

Annual Report 2024

MIGRATION OBSERVATORY OF LAMPEDUSA



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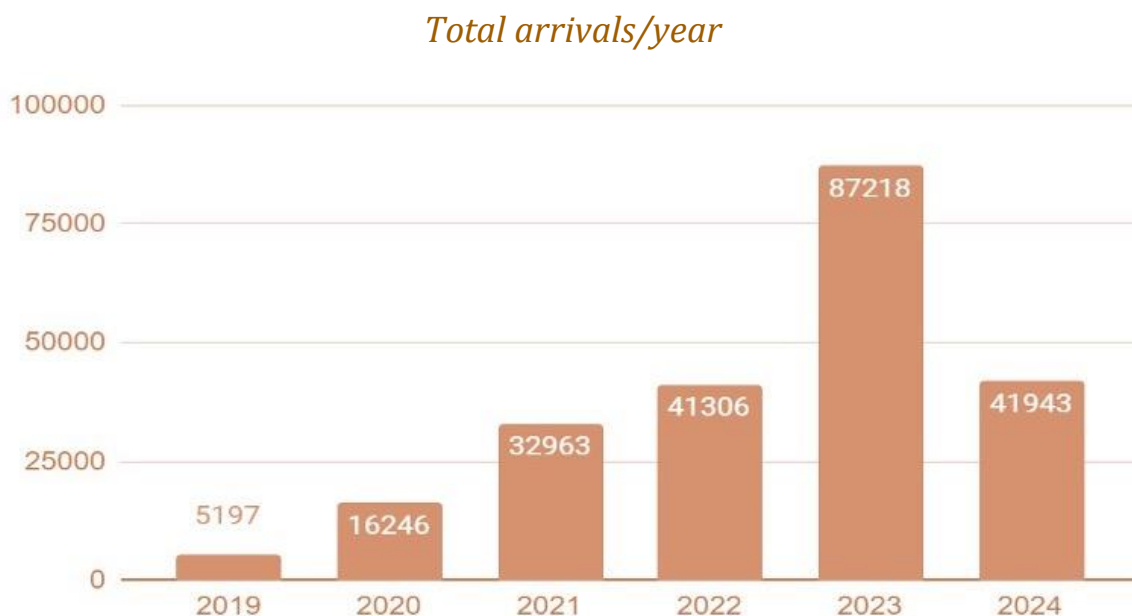
INTRODUCTION

The Migration Observatory of Mediterranean Hope – Refugee and Migrant Programme of the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy (FCEI) – has been active in Lampedusa for ten years. This report was prepared by the project’s staff and volunteers and refers to the year 2024. It is the result of collective work and is based on direct testimonies gathered on the island.

LANDINGS

The Central Mediterranean Route

In 2024, a total of 41,943 people arrived in Lampedusa. As shown in the graph below, arrivals in Lampedusa decreased by 51.9% compared to the previous year. However, when compared to 2022, there was an increase of 1.6%.¹



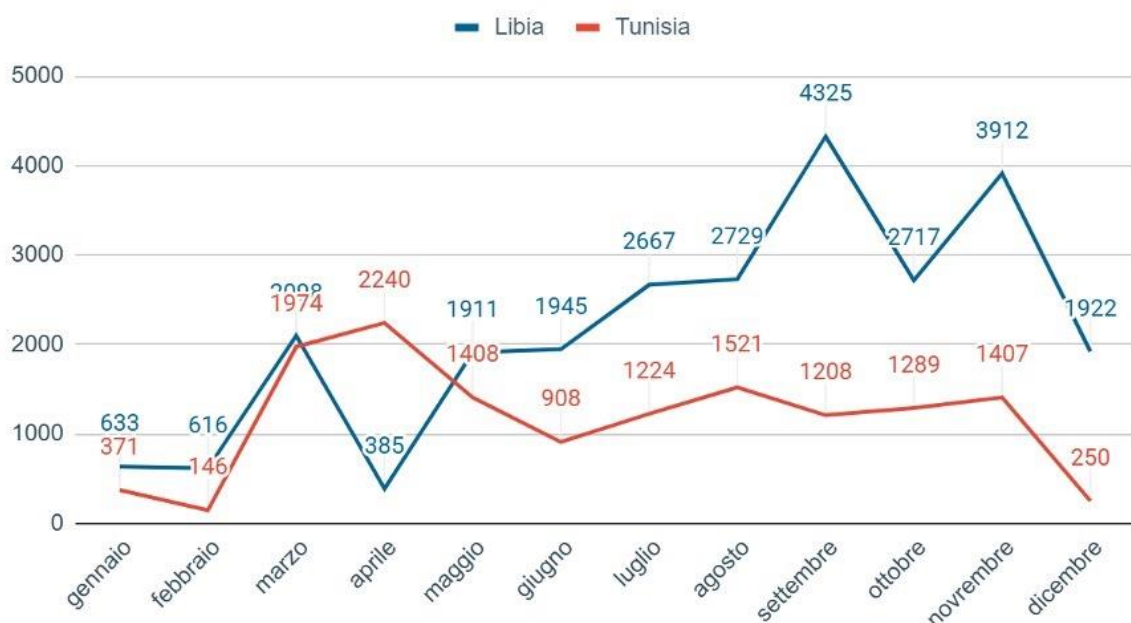
¹ The data collected comes from direct observation conducted by the team of the Migration Observatory. Throughout 2024, the team maintained a constant presence during all landing operations in Lampedusa, documenting each phase through continuous on-the-ground monitoring.

