a series of **important developments** in both trends and policies of mixed migration movement in the region.

- Quarter 3 represent the period with the highest number of arrivals registered along all routes and countries: arrivals registered between July and September 2023 represent 62 per cent of the total arrivals along the EMR, 52 per cent of the total along the WAAR, and 51 per cent of all arrivals along the WMR and the CMR.
- In July, a [memorandum of understanding](#) between the European Union and Tunisia was signed, which aims at fostering tighter border management and controls of departures from the Tunisian coasts.
- In July, a new [migration bill](#) passed in the UK which forbids anyone who reaches the country irregularly from claiming asylum and mandates their removal to a third country. The provision also applies to unaccompanied children and other vulnerable migrants, including victims of trafficking.

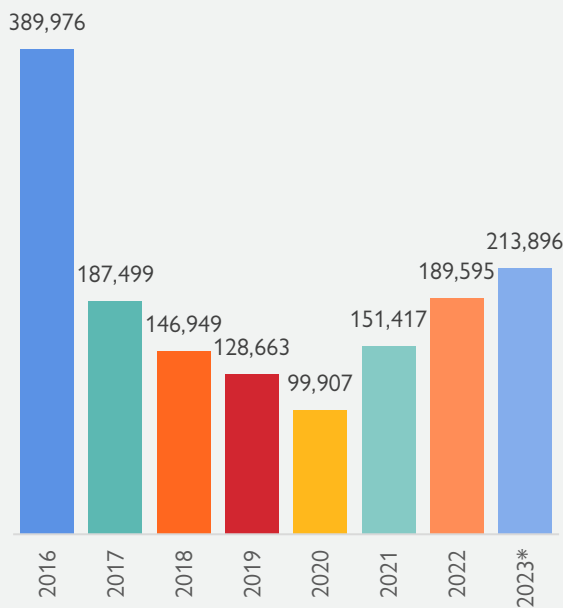
\* References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

- In July, the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) published its annual flagship [Asylum Report 2023](#). EU+ countries received around 996 000 asylum applications in 2022, a 53 % increase over 2021.
- In July, the European Commission partnered with Cyprus authorities and IOM to finance the re-construction and the enhancement of the sole [first reception center in Cyprus](#), in the Pournara district. Given the marked increase in arrivals, the Centre has been overcrowded in recent years.
- In September, the mayor of Lampedusa declared the [state of emergency](#) for the islands, as the island continues to receive the majority of arrivals to Italy by sea, with a peak of departures from Tunisia in the summer months.
- In September, the Italian government approved a [new decree](#) on immigration that provides for the extension of the maximum length of time foreigners can be detained in detention centers for repatriation to 18 months.

## 2. MOBILITY OVERVIEW

### MIXED MIGRATION FLOWS TO EUROPE

Arrivals in Europe, by year, cumulative, 2016-2023



\* Data for 2023 refers to the period from January to September 2023.

In the first three quarters of 2023, a total of 213,896 migrants and refugees were registered arriving through the three Mediterranean routes and the WAAR route to Europe, which is 60 per cent higher than the 132,894 arrivals registered in the same period in 2022, and 105 per cent higher than the 104,012 registered in the first nine months of 2021.

In line with trends from previous years, arrivals in Q3 of 2023 are considerably higher than the previous reporting period, registering an increase of 101 per cent compared to Q2 2023 (which recorded 57,455 arrivals).

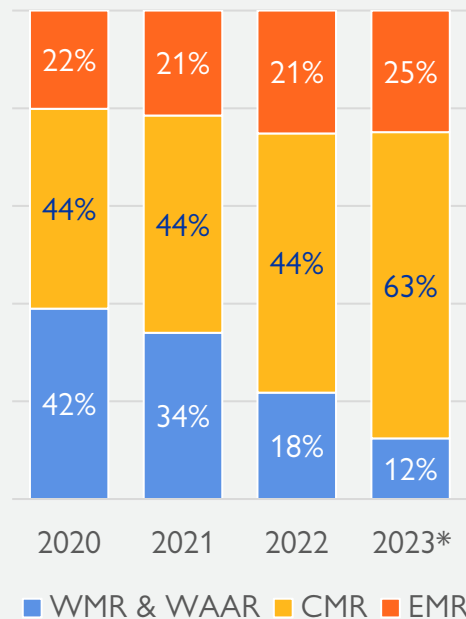
Sixty-four per cent of all registered individuals in the first nine months of 2023 arrived in Europe via the CMR to Italy and Malta (134,092 arrivals, almost all registered in Italy). Around 25 per cent

of arrivals travelled through the EMR to Greece, Cyprus and Bulgaria (53,264). The remaining 12 per cent were registered in Spain (26,540), through the WMR and WAAR.

Compared to the same period in 2022, arrivals in first three quarters of 2023 have increased by just over 60 per cent overall. Increase in arrivals is visible through all routes, with the CMR registering highest increase of 86 per cent compared to the same period in 2022. Arrivals along both the EMR and the WMR and WAAR combined have also increased compared to the same period last year (41% and 14%, respectively).

According to available data from national authorities, Syrian Arab Republic, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Tunisia, Afghanistan, Morocco and Egypt are the main countries of origin among all registered arrivals to Europe in the period from January to September 2023.

Arrivals in Europe – by route, cumulative, 2020-2023



EMR: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece  
CMR: Italy, Malta  
WRM and WAAR: Spain

\* Data for 2023 refers to the period from January to September 2023.

