

On the Move – Latest migration news

MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN SPAIN

10/05/2022-24/05/2022

- Spain has denied access to a group of [17 Sahrawis](#) who arrived in Madrid airport and asked for asylum. Only two of them were granted access to the Spanish territory since one was recognised as stateless and the other in need of international protection.
- The week between 9-13 May saw [many crossings](#) in the Canary route:
 - On 11 May 2022, 223 people were rescued by Salvamento Maritimo. Another 71 people were rescued by Guardamar Caliope and another group of 61 people were rescued by the vessel Salvamar Mizar. On the same day, a boat with 37 people autonomously reached the island of Lanzarote.
 - On 12 May 2022, 318 people were rescued by Spanish authorities from a total of 5 boats, which were brought to Gran Canary and Lanzarote.
 - Overall, [73 people](#) lost their lives during this week and it is unclear whether there are missing people.
- EuroMed Rights' member Iridia published a [report](#) on the violations of human rights migrants face when arriving to the Canary Islands. The organization reports that *"Discrimination in access to international mobility, the lack of legal channels and the improvised and insufficient response of the institutions have generated the creation of spaces of repeated violation of rights in the reception of people once they disembark on land, during detention in the CATEs and CIEs, as well as in the emergency mechanisms created in the Canary Islands Plan"*.

05/04/2022-10/05/2022

- On 1 May 2022, Alarm Phone reported on [three people](#) in distress in the Gibraltar Strait. Finally, they disembarked in Tarifa, Spain.
- On 30 April 2022, an [agreement](#) between Spain and Morocco on security and anti-crime cooperation agreement will enter into force. The agreement aims at "strengthening [Spain and Morocco's] border security policies, in line with European migration policies, which increasingly criminalize the migration process". EuroMed Rights and Migreurop [issued](#) a press release that denounces the content of this agreement.

- Between 26-27 April 2022, [31 people](#) died in the Canary Route in different shipwrecks.
- Since the reopening of the border between Spain and Morocco, after they had been closed due to the pandemic, [dozens of Moroccans and Saharawis](#) have been expelled on a weekly basis from the Canary Islands, sometimes without having fulfilled their right to legal assistance. On 14 April 2022, [20 people](#) were repatriated to Western Sahara.
- Survivors of a boat that was rescued on the 10 April 2022 told that two of the people who were on board [committed suicide](#) after a week at sea.

22/03/2022-05/04/2022

- On 27 March, after a month with practically no arrivals, [four boats](#) arrived in the Canary Islands in less than 24 hours.
- On 31 March 2022, at least [26 people went missing](#) at sea in the Atlantic trying to reach the Canary Islands.
- The 21 of march, after a year, [repatriation flights](#) to Morocco of migrants arriving in the Canary Islands by boat were [resumed](#).

08/03/2022 - 22/03/2022

- On 12 March 2022, at least 44 people [drowned](#) off the coast of Tarfaya (southern Morocco) while they were trying to reach the Canary Islands. There were 61 people on board, including women and children.
- On 15 March 2022, Spanish authorities [arrested](#) Mohamed Benhlime, activist of the Hirak movement and asylum seekers in Spain, and transferred him in a deportation centre. Amnesty International launched a [petition](#) and asked Spanish authorities to immediately stop his deportation as he risks torture and other inhumane and degrading treatments if deported to Algeria.
- Aid organisations have [said](#) that 2021 saw more fatalities in the Atlantic than ever before.

22/02/2022-08/03/2022

- On 25 February 2022, Alarm Phone launched the distress signal of a boat carrying [45 people](#) in the Atlantic. The people were rescued by Spanish authorities.
- The government has proposed to change the asylum process in Ceuta and Melilla to [speed up the return of migrants](#) and to process applications within a maximum of 10 days, as is the case in the airports, but it depends on Morocco to take back all those people whose asylum application is rejected.