These numbers highlight that, despite increasing European and national investments in border control and externalisation, significantly more people have arrived over the past three years compared to the previous three-year period.

While it is not possible to pinpoint the exact causes of this increase, it is evident that several factors have contributed to it. Among them are the worsening of systemic racism and the socio-economic crisis in Tunisia², the climate crisis—leading to a growing number of displaced people in areas such as Bangladesh—and wars or critical socio-political situations in countries such as Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, and Sudan. Once more, these events indicate the ineffectiveness of border externalisation policies which fail to truly address the migration. The phenomenon continues to affect tens of thousands of people and cause thousands of deaths each year.

Routes of origin

Arrivals during 2024 by source routes



² Sub-Saharan migrants and refugees continue to face collective deportations, evictions, assaults, and mistreatment. Meanwhile, Tunisian authorities have been arresting and convicting several property owners for renting apartments to undocumented individuals. [De la crise à la normalisation de la violence en Tunisie](#)

During 2024, the provenance routes to Lampedusa showed a significant change from previous years. Between January and March, there was an upturn in departures from Libya, which exceeded those from Tunisia for the first time in over a year. Between April and June, flows were evenly distributed between the two main routes, with 4,241 people arriving from Libya and 4,505 from Tunisia. Between July and September, the number of arrivals from Libya (9,721 persons) clearly exceeded those from Tunisia (3,933 persons). This trend is also confirmed in the last quarter (October-December) of 2024, with a clear majority of people leaving from Libya (8,551) compared to those from Tunisia (2,946). Looking at the annual total, there is a clear difference in the distribution between the routes with a total of 25,860 landings from Libya and 13,946 from Tunisia.

Pushbacks

To gain a comprehensive understanding of how many people have attempted to cross the Central Mediterranean route, it would be essential to have reliable data on those who did not reach Lampedusa because they were intercepted by the so-called Libyan or Tunisian coast guard. The reinforcement of European and Italian border externalisation policies actively encourages and supports these pushbacks, in direct violation of the principle of “non-refoulement”, as confirmed by the European Court of Human Rights³, the Court of Cassation⁴, and ordinary courts⁵.

Libya

Numerous testimonies gathered during landings recount the violence and torture suffered by people on the move while crossing Libya. Similarly, many persons described instances of pushbacks. According to data from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), 21,762 people were intercepted and deported to Libya in 2024.⁶ However, these figures may be underestimated. A comparison between IOM’s weekly

³ [Respingimenti verso la Libia – L’Italia condannata dalla Corte Europea per i Diritti dell’Uomo.](#)

⁴ [Migranti. Cassazione: «La Libia non è un porto sicuro». Reato obbedire ai guardacoste.](#)

⁵ On 26 June 2024, the Civil Court of Rome confirmed that the same principle of non-refoulement was violated when the merchant ship Asso 29 brought 150 people back to Tripoli under the coordination of the Italian authorities. [Caso Asso 29, arriva a sentenza: La Libia non è un luogo sicuro dove condurre i migranti - Asgi.](#)

⁶ Data from 1 January to 28 December 2024. https://x.com/IOM_Libya

reports and alerts from Alarm Phone, as well as other NGOs operating in the Central Mediterranean, reveals notable discrepancies.⁷