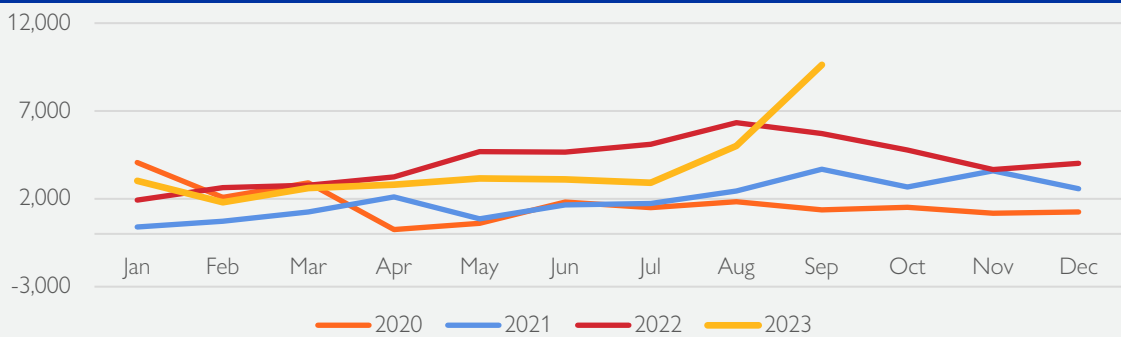
## MIGRANT FLOWS MONITORING IN THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE

From January to September of 2023, a total of 34,108 migrants were apprehended by the Turkish Coast Guard (TCG) at sea, while trying to reach the EU (mostly Greece). This is a 8 per cent decrease in comparison with the same period in 2022 (36,856). However, Q3 2023 represents an increase of 100 per cent in comparison with Q2 of 2023 (8,882). The top nationalities of apprehended persons in Q3 2023 were Afghanistan, Syrian Arab Republic, Palestinian Territories, Yemen, Congo, Sudan

Liberia, and Iraq. According to the TCG, 12 migrants died at sea in 2023 so far. No deaths were recorded in this quarter.

Additionally, according to the Turkish Presidency of Migration management (PMM), 165,571 migrants in irregular situation were apprehended on various locations inside Türkiye in 2023 so far. The top three nationalities in 2023 remain Afghanistan, Syrian Arab Republic and Palestinian Territories.

Apprehensions by the TCG, all maritime regions, 2018–2023



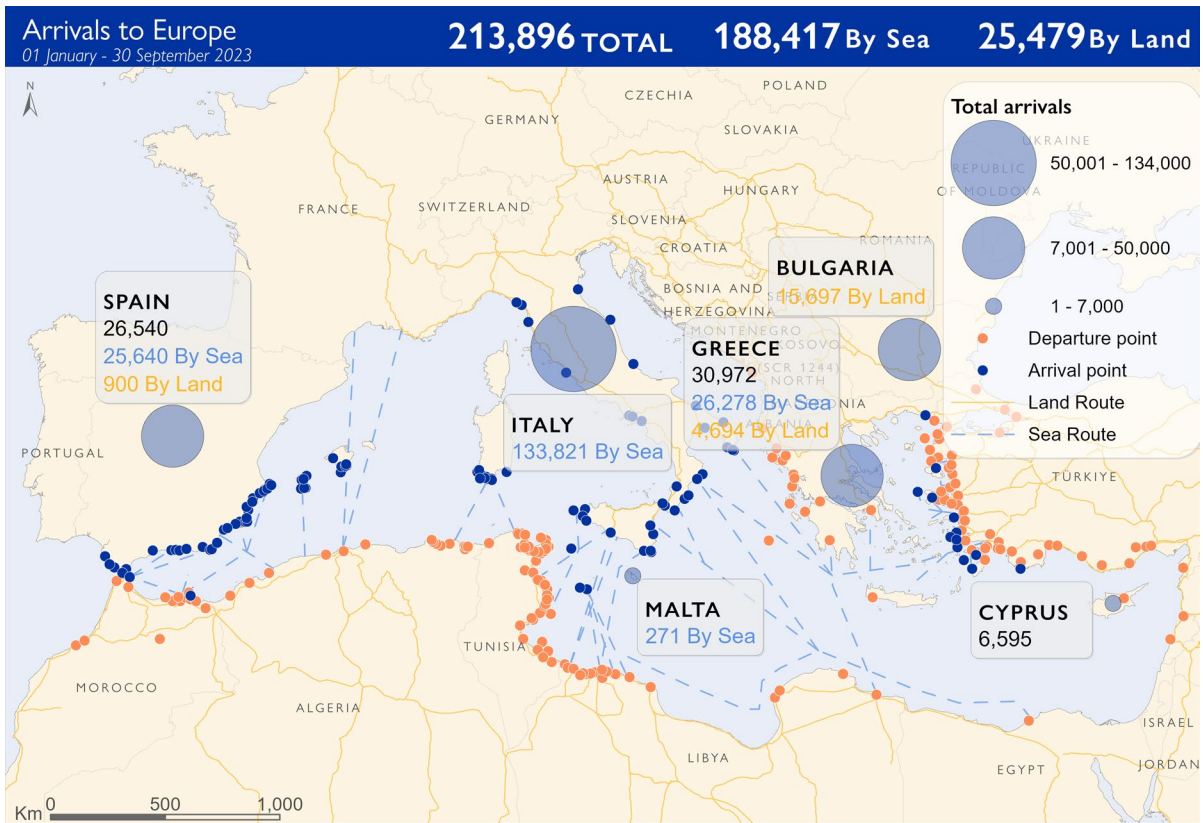
Apprehensions by the Turkish coast  
01 January - 30 September 2023