- On 2 March 2022, some 2,500 people tried to cross into the Spanish enclave of Melilla by jumping the fences - [the largest attempt](#) in recent years. More than 500 migrants managed to cross. "The aggressiveness that we have witnessed, yesterday as well as today [...] had not been seen on other occasions," the prefect denounced on public television. According to local authorities, 27 members of the police force were injured on Wednesday and 20 on Thursday. For its part, the Moroccan Association for Human Rights (AMDH) reported on Wednesday that around 30 migrants were injured. According to AdMDH, 250 migrants were arrested on March 3 and placed in a youth center, transformed into a detention center, in the Moroccan town of Kariat Arekmane, and will be removed by the authorities from the area.

08/02/2022 - 22/02/2022

- A judge in **Ceuta** ordered that [14 Moroccan minors](#) who were expelled at Ceuta's borders, should be repatriated to Spain because their rights were violated. The boys were part of a big group of almost 2,000 minors who attempted to enter Ceuta in May 2021 and were expelled to Morocco. The judge found that *"the action did not comply with the law, that the fundamental right to physical and moral integrity of minors was violated and demands that the necessary measures be adopted for the return of minors"*.
- On 14 February 2022, Alarm Phone informed that [6 people](#) had been missing for 48h in the Alboran Sea. Spanish authorities were searching for them. Finally, they were rescued and disembarked in the town of Motril.
- On 10 February 2022, Alarm Phone launched a distress signal of a boat carrying [61 people](#) in the Atlantic. The people were rescued by Spanish authorities and disembarked in **Gran Canaria**. On the same day, Spanish authorities said they rescued a total of [222 people](#) on different boats. In the winter months, arrivals to the Canary Islands have been intense, with 3,039 arrivals in November, 2,451 in December and more than 2,674 in January 2022.
- Spain wants to immediately [resume](#) the deportations to **Morocco** now that the airspace has been reopened. Moroccan airspace was closed since April due to the pandemic and the maritime borders remain closed.
- An agreement is in place to install an [Integrated Exterior Surveillance System](#) (SIVE) in the island of Lanzarote, 10 meters from the Mirador de Haría in the north of the island.

25/01/2022 - 08/02/2022

- [245 people](#) went missing in the Canary Route on 6 February 2022. They were on board 4 vessels, and among them were 6 babies.
- [50 people](#) are currently in severe distress in the Canary Route, 4 of them have died already. Authorities are informed, but they have not intervened so far.
- In the last two weeks of January, [2,200 people](#) arrived to the Canary Islands.
- [16 people](#) are missing after a shipwreck took place off Fuerteventura. Spanish authorities were able to rescue 39 people and found one dead person.
- On 26 January 2022, more than [319 people](#) in seven different boats were rescued by Spanish authorities in the Atlantic. However, rescues arrived too late for a boat carrying 27 people, and [18 lost their lives](#). The NGO Caminando Fronteras [demanded](#) the investigation of the death of these 18 people, as Spanish authorities intervened hours later they received the GPS location of the boat in distress.
- Five bodies washed ashore close to Malaga in a few days, probably from an [unreported shipwreck](#). According to [Alarm Phone](#), these could be the victims of a shipwreck that took place on the 8th of January in the Alboran Sea, where 27 people went missing. If that is the case, 22 of them are still missing.
- In the weekend between 22-23 January 2022, Spanish authorities rescued [445 people](#) and disembarked them in the Canary Islands.
- The [number of women](#) crossing the Canary route is increasing: in 2020, 5% of arrivals to the Canary Islands were women; in 2021, the percentage rose to 14%. So far in 2022, women constituted more than 15% of arrivals.
- The Spanish Supreme Court [ruled](#) that “citizenship requirements can be relaxed to accommodate women coming from countries where they have faced discrimination in access to education”. The decision refers to the case of a woman from Morocco who failed her integration test to get citizenship.

11/01/2022 - 25/01/2022

- On 18 January 2022, a boat carrying [62 people](#), including a pregnant woman who gave birth on board, launched a distress call. Spanish authorities rescued the people who disembarked in Fuerteventura.