«We meet O., who tells us he is from Mali. During his journey, he was shot in the leg in Libya, with the bullet piercing his shin. He was hospitalized twice: the first time they only put a cast on him, but during the second visit, he underwent surgery. They inserted metal pins into his leg, explaining that in Libya, if you can pay, they will operate on you, otherwise, they will amputate. O. probably managed to find the money for the surgery, though it seems the procedure wasn't done properly. He shows us an X-ray image: three screws can be seen inserted into his leg. However, at the time of our meeting, one screw is still in place, while two are sticking out. When we ask him what happened, he tells us that, when boarding the boat, he hit his leg and the screws came out. The pain, he says, is unbearable.»

12 July 2024

Tunisia

Many direct testimonies collected by the Observatory team during landings at the Favaloro Pier recount violence and practices that violate human rights, carried out by the Tunisian “Garde nationale” against people on the move. The Alarm Phone report “Interrupted Sea”⁸, which investigates the violent and illegal practices of the Tunisian “Garde nationale”, confirms these accounts. Additionally, the investigation by IrpiMedia into the shipwreck on 5 April 2024 highlights the deterrent maneuvers of the “Garde nationale”, which caused a metal boat to capsize, resulting in the deaths of 15 people⁹.

⁷ The Observatory, in its monitoring work, compares IOM Libya’s weekly Maritime Update—which includes dates, numbers of intercepted individuals, and the ports where these operations took place—with reports from Alarm Phone and NGOs engaged in Search and Rescue. In several instances, Alarm Phone’s alerts are not accounted for in the official reports.

⁸ <https://alarmphone.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Interrupted-sea-EN.pdf>

⁹ The responsibilities of Tunisia’s Garde Nationale in the shipwreck of April 5th 2024

These “proxy pushbacks” are a direct result of European and Italian externalisation policies, which continue to fund, train, and equip the so-called Tunisian and Libyan coastguards. The latest concrete step in this direction is the adoption of Decree 2024-181 on 5 April 2024, which establishes the "National Centre for Coordinating Maritime Search and Rescue Operations" and defines a Tunisian area of responsibility up to just a few nautical miles from Lampedusa. The Tunisian SAR (Search and Rescue) has been operational since June 2024.

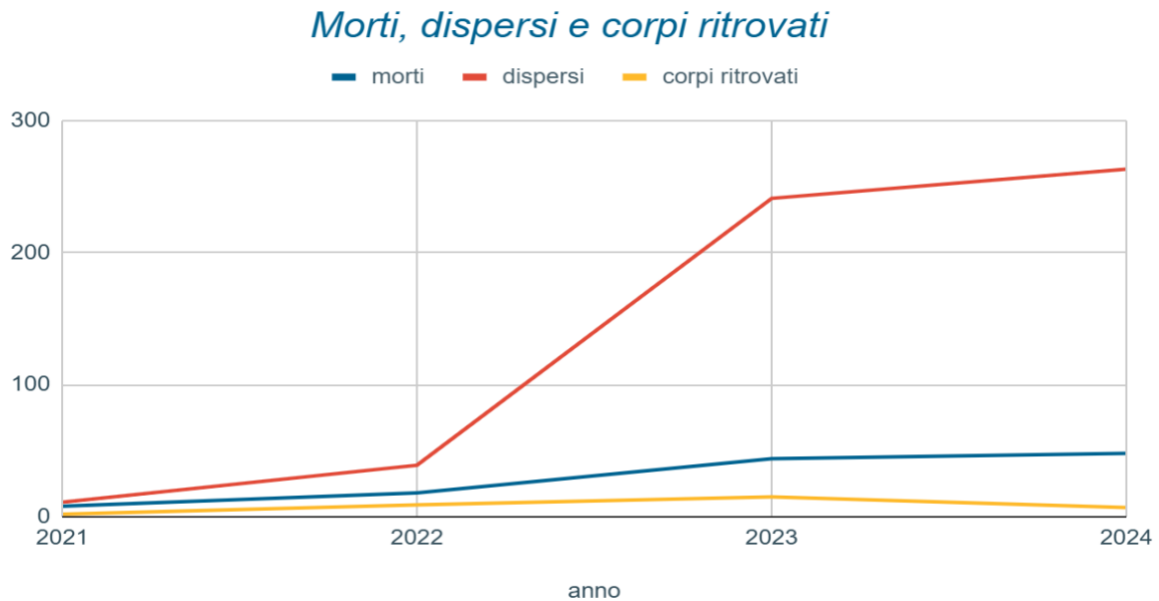
«A young man tells us he spent a year in Tunisia trying to leave. He shares that he lived in the bushes in the desert, suffered violence at the hands of the Tunisian police, and was pushed back several times after managing to depart. He is very happy to have finally made it to Italy.»
29 August 2024.»