**34,108** TOTAL Apprehended



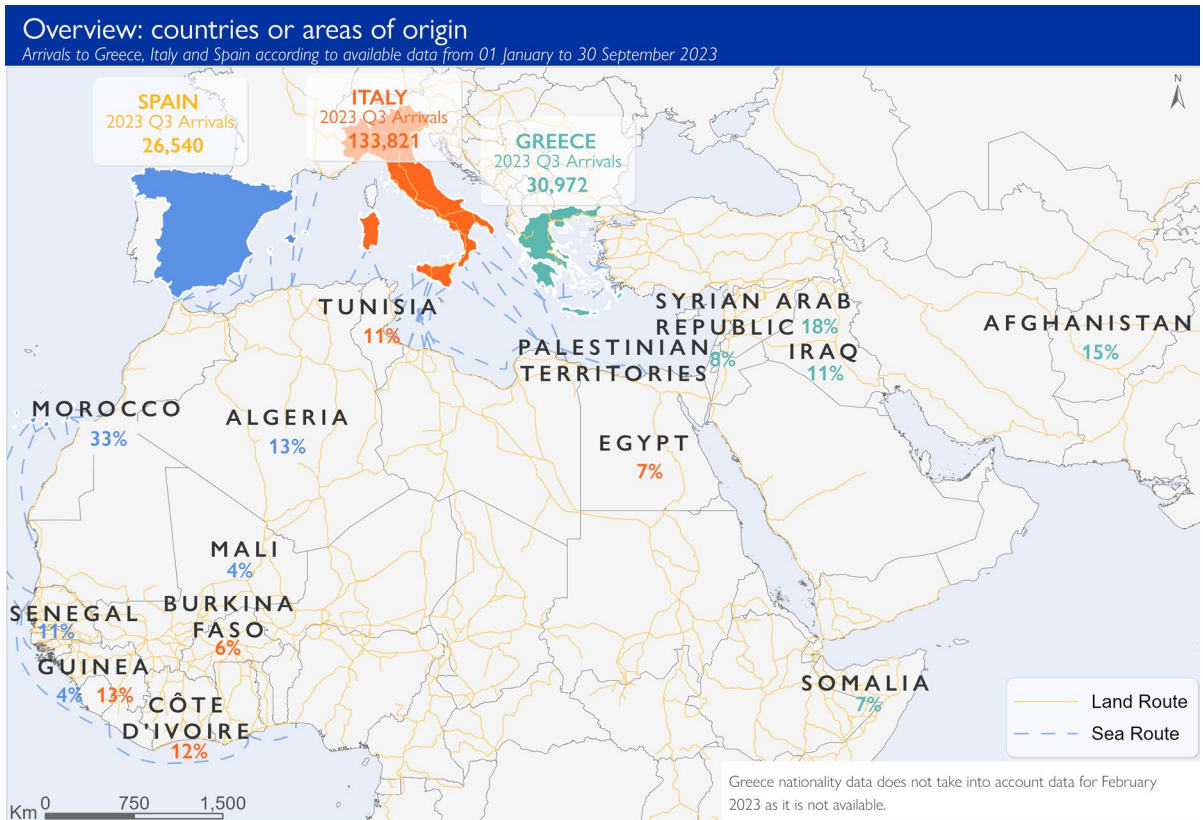
This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

Source Data : IOM, National Authorities



This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

Source Data : IOM, National Authorities



Greece nationality data does not take into account data for February 2023 as it is not available.

This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

Source Data : IOM, National Authorities

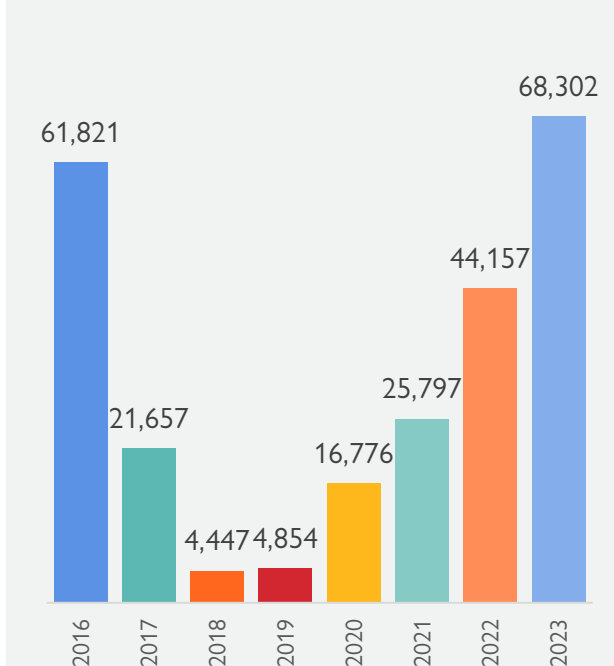


### 3. MIXED MIGRATION FLOWS

#### FIRST ARRIVAL COUNTRIES

#### ITALY

Arrivals to Italy in Q3 2016–2023



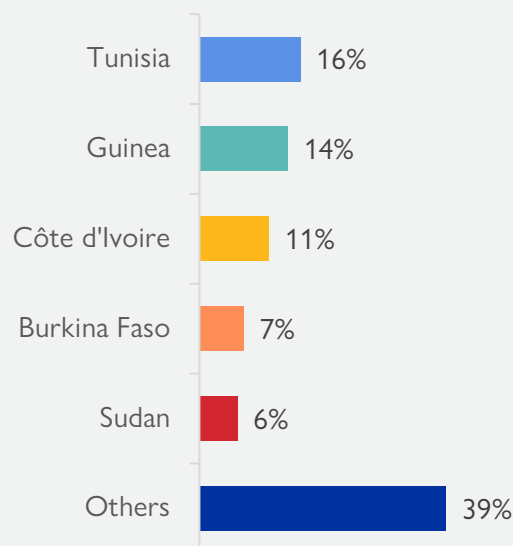
Data source: Italian Ministry of Interior, [DTM flow monitoring](#)

Italian authorities registered a total of 68,302 migrants and refugees arriving by sea in the country during the third quarter of 2023. This is 80 per cent higher than the registered arrivals in Q2 of 2023 (37,824), it is also over 54 per cent higher than the arrivals registered in Q3 of 2022 (44,157), making this the quarter with the highest registered arrival figures since 2016. Total of 133,821 arrivals were recorded in first three quarters of 2023, which is third highest recorded number since 2015 (153,842) and 2016 (181,436).