- On 17 January 2022, [3 people](#) left from Laayoune to reach the Canary Islands. They were adrift and in need of urgent assistance and were finally rescued by Spanish authorities and disembarked in Lanzarote.
- Since the 9 January 2022, [52 people](#) – including 8 children - have been missing in the Canary Route. Spanish authorities have been looking for them but were not able to find them.
- 50 anti-racist groups [denounce](#) the use of biometric technologies and artificial intelligence at borders, as these technologies often produce false results on non-Caucasian subjects, and there is a widespread lack of transparency on how they data is used and collected.
- Over [4,500](#) young foreigners applied for residency and work papers after a month since the new [regulations](#) facilitating the integration of foreign youths came into effect.

14/12/2021 - 11/01/2022

- In 2021, [41,979 people](#) disembarked in Spain. Of those, 23,042 arrived in the Canary Islands. The five main countries of origin are Algeria, Morocco, Mali, Guinea and Ivory Coast.
- 2021 has been the [most lethal](#) year on record on the migratory routes leading to Spain. According to the recently released report by the organization Caminando Fronteras, 4,404 people died *en route* to Spain. Find the report [here](#).
- In the night of 2 January 2022, a [shipwreck](#) occurred off the coasts of Spain. 16 people were rescued by a private vessel that was in the vicinity, 3 bodies were recovered and 10 people are missing. In previous days, other shipwrecks occurred and Spanish authorities are now looking for [17 missing people](#).
- 9 asylum seekers were [pushed back](#) on 1 January 2022 from the Chafarinas Islands, against their right to apply for asylum in Spain.
- In the week before 25-26 December 2021, more than [600 people](#) tried to reach the Canary Islands. On 18 December 2021, Spanish authorities rescued about 500 of them. Many were also intercepted by Moroccan authorities.
- Amnesty International [reports](#) on the progressive deterioration of the right to asylum on the Canary Islands. The organization denounces the saturation of the reception system on the islands, the inadequate living conditions in the centres and the lack of appropriate protection for the most vulnerable people, like children or victims of trafficking.

30/11/2021 - 14/12/2021

- In the night between the 6th and 7th of December 2021, a baby, two women and a man [died](#) in the Atlantic Ocean.
- On 1 December 2021, Spanish authorities rescued more than [200 people](#) and disembarked them in Fuerteventura. Unfortunately, a 2-months-old baby [died](#).
- Alarm Phone published the [report](#) 'No Human is Illegal: criminalization in North Africa and Spain' where it analyses the developments in the Western Mediterranean route in the first half of 2021.
- In the end of November, the Spanish authorities rescued [134 migrants](#) on their way to the Canary Islands, but 4 people died and 4 others went missing. This route is still attracting many migrants despite the elevated dangers of the crossing. So far, almost [19,000](#) people made the crossing since January 2021. At the same time, [936](#) – including 83 minors - died in the crossing, but the number could be much higher, as many people disappear at sea and their bodies are never found.
- The Spanish authorities archived the investigation of a pushback of a minor from Ceuta last May, when about 10,000 people entered the Spanish enclave. The boy, named [Aschraf](#), had entered Ceuta from the sea and was expelled on the same day to Morocco. As the boy was a minor, the expulsion would have been illegal. However, the investigation was dropped as, allegedly, the age of Aschraf could not be confirmed.

16/11/2021 - 29/11/2021

- The Catalan NGO Open Arms announced that it has a new rescue vessel called [Open Arms Uno](#).
- On the 23rd of November 2021, a [shipwreck](#) occurred in the Atlantic Ocean. The 34 people on board left the city of Dakhla and were directed towards the island of Gran Canaria. They were at sea for three weeks when they were found by a merchant vessel, but only 20 survived.
- Spanish authorities rescued more than [370 migrants](#) who were trying to reach the Canary Islands from Morocco. Among the 370 people, there were 36 women, 26 minors and two babies. The number of arrivals to the islands have been increasing since the beginning of the year, as has the number of interceptions carried out by Moroccan authorities.
- On the 27th of November 2021, [two people](#) died and four went missing in the Atlantic. The boat capsized during the rescue operation carried out by Spanish authorities.

