

ITALY Sea arrivals dashboard

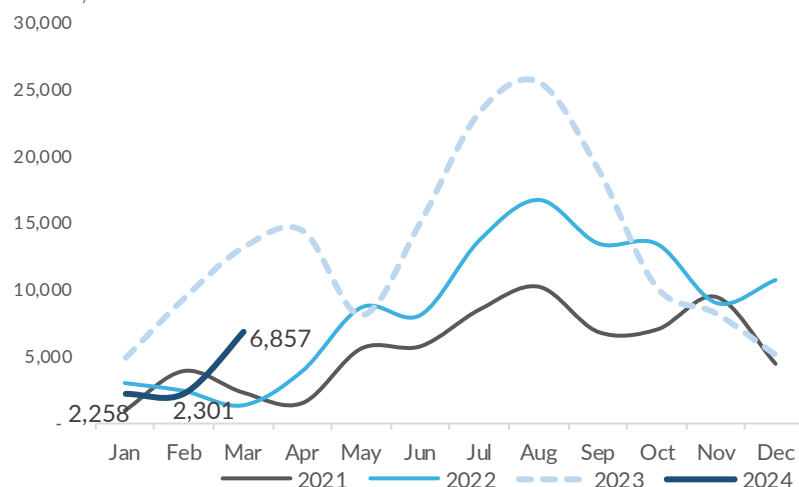
Overview

In the first three months of 2024, 11,416 refugees and migrants arrived in Italy by sea, compared to 27,695 in the same period last year (-59%). Arrivals in March rose significantly compared to February (+198%). Most March arrivals disembarked in Sicily (5,713), followed by Marche (336), Tuscany (249), Calabria (221), Lazio (132), Liguria (129), Emilia-Romagna (71) and Sardinia (6).