29 August 2024

«A Sudanese young man tells us he spent 8 months in El Amra, a small village in central Sfax, which is currently known as the area where people who want to depart tend to gather. He has already been intercepted at sea four times, two of which resulted in his deportation to the border with Algeria, in the desert.»

31 August 2024

Shipwrecks, deaths and missing persons



In 2024, at least 1,717 people died in the Central Mediterranean and 2,301 across the entire Mediterranean route.¹⁰ This year has been more deadly than the previous one¹¹, as shown in the graph above. Since the beginning of 2024, the Observatory has recorded continuous shipwrecks in the waters off Lampedusa, with at least 48 confirmed deaths, 263 missing persons, and other presumed shipwrecks for where it is difficult to ascertain the deaths or trace the missings. Below is an account of some of the episodes that have been monitored.

January

January 14: Reports indicate a shipwreck off the coast of Lampedusa, with at least 40 people missing.

January 30: 48 people who departed from Tunisia were shipwrecked just before being rescued. At least one minor is reported missing.

February

February 1: A metal boat departed from Sfax (Tunisia) with 49 people on board and capsized while attempting to signal for help as rescue boats approached. All

¹⁰ The IOM claims that these numbers are largely underestimated due to the difficulty of finding exact information. [Missing Migrants Project](#).

¹¹ IOM statement on Twitter.

passengers fell into the sea, some without life vests. No confirmed information is available on the number or identity of the missing. A small child is reported missing.

February 2: An Egyptian man dies during the crossing on a boat that left from Libya.

February 28: The Sea-Eye rescues a boat that departed from Libya. The survivors were brought to Porto Empedocle's hotspot (Agrigento). Three people were evacuated for medical reasons to Lampedusa. Two men were found dead, likely from carbon monoxide poisoning in the boat's hull.

March

March 6: Four people were evacuated from Seawatch-5 to Lampedusa for carbon monoxide poisoning. A 17-year-old boy died aboard the NGO's ship.

March 8: A man from Bangladesh dies during the crossing shortly after leaving Libya. His fellow travelers keep his body aboard until they reach Lampedusa, where they crash into rocks, remaining stuck for at least two days.

March 13: The Ocean Viking rescues a boat in distress. At least 60 people are presumed drowned. Two individuals were evacuated to Lampedusa for medical reasons and later transferred to Sicily, one of whom died in the hospital.

March 18: A metal boat, which left Sfax on March 15, capsized during a transfer operation by the Coast Guard, resulting in the deaths of two Cameroonian boys.

March 23: A boat capsized, and the MareGo humanitarian ship intervened to rescue the people in the water while waiting for the Coast Guard. A 1-year-old girl from Cameroon was reported missing.

March 24: A metal boat capsized during a rescue operation by the Coast Guard, and a minor from Guinea Conakry is reported missing.

March 25: A boat with about 150 people, which left Libya three days prior, arrived at Lampedusa. Shortly after departure, the boat experienced mechanical failure, and the so-called Libyan Coast Guard intervened, leaving the boat adrift and allegedly firing near the boat. Ten people fell into the water during rescue operations conducted by a nearby oil tanker that responded to the Seawatch plane's alert. The Italian Coast Guard carried out the transfer, bringing 139 people to Lampedusa. Three individuals were reported missing: an Ethiopian boy, a man from Bangladesh, and a man from Syria (this case was documented and filmed by Seawatch¹²).

¹² https://www.instagram.com/p/C4_G5vIsvt_/

March 28: A metal boat from Sfax capsized, and the humanitarian boat Trotamar and the Italian Coast Guard intervened. Three people are missing: a 5-month-old baby and two boys from Guinea Conakry.

April

April 4: 46 people on a metal boat from Sfax fell into the water during a rescue operation. The last one to be retrieved by the Coast Guard, named Amina, a 20-year-old from Gambia, did not survive. Her brother and sister, both survivors, confirmed her death.