In Q3 of 2023, more than 80 per cent of the arrivals were reported to have departed from Tunisia, followed by departures from Libya (13%), Republic of Türkiye (4%) and Algeria, Lebanon and Cyprus (<1%).

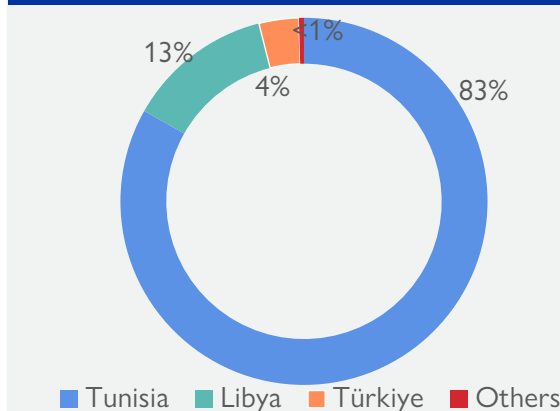
It is estimated that at least 371 migrants perished

Arrivals to Italy – nationality breakdown in Q3 2023 (%)



Data source: Italian Ministry of Interior.

Arrivals to Italy – departure countries in Q3 2023



Data source: Italian Ministry of Interior.

while crossing the CMR in Q3 of 2023, compared to the 1,295 in previous quarter, with a decrease of more than 70 per cent. There is a small increase of 0.5 per cent in the reported incidents compared to the Q3 2022 (369).<sup>5</sup>

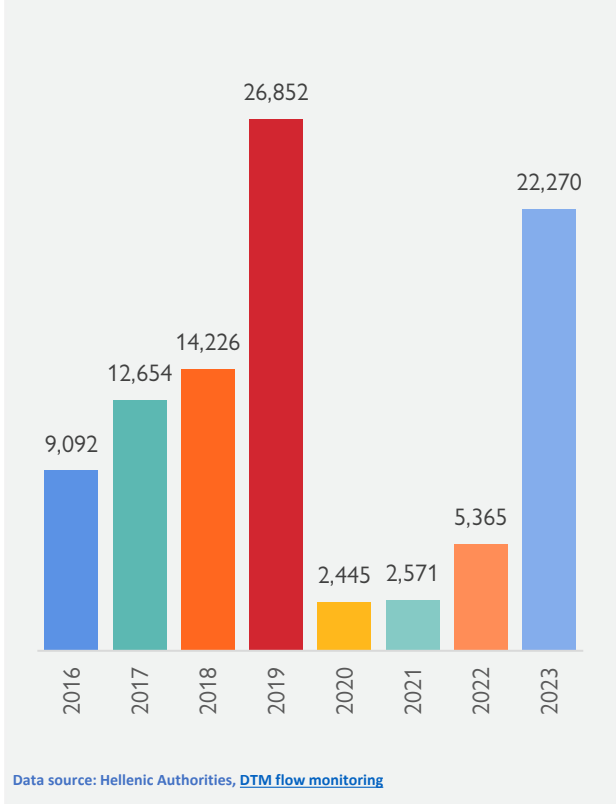
5. IOM’s Missing Migrant Project: [missingmigrants.iom.int](https://missingmigrants.iom.int) [Accessed 30 November 2023].

**GREECE**

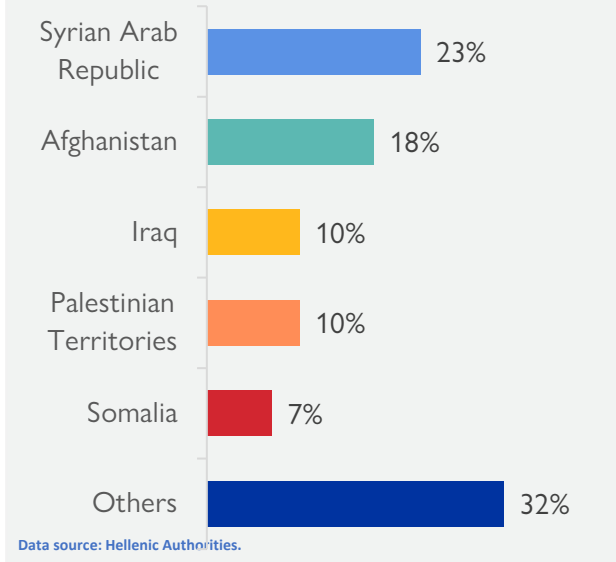
In Q3 of 2023, Hellenic authorities registered a total of 22,270 migrants and refugees arriving by land and by sea to the country, which represents a great increase of 355 per cent compared to the previous quarter (4,891). Total of 11,428 arrivals by sea were recorded in September 2023, which represents highest recorded number since March 2016, when 26,971 sea arrivals were recorded in a single month. Arrivals in Q3 2023 are also significantly higher, 315 per cent compared to the 5,365 registered in the same quarter last year (Q3 2022).

According to the Hellenic Coast Guard and Police, in Q3 of 2023 10 per cent of arrivals were registered as land crossing from Türkiye in the region of Evros, as opposed to 37 per cent in Q2 2023. The rest of migrants and refugees were reported to have landed on several Greek islands (Lesbos, Samos, Rhodes, Kos among them).