- Three agents of the Spanish Guardia Civil have been accused of deliberately [killing](#) a young Yemeni migrant who was attempting to enter Melilla. The agents have allegedly beaten the migrants and thrown him back at sea, where he died.
- [39 Palestinian](#) refugees sought asylum at Barcelona airport after they landed from a flight departed in Cairo. 29 of them were allowed to enter Spain, whereas the requests of the 10 others are still being examined.

25/10/2021 - 15/11/2021

- The numbers of migrants and asylum seekers crossing the Atlantic to arrive to the **Canary Islands** is predicted to be the [highest since 2006](#). The numbers of those who died attempting the crossing is also higher than last year, with 880 certified deaths and 1,000 potentially dead in so-called invisible shipwrecks, but the numbers are likely to be much higher. Despite the increase of arrivals, the reception of migrants on the islands has seen an improvement compared to last years, especially because people are now regularly transferred to the mainland. At the same time, police sources cited by **El País**, state that the cooperation between the Spanish government and Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal and Gambia stopped around [8,000](#) migrants from reaching the islands.
- [34 people](#) are reported missing on the Canary route. They left from **Dakhla** on the 2nd of November and are still unaccounted for. Spanish authorities have been informed by Alarm Phone, but they have not been able to locate the migrants.
- On the 14th of November, [8 people](#) drowned on their way to the island of Gran Canaria.
- **EuroMed Rights** participated in the conference [Migratlantes. Encuentro De Migraciones Atlánticas](#) organised by the Government of the Canary Islands. [Here's](#) the link to the intervention.

05/10/2021 - 25/10/2021

- On 18 October 2021, a [shipwreck](#) off Almeria left 12 missing. Only two people were rescued.
- Between 16 and 18 October 2021, more than [300 people](#), including women and minors, were intercepted and rescued by the Moroccan coast guard while trying to cross by boat from Morocco to the Canary Islands. They were all brought back to Morocco.
- On 16-17 October 2021, [37 people died](#) off Spanish coasts.
- On 24 October 2021, a [six-year-old boy died](#) trying to reach the Canary Islands after being rescued off Gran Canaria with another 49 people,

including his mother and sister, after almost two weeks at sea. Between 11-12 October 2021, in less than 24h, [280 people were rescued](#) on the route to the Canary Islands. An additional 187 people were [rescued](#) on 13 October 2021 on the Canary Route. One year after the sharp increase in arrivals in the Canary Islands, migrants, including families and minors remained [stuck in overcrowded camps](#) in deplorable hygienic and living conditions.

23/09/2021 - 05/10/2021

- **Canary Islands:** According to the NGO *Caminando Fronteras*, 57 people, including 12 minors, died in a [shipwreck](#) in the Atlantic route trying to reach the Canary Islands after spending a week at sea. Most of the people were from Guinea Conakry and Ivory Coast. Five people survived and only 16 bodies were recovered. Around [50 people](#), including 27 women and 8 children, in a wooden boat who departed from Dakhla to the Canary Islands have been missing since 26 September 2021. On 26 September 2021, at least [340 people](#) arrived in the Canary Islands in eight boats. On 27 September 2021, another 33 people were rescued South of Gran Canaria. Despite the critical conditions of the camp facilities denounced by many organisations, these [temporary reception camps](#) built under the Canary Islands Plan in 2020 and capable of hosting up to 7,000 people across the Islands, will remain the main facilities hosting migrants in the event of an increase in arrivals. The Ministry of the Interior [announced](#) the acceleration of the installation of the Integral System of External Surveillance (SIVE) in the island of Lanzarote.
- A group of [700 migrants](#) tried to cross from Morocco to the Spanish enclave of Melilla, but they were prevented by Moroccan border guards.
- On 27 September 2021, Salvamento Marítimo rescued [404 people](#) on 29 different boats in just one day. Most of the people departed from Algeria.
- The bodies of 7 adults and a 3-year-old child were [discovered](#) on the shore in the coast of Almería.
- According to IOM, whose data are which are lower than the reality, in the first eight months of 2021, 785 people died in the Atlantic route to the Canary Islands, while 240 in the Western Mediterranean Route from Morocco and Algeria to Spain, for a total of [025 people](#) (doubled compared to the same period in 2020).