April 10: A shipwreck occurred in Malta's SAR waters involving a boat from Sfax, with 43 people on board. In addition to 22 missing, six people died aboard the Coast Guard vessel, likely due to drowning and hypothermia. Two bodies were found in the sea, including a three-year-old girl. A young man between 22 and 25 years old died once reaching the Favaloro Pier, after about an hour of attempted resuscitation.

April 10: One of the women who survived the shipwreck mentioned above had initially boarded another boat, which had also capsized. At least 45 people are missing. It is believed that she was found at sea and boarded the boat.

May

May 7: A boat departing from Libya with about 57 people on board was rescued by the humanitarian ship Nadir and the Coast Guard. One man died during the crossing, likely due to hydrocarbon poisoning.

May 28: The Humanity 1 ship rescues a boat carrying a mother and two children, one three years old and the other six months old. The youngest died from hunger. The three were evacuated to Lampedusa, while the Humanity 1 continued to another port.

June

June 1: The commercial ship Maersk Aegean rescued a boat that left from Gars Garabulli (Libya), bringing it up to 8 nautical miles away. When the Coast Guard began transferring the 67 people on board, a Gambian minor fell into the water. The person could not be retrieved.

June 7: Geo Barents retrieved 11 bodies that had already been spotted by the Seabird plane. One of the bodies previously seen was not found.

June 8: Seabird spotted two more bodies, one of which was recovered by Ocean Viking.

June 17: Nadir assisted a boat that left Libya, carrying 54 people. Ten of them died from asphyxiation after being trapped in the boat's lower hull. The survivors were brought to Lampedusa by the Coast Guard, while the boat and the bodies were towed by Nadir for 10 hours. A silent march was organized from Nadir's dock to Favalaro Pier, attended by members of the Forum Lampedusa Solidale and other activists.

July

July 6: 44 people arrived from Sfax after a four-day journey. Two Gambian men and a Senegalese man are missing.

July 7: 43 people arrived from Libya after two days at sea. As they neared Lampedusa, high waves capsized the boat, which collided with rocks. All passengers fell into the water. The survivors, in shock, reported that two of their fellow travelers did not manage to swim ashore. One was an Egyptian citizen, whose body was recovered on July 9, and the other was a Bangladeshi man, still missing.

August

August 12: The body of a Syrian man, presumed to have died from hydrocarbon inhalation, arrived. He was traveling with 144 other people who departed from Sabratha, Libya, and had traveled for three days. Four other people were brought to the PTE (Triage and Emergency Point) of Lampedusa for hydrocarbon inhalation.

August 29: During a recovery operation, the Guardia di Finanza discovered a body in an advanced state of decomposition.

September

September 4: Seven survivors of a shipwreck arrived at Favalaro Pier. The boat, which left Libya, likely on September 1, had 27 people aboard. It seems that the boat was stranded due to an engine failure, and people began falling into the water. The survivors were found clinging to the boat, which was filled with water. After arriving exhausted, the survivors were taken to a hotspot, and only one person was transferred to the PTE later for pre-existing conditions aggravated by the journey. On September 8, seven bodies were found in the sea (six by the Coast Guard and one by the Guardia di Finanza). The bodies were unrecognizable, making it impossible to identify them as victims of the same shipwreck. Just two days prior, Seabird had reported a distressed boat 26 nautical miles from Lampedusa, which appeared to be the same one that had capsized.

September 25: Two minors (and likely another person) drowned off Capo Ponente, Lampedusa. The iron boat capsized near Capo Ponente. Tourists on a boat tour witnessed the scene.

September 26: A boat from Sfax arrived late at night, carrying mainly people from sub-Saharan Africa. Among them was the mother of a newborn, who appeared to have died of starvation during the journey. The baby's body was never recovered.

October

October 7: A Syrian man died during the crossing on a boat from Libya.