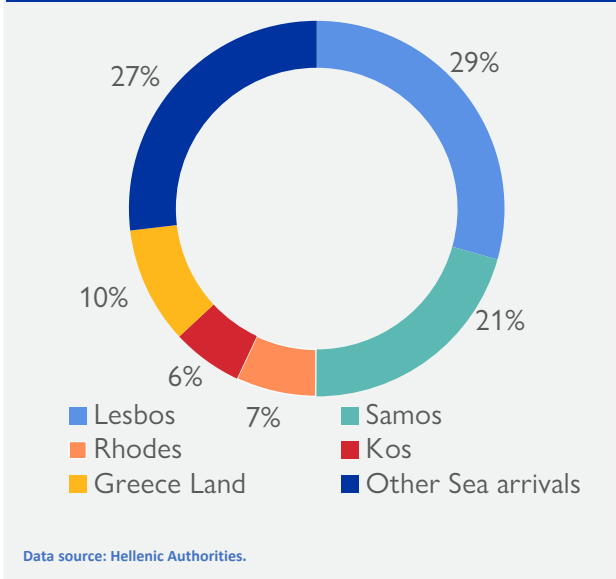
**Arrivals by land and by sea to Greece in Q3, 2017–2023**



**Arrivals by sea to Greece – nationality breakdown in Q3 2023**



**Arrivals to Greece – main entry points in Q3 2023**



Main reported nationalities in Q3 of 2023 are Syrian Arab Republic (23%), Afghanistan (18%), Iraq (10%) and Palestinian Territories (10%).

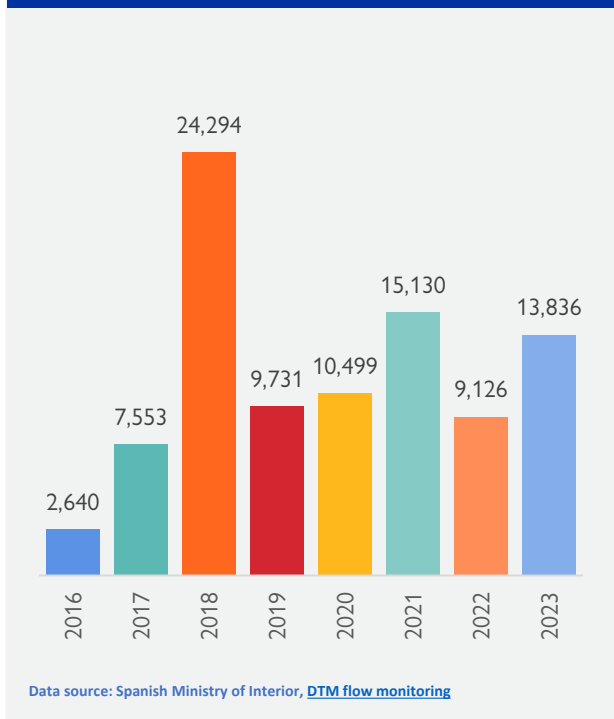
Along the EMR, at least 7 migrants disappeared or died in Q3 of 2023, which represents a decrease of 46 per cent compared to Q2 2023.<sup>6</sup>

6. IOM’s Missing Migrant Project: [missingmigrants.iom.int](https://missingmigrants.iom.int) [Accessed 30 November 2023].

SPAIN

In Q3 of 2023, authorities in Spain registered a total of 13,836 arrivals, of which 13,488 by sea and 388 by land. This is 64 per cent more than the 8,417 registered in the previous quarter. Similarly, to other first arrival countries, Q3 2023 represents an increase compared to the previous quarter and also a considerable increase if compared to Q3 of 2022 (+52%).

Arrivals to Spain in Q3 2017–2023



According to Frontex data, Morocco (26%) is the main country of origin at arrival to Spain in Q3, followed by Algeria (14%) and Senegal (13%).<sup>7</sup> These trends are in line with those observed in the first half of 2023 and more broadly with 2022, where Morocco and Algeria also represented the two main nationalities of arrivals.

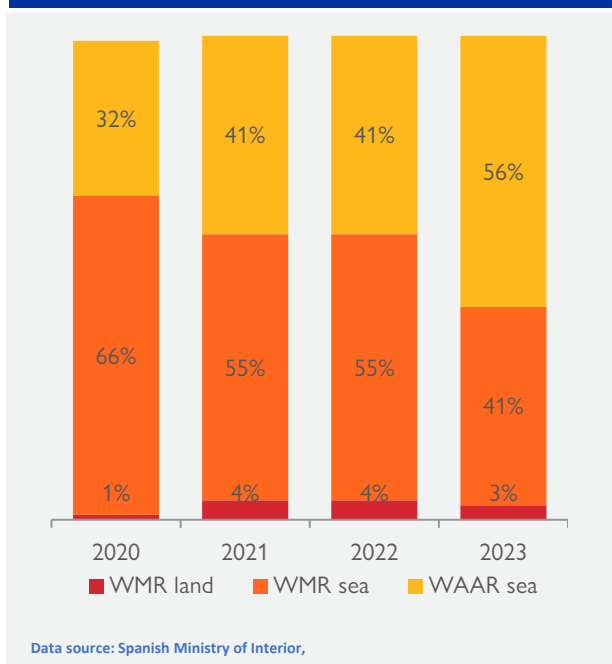
Arrivals to the Canary Islands represented more than half (56%) of all arrivals in Q3 of 2023, with the rest being represented by a variety of locations in Andalucía, the region of Murcia, the Comunidad Valenciana and the Balearic Islands. Land arrivals only represented 3 per cent of total.