11,416 Jan-Mar 2024 ¹
27,695 Jan-Mar 2023 ¹

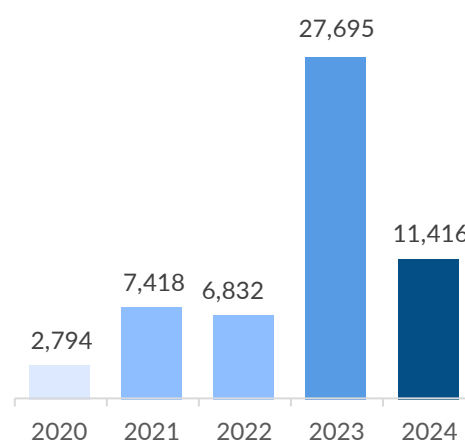
Monthly sea arrivals

January 2021 to March 2024



Yearly sea arrivals

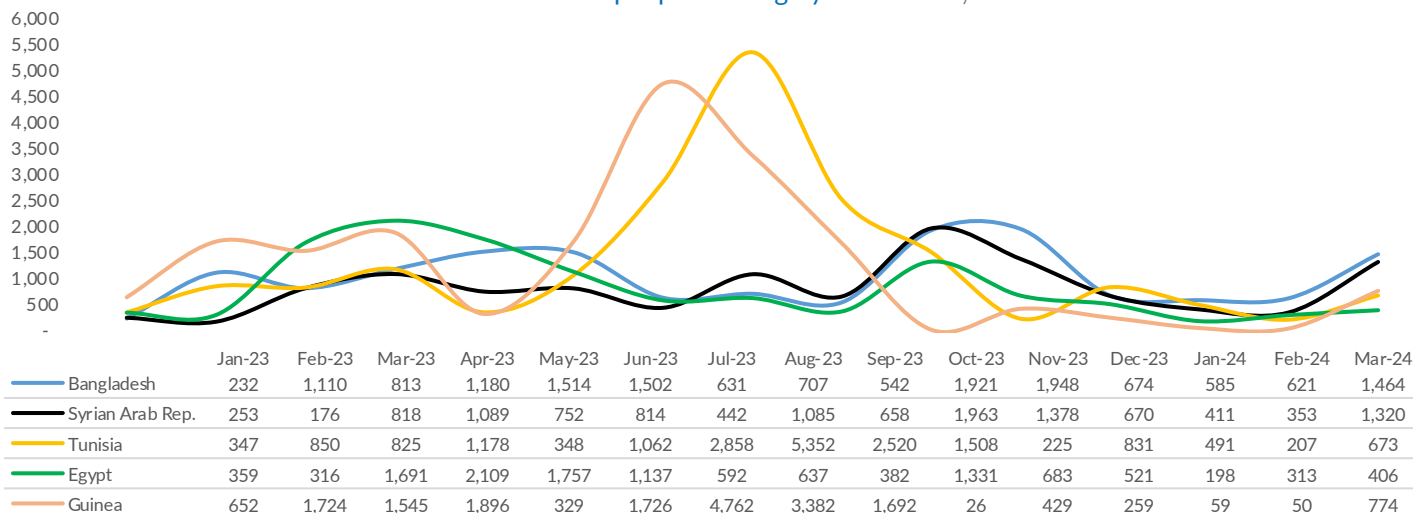
January to March, 2020-2024



Nationality of arrivals

In March, 21 per cent of arrivals were Bangladeshi (27% in February), followed by 19 per cent Syrian (15% in February) and 11 per cent Guinean (2% in February). Among other nationalities arriving in significant numbers by sea were Tunisians (9%), Egyptians (6%), Pakistanis and Malians (5% each), Gambians (4%), Sudanese and Senegalese (3% each). In March, as in February, the main nationalities departing from Libya were Bangladeshis (34%, same as in February), Syrians (31%, 19% in February) and Egyptians (9%, 17% in February). Most of those departing from Tunisia were Guineans and Tunisians (26% each, with Tunisians being 45% and Guineans being 11% in February), Malians (11%) and Gambians (9%). In March, all those arriving in Italy by sea from Algeria were Algerians.

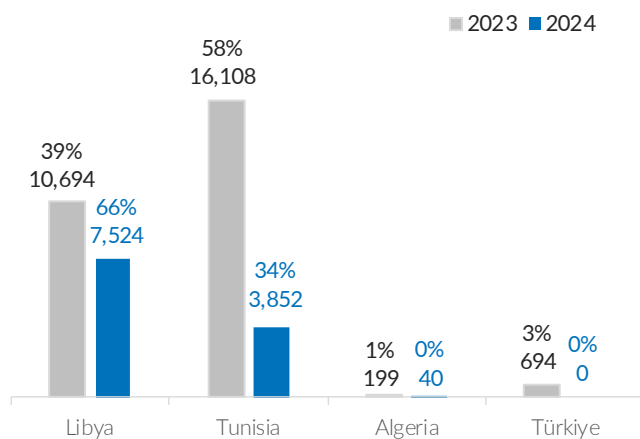
Most common nationalities of people arriving by sea - January 2023 to March 2024



Country of embarkation

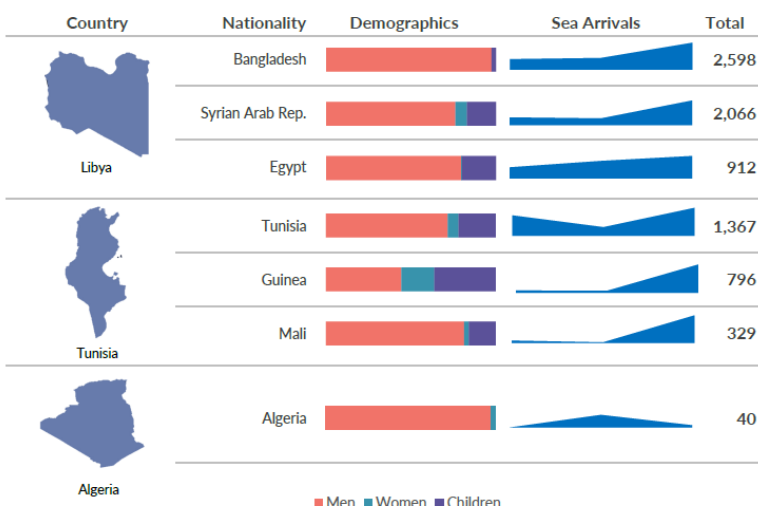
Overall, in the first three months of 2024, 66 per cent of sea crossings departed from Libya (7,524 people in 131 landings), while 34 per cent originated from Tunisia (3,852 people in 131 landings) and less than 1 per cent from Algeria (40 people in 6 landings). In March, as in February, Libya was the main country of departure (equivalent to 62% of people landed in Italy), followed by Tunisia (38%) and Algeria (less than 1%).