6/09/2021 - 22/09/2021

- **CANARY ISLANDS:** In the first eight months of 2021, a total of 20,491 migrants arrived in Spain, 9,255 of them in the Canary Islands, amounting to a [135.8% increase](#) compared to the same period last year in the Islands. On 14 September 2021, [365 people](#), including 13 women and three

children, arrived in Lanzarote and Gran Canaria. One dead body was recovered. The [Government of the Canary Islands](#) asks the central government for an agreement to care for minors, in light of an increase in migrant arrivals expected for the autumn 2021.

- On 20 September 2021, 125 people, including 60 women, some pregnant women and children, have arrived at the Peñón de Vélez de la Gomera, Spanish territory in Northern Morocco, and requested asylum. They were eventually [returned to Morocco](#) despite their willingness to request asylum in Spain.

19/08/2021 – 06/09/2021

- **CANARY ROUTE:** On 4 September 2021, after 4 days at sea, [45 people](#), including 17 women and 2 kids, who had departed from Dakhla, were rescued by the Spanish coast guard and brought to Gran Canaria. On 2 September 2021, a boat capsized with [86 people on board](#). The Moroccan Navy has recovered 22 bodies, 21 women and 1 girl – there are no survivors. On 31 August 2021, at least [11 people](#) who had departed from Tan-Tan died in a shipwreck *en route* to the Canary Islands. On 30 August 2021, the NGO Caminando Fronteras denounced another shipwreck on the Canary route with [29 victims](#), including 7 children. On 28 August 2021, another tragedy on the Canary Route, [off the coasts of Senegal](#), left 48 people missing and one dead. 11 survivors were rescued by the Senegalese Navy. On 27 August 2021, Salvamento Marítimo [rescued](#) 27 people in distress off Dakhla, four people had already died on board (a woman, a man, a teenager and a girl) and of the 27 survivors [one woman](#) died when reaching Gran Canaria. On 25 August 2021, 46 migrants, including 14 women and two babies, were [rescued](#) off Gran Canaria, Canary Islands: some of the survivors were transferred to the hospital for their critical health conditions. On 20 August 2021, at least [52 people died in a shipwreck](#) on the Canary route: they had left Laayoune several days before and just one woman survived. Following a deadly shipwreck off the coast of Mauritania, *en route* to the Canary Islands, on 16 August 2021, UNCHR and IOM [published](#) a joint press release call for strengthening search and rescue capacity off the coast of Mauritania and recall that “many rescued at sea end up in administrative detention”.
- On 28 August 2021, around [350 people](#) were prevented by Spanish border guards from entering the enclave of Melilla from Morocco.
- On 27 August 2021, the Spanish Coast Guard [rescued 87 people](#) off the coast of Cádiz.
- On 24 August 2021, the Court in Ceuta [rejects](#) the government’s evidence justifying deportations and continues to halt the returns of minors to

Morocco, saying that the returns were not in compliance with Spanish legal system and rights safeguards.

- On 21 August 2021, Alarm Phone denounced that around 30 people, including women and children, are [stuck](#) on Isla de Tierra without food and water and risk being pushed back to Morocco, instead of being allowed to ask for asylum in Spain.
- According to the European Commission, the Internal Security Fund – Border and Visa was used to reinforce [border controls in Ceuta and Melilla](#), through “the introduction of optical fibre in the border perimeter, a human counting system using facial recognition via CCTV cameras and the update of the Ceuta CCTV”.