7. Spain data on nationalities are sourced from [Frontex](https://frontex.europa.eu/).

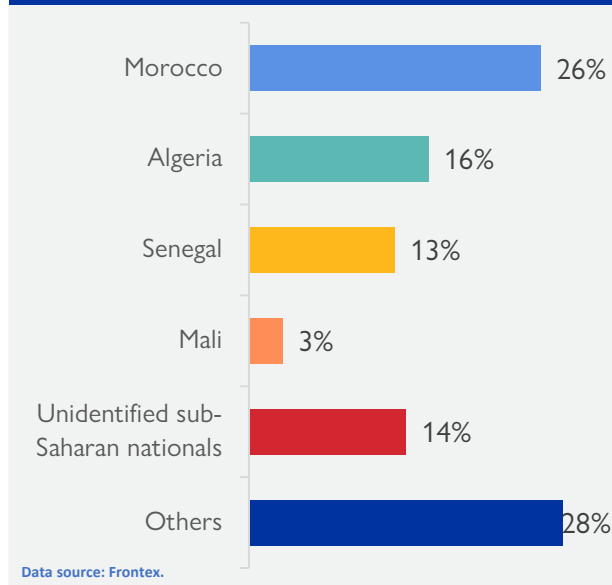
8. IOM’s Missing Migrant Project: [missingmigrants.iom.int](https://missingmigrants.iom.int) [Accessed 30 November 2023].

The total number of dead and missing migrants on their way to Spain (WMR and WAAR) in Q3 2023 (546) presented an increase of 3 per cent if compared to Q2 2023, and it is a 170 per cent higher if compared to Q3 of 2022.<sup>8</sup>

Arrivals (%) in Spain in Q3 by route, 2020–2023



Arrivals to Spain – nationality breakdown in Q3 2023 (%)



## OTHER COUNTRIES OF FIRST ARRIVAL

### BULGARIA, CYPRUS AND MALTA

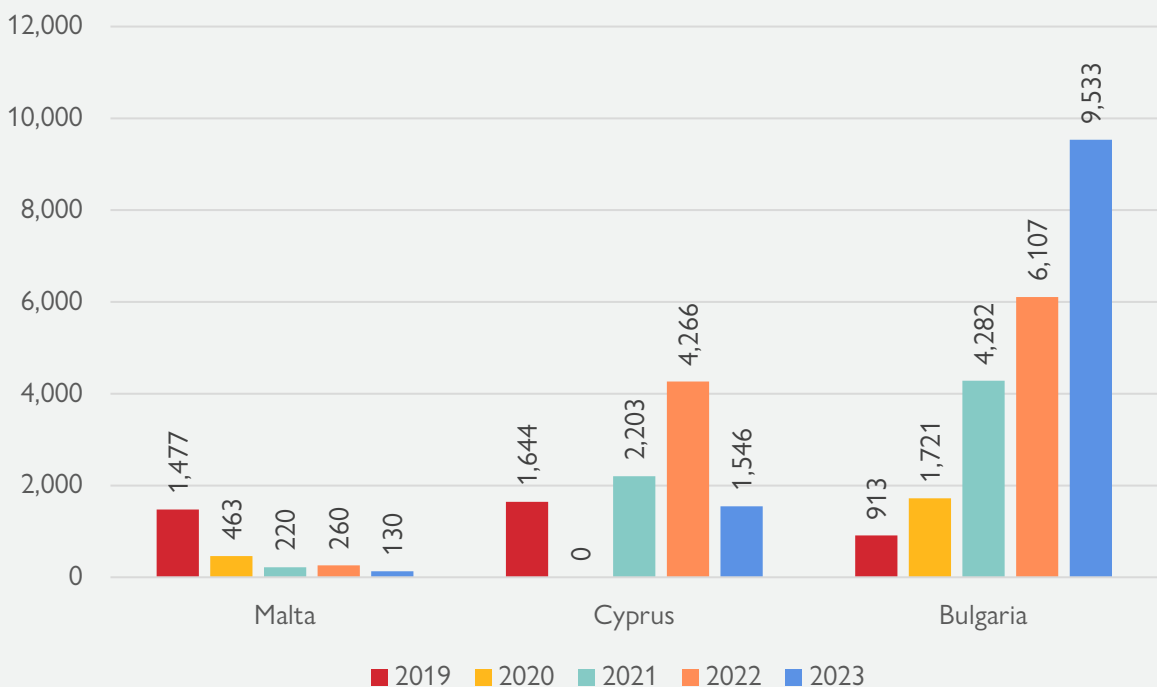
According to the Bulgarian Ministry of Interior, 9,533 new migrants were apprehended on entry, inside and on exit from the country in Q3 of 2023, which represents a high increase of 148 per cent compared to the previous quarter. This is an increase of 56 per cent compared to the same quarter in 2022 (6,107). Main reported nationalities registered in Q3 2023 in Bulgaria were Syrian Arab Republic (55%), Afghanistan (31%), and Morocco (10%), in line with Q1 and Q2 2023.<sup>9</sup>

According to the NGO CODECA, 1,546 new arrivals to Cyprus were reported in July and August 2023, either by sea or by crossing the green border with the northern part of the island. No data are available for September, which makes

comparisons with previous periods weaker. Main nationalities registered of arrivals in Cyprus in 2023 were Syrian Arab Republic (40%), Nigeria (14%), and Afghanistan (11%).

In Malta, 130 migrants or refugees arrived by sea in Q3 2023, a slight decrease of 7 per cent compared to Q2 of 2023. Compared to the same quarter of 2022, there is a decrease of 50 per cent in Q3 2023. Malta recorded highest number of arrivals in 2019 (3,405), which is a 92 per cent difference compared to the total number of arrivals in 2023. According to available data, the most-reported nationality at arrival in Malta in Q3 2023 is Bangladesh (51%), followed by Guinea (22%) and Syrian Arab Republic (16%).

Arrivals to Malta, Cyprus and Bulgaria in Q3, 2019 – 2023



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

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

## TRANSITS THROUGH THE WESTERN BALKAN REGION

Along the WB region, **Serbia** is the country with the highest number of transits in the first three quarters of 2023, with 82,946 new migrants and refugees to have been registered in the reception centres across the country.<sup>10</sup> This is a slight increase of 1.5 per cent compared to the same period in 2022. No data on nationalities of migrants registered is available for Serbia.