January to March 2023 - 2024



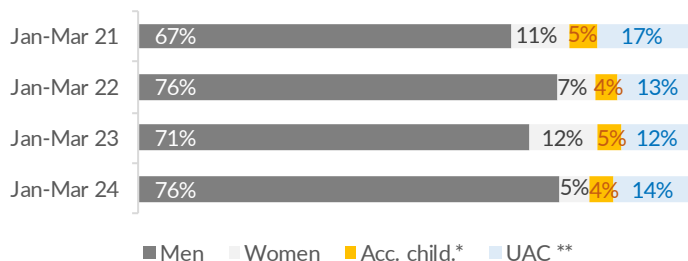
Due to rounding, the percentages may not add up exactly to 100%.

Top 3 nationalities by country of embarkation, January to March 2024



Demographics of arrivals

January to March 2021 - 2024



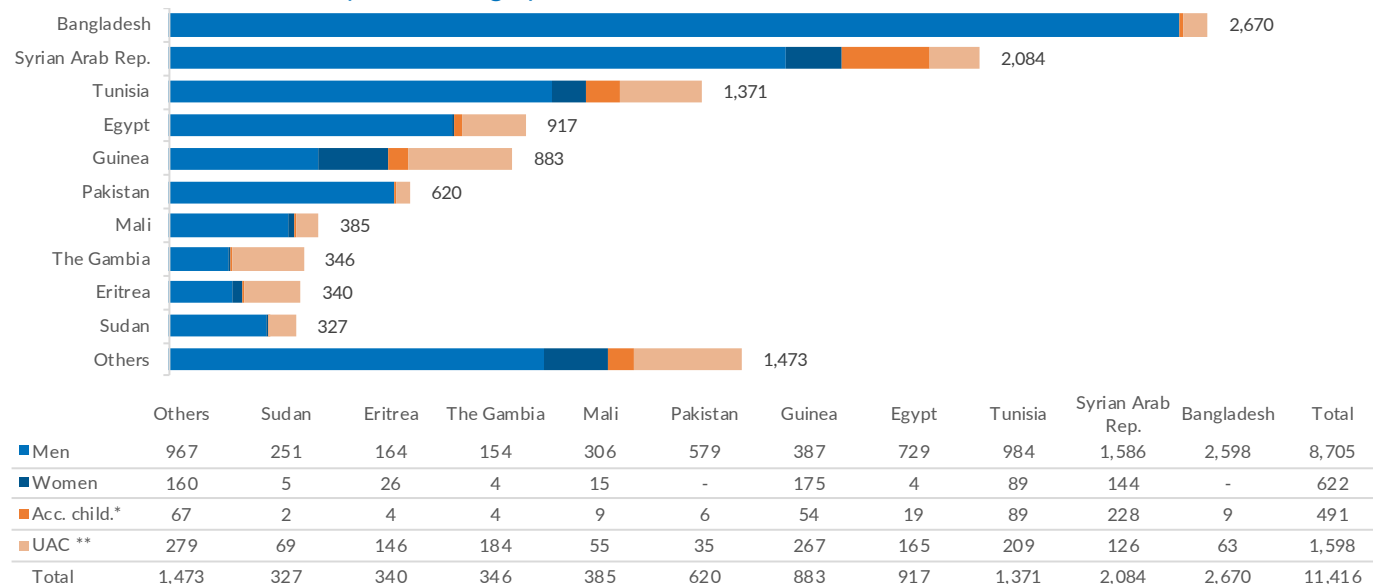
Due to rounding, the percentages may not add up exactly to 100%.