27/07/2021 – 19/08/2021

- On 13 August 2021, Spain and Morocco agreed to [return 700 unaccompanied minors](#) from the Spanish enclave of Ceuta to Morocco who had entered Ceuta in May 2021. The return of unaccompanied minors is in breach of Spanish law and the European Convention of Human Rights. Save the Children declared that the Committee on the Rights of the Child replied to their [initial petition](#), submitted jointly with Gentium and Andaluçiaacoge asking the Spanish government to halt the return of 10 minors. Although 5 of them have already been expelled, it halted the return of the other 5. More and more girls are present in the migratory route from Morocco to Ceuta: Save the Children interviewed 85 [minor girls who arrived in Ceuta](#) in May 2021, reporting that 4% are cases of LGBTI people who suffer violence inside or outside their family environment, others escaped situations of labour exploitation as well as forced marriages. On 16 August 2021, the [Court](#) of guard Number 2 of Ceuta has decided to suspend for 72 hours all returns of minors to Morocco after hearing the testimony of five children.
- On 5 August 2021, 42 people, including 30 women, 8 children and 4 men, [died in a shipwreck](#) on the Atlantic route from Dakhla to the Canary Islands.

5/07/2021 – 27/07/2021

- On 22 July 2021, around 240 people [crossed](#) the fence from Morocco to the Spanish enclave of Melilla.
- According to an internal document, [seen by El Pais](#), the Civil Guard of Alicante orders its agents not to share "in any case" information with Frontex, as part of its Operation Índalo which patrols the Algeria-Spain route.
- According to the activist Helena Maleno, [64 people](#), including 38 women and 10 children, were in distress at sea for days *en route* to the Canary

Islands but their calls for help remained unanswered. On 12 July 2021, a [shipwreck](#) on the Canary Route of a boat with 30 people on board caused the death of at least 16 people.

- Between 10-13 July 2021, [around 300 people](#) arrived in the Canary Islands (Fuerteventura, El Hierro, Gran Canaria, Lanzarote, Tenerife, Fuerteventura) in different disembarkation operations. On 24 July 2021, 44 people [arrived](#) in El Hierro after 5 days at sea.
- The Spanish NGO Caminando Fronteras [denounced](#) that 2,087 people died or gone missing on sea crossings *en route* to Spain in the first six months of 2021.
- An investigation [reveals](#) that migrant women seasonal workers in strawberry fields in Spain face constant sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation by their employers.

21/06/2021 – 05/07/2021

- On 30 June 2021, a five-year-old girl died while she was evacuated in helicopter after 17 days crossing the Atlantic. 35 other people, including 16 women and six children, were [rescued](#) but one dead man was found on the boat. In just 2 days, [44 deaths](#) were registered on the **Canary Route**.
- On 29 June 2021, Alarm Phone denounced that a boat that left **Dakhla** on 25 June with 46 people on board, including 22 women, one of them pregnant, and 5 children was still [missing](#).
- On 27 June 2021, yet [another tragedy](#) *en route* to the Canary Islands, when a boat with around 60 people, including 15 women and 2 children, capsized off **Western Sahara**. 40 people died and 22 others were rescued by a fishing boat. Around [298 people](#) on seven different boats arrived in the Canary Islands on the same day.
- As EASO will increase reception conditions' support in Spain, its Chief Nina Gregori [commented](#) that Spain "has a rather unique system and the management of places is in the hands of NGOs", while Spanish Migration Minister said several times that the reception system is not efficient.
- More than 1,700 migrants in the **Canary Islands** are still [waiting](#), after months, for their age determination tests, amid discord between the Government of the Canary Islands and the Las Palmas Prosecutor's Office.
- On 28 June 2021, **Salvamento Marítimo** [rescued](#) 37 people who were adrift in a boat off Gran Canaria, Canary Islands. Two people on board had died and seven were hospitalised in serious conditions.