**Croatia** registered 56,513 transits in the first three quarters of 2023, with an increase of 136 per cent compared to the same period in 2022. Afghanistan is the most reported nationality (35%), followed by Republic of Türkiye (15%) and Morocco (10%).

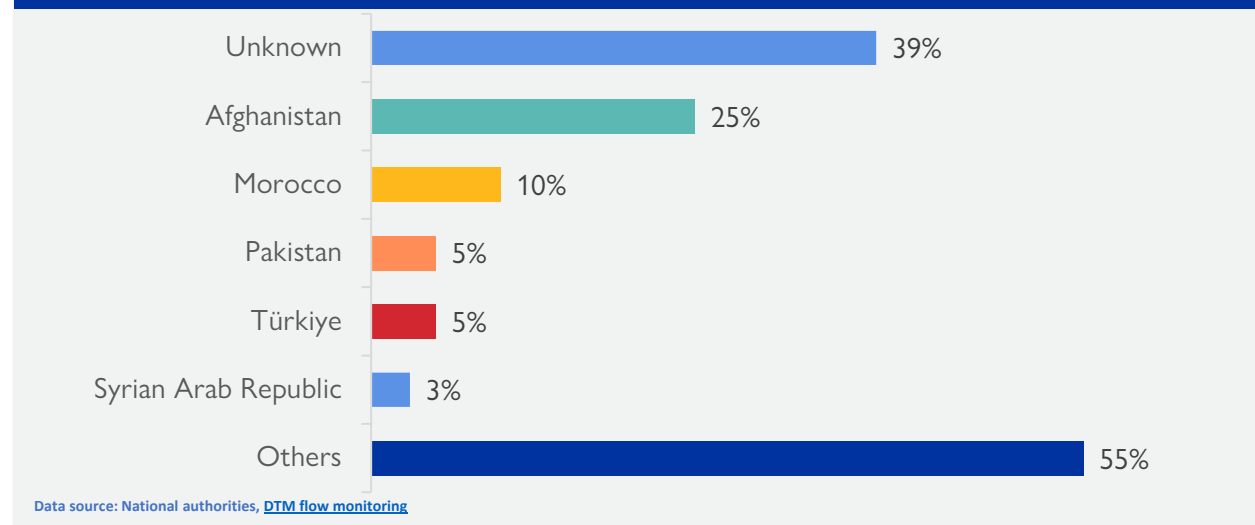
According to data from national authorities, 44,488 migrants and refugees were apprehended in **Slovenia** in the period between January and September 2023, continuing to registering the highest increase among WB countries (184% compared to the same period of 2022). Main nationalities reported are Afghanistan (31%), Morocco (16%), and Pakistan (10%).

In the other Western Balkans (WB) transit countries and territories (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Kosovo\*), as well as Romania, a total of 45,519

migrants and refugees have been officially registered at entry or exit, representing a decrease of 11 per cent compared to the same period of January-September 2022. The main nationalities registered for these countries correspond to those shown above: Afghanistan (33%), Morocco (18%) and Syrian Arab Republic (11%).

During the reported period, IOM's DTM carried out several assessments at key flow monitoring points within Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>11</sup> Between June and September, also about 1 thousand flow monitoring surveys were collected in the 6 WB countries and territories. According to preliminary evidence, most migrants travel through the Republic of Türkiye before crossing into Greece (by land or sea) or Bulgaria. Migrants and refugees from Central and South Asia (Afghans, Bangladeshis, Iranians, Pakistanis) and the Middle East (Iraqis, Syrians) tend to conduct most of their journeys via the land route, often walking for most parts of their journey. In contrast, most migrants and refugees from the African continent start their journeys by plane either directly to the WB region or to the Republic of Türkiye before moving by land onwards.

### Transits in the WB region – nationality breakdown in Q3 2023



10. This is used as a proxy indicator for the overall number of new registrations in Serbia.

11. IOM, 'Bosnia & Herzegovina – MIGRANT MOBILITY SITUATION REPORT (September 2023)', 31 October 2023. Available at: [Bosnia & Herzegovina – MIGRANT MOBILITY SITUATION REPORT \(September 2023\) | Displacement Tracking Matrix \(iom.int\)](#) [Accessed 22 November 2023].

