

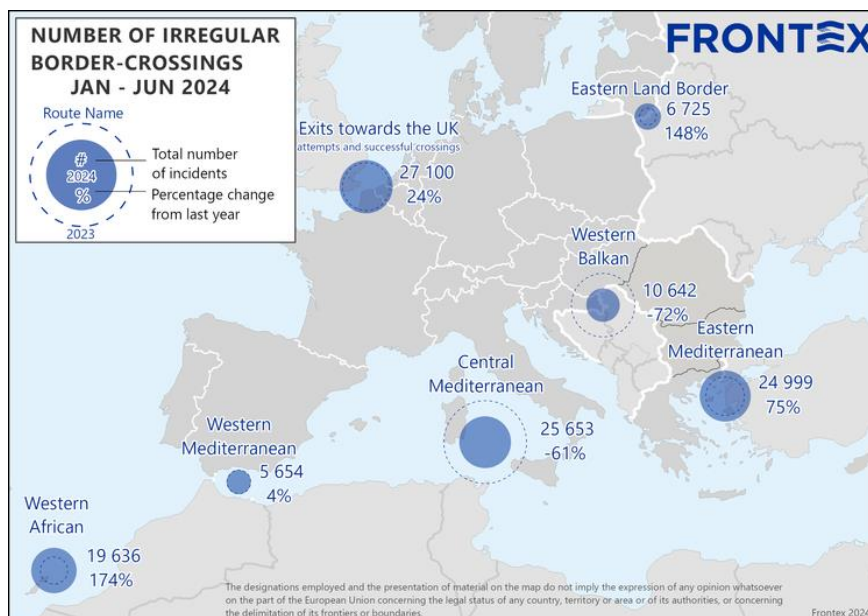
EU external borders Irregular border crossings fall one third in the first half of 2024

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The number of irregular border crossings into the European Union in the first six months of 2024 fell by almost a third (30%) to roughly 94 000, according to preliminary data collected by Frontex. Among the main migratory routes, the Western Balkans and the Central Mediterranean recorded the largest decreases in detections of irregular border crossings (-72% and -61% respectively), while the West African and the Eastern Land Border have seen the largest increases (+174% and 148% respectively).

Key highlights for the first half of 2024:

- **Central Mediterranean** saw a 61% drop (y/y) in detections.
- **Western Balkans** also continued to show a strong decrease (-72%), biggest drop among the main migratory routes to the EU.
- **Western African** route and **Eastern Land Border** showed the highest rises of 174% and 148%.
- Top three nationalities on all routes this year: **Syria, Mali, Afghanistan**.



The **Central Mediterranean** route, which saw the largest number of irregular crossings a year ago, continued to show a downward trend of recent months. Despite a decrease of 61% compared to last year, it remained the most active route this year with almost 26 000 detections. In June, the number of arrivals fell to 4 500, a decrease of more than 71% compared to last year.

The number of detections on the **Western Balkan** route also continued to fall in the January-June period and was down 72% to just over 10 640.

Meanwhile, the **Western African** route continued to record unprecedented numbers of detections, with the total of irregular migrants arriving in the Canary Islands in the first half of the year increasing by 174% year-on-year to almost 20,000. In June, there were 2,600 arrivals.

The second most active migratory route in the first half of the year was the **Eastern Mediterranean**, where the number of arrivals increased by 75% to almost 25 000.

With more than 2,900 officers and staff engaged in various operations, Frontex remains committed to protecting the EU's external borders.

In the first six months of 2024, there was also a significant increase in irregular border crossings at the **Eastern Land Borders**, with a sharp rise of 148% to over **6 700**. A vast majority of the people detected on this route were Ukrainian nationals.

On the Channel route, the number of detections in the first six months of 2024 increased by 24% to reach 27 100.

Note: The preliminary data presented in this statement refer to the number of detections of irregular border crossing at the external borders of the European Union. The same person may cross the border several times in different locations at the external border.

ROUTE	JUNE 2024	JAN-JUNE 2024	JAN-JUNE 2023/ JAN-JUNE 2024	TOP NATIONALITIES (JAN-JUNE 2024)
Central Mediterranean	4 472	25 653	-61%	Bangladesh, Syria, Tunisia
Eastern Mediterranean	2 701	24 999	+75%	Syria, Afghanistan, Egypt
Western African	2 587	19 636	+174%	Mali, Senegal, Morocco
Western Balkan	1 502	10 642	-72%	Syria, Türkiye, Afghanistan
Western Mediterranean	854	5 654	+4%	Algeria, Morocco, Mali
Eastern Land Border	1 270	6 725	+148%	Ukraine, Somalia, Syria
Exits towards the UK	5 280	27 100	+24%	Afghanistan, Vietnam, Iran