In the first three months of 2024, most people arriving by sea were adult males (76%), followed by unaccompanied children (UAC, 14%), adult females (5%) and accompanied children (4%).

In March, 457 adult females reached Italian shores, mainly originating from Guinea (166), the Syrian Arab Republic (101), Côte d'Ivoire (45) and Tunisia (37).

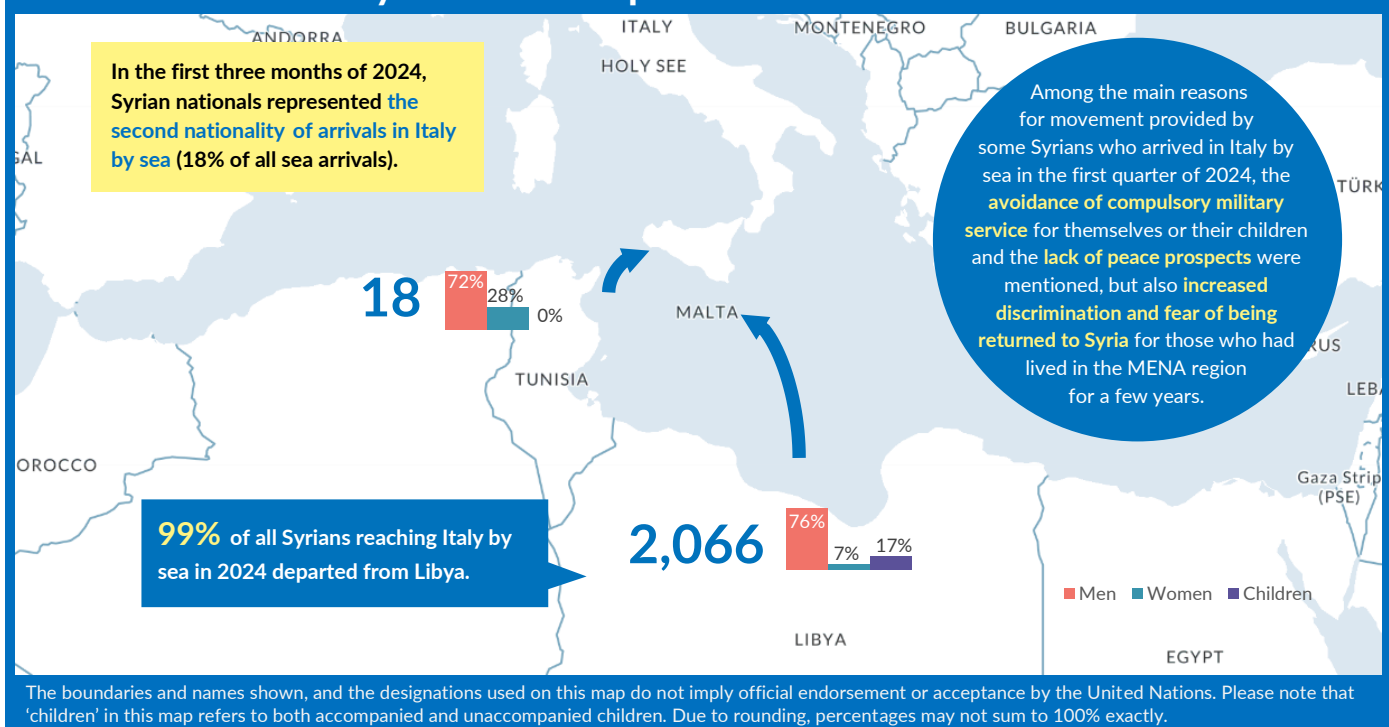
In the same month, 1,020 UAC arrived in Italy by sea. The main nationalities were Guinean (214), Gambian (142), Tunisian (131) and Syrian (81).