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

# 4. MIGRANTS' PRESENCE

## MIGRANTS' PRESENCE IN EUROPE AND THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKIYE

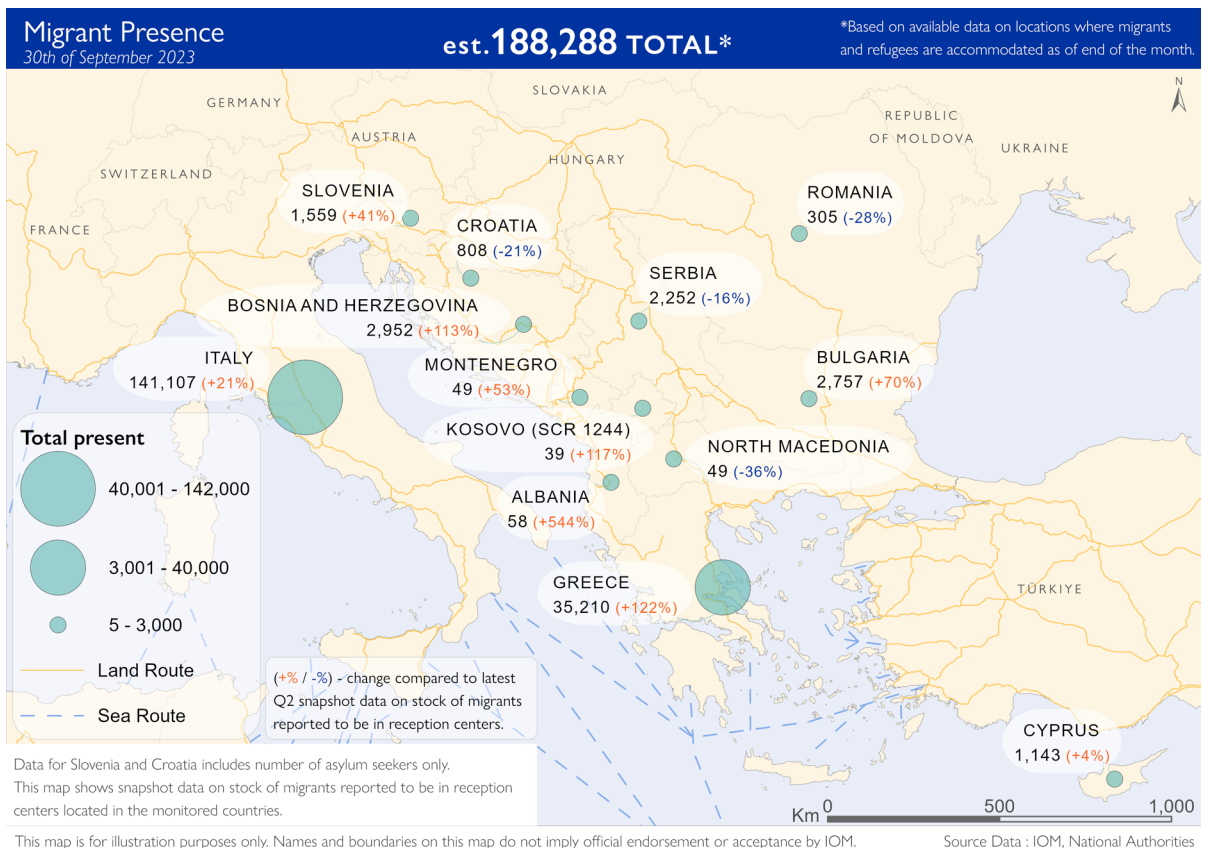
At the end of Q3 2023 an estimated 188,288 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers were residing in different facilities in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Kosovo\*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia. No data is available on migrants in reception in Spain and Malta. The migrant presence estimated at the end of Q3 2023 is 32 per cent higher than the 142,400 reported at the end of Q2 and also 6 per cent higher compared to the same quarter last year.

For what concerns countries of first arrival, Italy and Greece report the largest shares of migrant presence overall (75% and 19% of the total, respectively), similarly to the previous two

quarters. Migrants in reception in Italy increased the most in absolute terms in Q3 compared to Q2 2023 (24,060, +17%). Greece recorded the highest increase relative to the previous quarter instead (+55%, or 19,347 more).

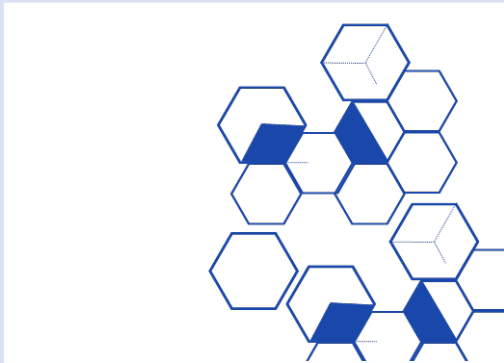
In the WB region, Bosnia and Herzegovina reported the highest number of migrants in reception at the end of Q3 (2,952 and 2,252, respectively).

Additionally, according to the latest available data from the Turkish PMM, there are more than 4.7 million foreign nationals present in Türkiye as of the end of Q3 2023, 3.6 millions of whom are seeking international protection.<sup>12</sup>

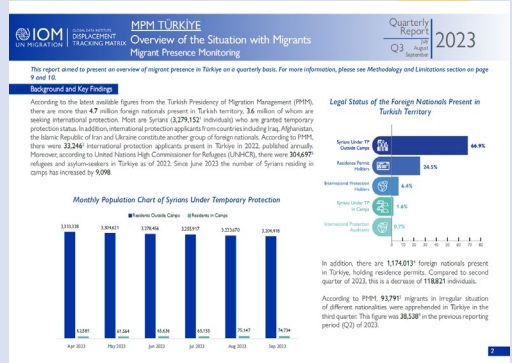


\* References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).  
 12. IOM, 'Türkiye — Migrant Presence Monitoring — Quarterly Migrant Presence Monitoring (Jul-Sep 2023)', 24 October 2023. Available at: [Türkiye — Migrant Presence Monitoring - Quarterly Migrant Presence Monitoring \(Jul-Sep 2023\) | Displacement Tracking Matrix \(iom.int\)](https://www.iom.int/publications/turkiye-migrant-presence-monitoring-quarterly-migrant-presence-monitoring-jul-sep-2023) [Accessed 23 November 2023].

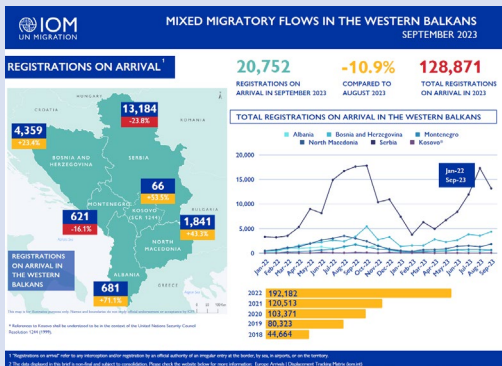
# LATEST PRODUCTS AND PUBLICATIONS



**Europe — Mixed Migration Flows to Europe, Quarterly Overview Dataset (Jul – Sep 2023)**



**Türkiye — Migrant Presence Monitoring - Quarterly Migrant Presence Monitoring (Jul-Sep 2023)**



**Western Balkans — Mixed Migratory Flows Report (September 2023)**



**Europe — Mixed Migration Flows to Europe, Quarterly Overview (April – June 2023)**

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

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