Nationality and demographics of arrivals – January to March 2024



Quarterly focus

Sea arrivals from Syrian Arab Republic



Profiles

In the first quarter of 2024, **2,084 Syrian nationals** reached Italy by sea, a **67 per cent increase** compared to the same period in 2023, making Syrians the **second nationality of sea arrivals** until March (18% of all sea arrivals) and consolidating an upward trend observed since the beginning of 2022, with peaks in October and November 2023, and in March 2024. In 2023, **10,098 Syrian nationals** reached Italy by sea, the sixth nationality on a yearly basis (6% of all sea arrivals) and the **highest figure of yearly sea arrivals from the Syrian Arab Republic since 2014**.

The current increase comes despite the *de facto* closure of some sea routes traditionally used by Syrians in the past: the Eastern Mediterranean route and the sea route from Cyrenaica, in Libya. Regarding the former, no arrivals from Türkiye or Lebanon were recorded in the first quarter of 2024 and very few in 2023, especially compared to previous years. In 2022, for instance, 22 per cent of all Syrian nationals reached Italy via the Eastern Mediterranean route. Regarding the latter, the sea route from Cyrenaica was widely used by Syrians between mid-2022 and mid-2023, until departures from this area were *de facto* stopped. As a result, in the first quarter of 2024, **99 per cent of Syrians reaching Italy by sea departed from western Libya**. Due to the very limited geographical point of embarkation for Syrians since mid-2023 onwards (Tripolitania in Libya), almost all Syrian nationals reaching Italy disembarked in **Lampedusa**. Changing routes also had an impact on the **age and gender profile** of Syrians reaching Italy by sea. While most Syrians reaching Italy by sea continued to be adult males, UNHCR teams at the landing sites observed a decrease in the number of adult females and children reaching Italy, as Syrian families used to travel mainly via the Eastern Mediterranean route. Accordingly, in the first quarter of 2024, 76 per cent of Syrian arrivals by sea were adult males, 17 per cent children and 7 per cent adult females.

Many of the Syrians who reached Italy by sea in the first quarter of 2024 and spoke to UNHCR originated from Daraa, Homs, Aleppo and Damascus and, as in previous years, reported to have left the Syrian Arab Republic to avoid compulsory military service for themselves or their children and the lack of peace prospects. Also, a growing number of Syrians who have been living in the Middle East and North Africa region for many years are among the new arrivals, and some reported to UNHCR the increased discrimination and fear of being returned to Syria as main drivers for onward movement to Europe. Many had lived in **Türkiye**, often for a decade or more, working in the agricultural or manufacturing sectors. Others had been long-term residents in the **United Arab Emirates** or **Saudi Arabia**. The decision to leave after years is again linked to the increasing discrimination against Syrians and the likelihood of repatriation in the event of job loss.

Routes

Most of the Syrians disembarking in Italy and who spoke to UNHCR reported they had entered Libya through Benghazi airport on work visas, from where they crossed into Tripolitania with the support of smugglers to obtain the necessary health certificates to travel in the country. Once in Tripolitania, they reported being taken to farmhouses in the Zuwarah area, where many other people (mostly Sudanese, Egyptians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis) were waiting to cross the sea. Many Syrians had only been in Libya for a short time prior to the sea crossing, some for only a few weeks. Others told UNHCR that once they arrived at the huts, those who could not pay for the sea crossing were taken to a detention facility where they were forced to contact their families to pay for the trip. After receiving the money, the smugglers would take them to the boats that would take them to Lampedusa. Most of the Syrians UNHCR spoke to reported that they had relatives or friends in northern **European countries** whom they intended to join.