November

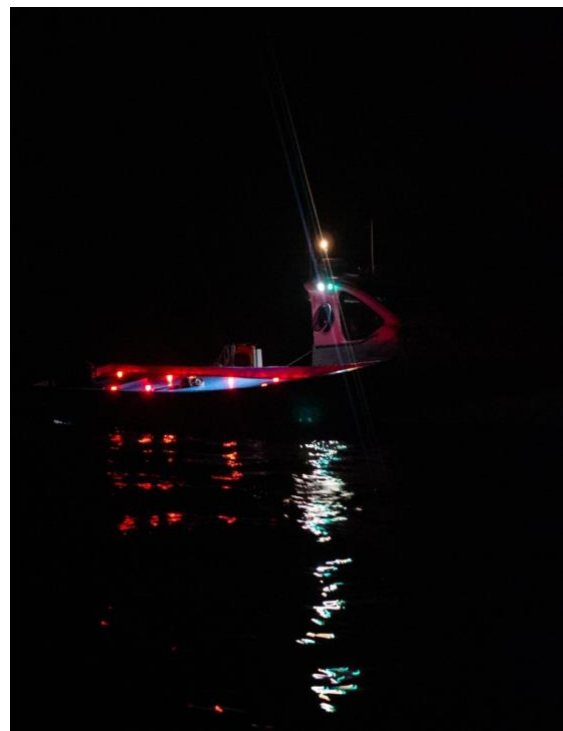
November 27: A boat with mainly sub-Saharan people aboard filled with water, and many people fell into the sea. Upon arrival at Lampedusa, it was discovered that a woman was missing.

December

December 11: The Trotamar ship of the Compass Collective NGO rescued a 12-year-old girl from Sierra Leone aboard a boat with around 45 other people, all of whom were lost after the boat capsized.

December 31: Seven survivors of a shipwreck arrived at Favalaro Pier from a boat carrying 20 other people who are missing. The boat is believed to have capsized due to high waves.

The Observatory, along with other organizations involved in memory and missing person searches, continues to observe the lack of clear and transparent procedures for the identification of bodies, the preservation of biological material for identification, family contact, repatriation, or burial of the deceased. The bodies brought to Lampedusa remain in the island's only morgue for weeks, without an aeration and refrigeration system, denying the preservation of the body and the dignity of the deceased.



Favaloro Pier

Molo Favaloro remains an inadequate place to receive the people who land there. The condition of the sanitary facilities is unsanitary, hazardous, and unfit for use. Over the years, the Observatory, together with other local organisations and the religious community, has submitted numerous reports in an attempt to ensure that the situation is addressed. To this day, the condition of the sanitary facilities remains unchanged.

Another issue identified by the Observatory team and the local network concerns the lack of adequate seating at Molo Favaloro, which is essential for newly arrived people who are often exhausted and physically drained. Some religious communities from across the country, in collaboration with the local Catholic Church, have built and decorated seven benches, which they independently transported and placed at Molo Favaloro to replace the old, rusted, and unusable seating.

«During the night 48 people arrive from Tunisia. Two of them urgently need to go to the toilet, but they are not allowed. A man who was laying his dirty clothes on the ground is abruptly reprimanded. The dock was already in very poor hygienic conditions well before these people arrived. During the same arrival, we escorted two people in because they were unable to walk. The wheelchair remains inside the ambulance, unused»

29 November



The Contrada Imbriacola hotspot

1st June 2024 marked one year since the Italian Red Cross (CRI) took over the management of the Lampedusa hotspot. This change was the result of the declaration of a state of emergency in April 2023, following a sharp increase in arrivals¹³.

As a consequence of this declaration, in addition to handing over the management of first reception centres and hotspots in Italy to the CRI, there was also an increase and strengthening of the Centres for Repatriation (CPR), as well as the finalisation of agreements with Tunisia, Albania, and other countries.

Under the previous management by the cooperative Badia Grande, there were no adequate means to transfer people from the dock to the hotspot. Now, however, buses and other vehicles circulate on the island to facilitate transfers. Nevertheless, alongside these improvements, other shortcomings have emerged. From spring 2024, the CRI introduced blankets to replace thermal blankets during disembarkations. On several occasions, during November and December 2024, these blankets proved insufficient for the number of arrivals.

Despite the general improvement in resources and logistical means implemented by the CRI, our observations indicate that these measures are still not enough to ensure reception and dignity for those arriving on the island. Furthermore, the hotspot continues to function as a place of detention. The only recorded case of an authorised release dates back to October 2023, when an Egyptian man, who had been detained without justification, was freed thanks to the intervention of ASGI, which was temporarily present in Lampedusa. His detention was due to the discretion of the police officer in charge of the hotspot¹⁴. This occurred despite the 2023 ruling by the European Court of Human Rights, which condemned Italy for the unlawful detention and inadequate material conditions of the hotspot in the case of *J.A. et al. v. Italy*¹⁵. On 13th June 2024, the

¹³ <https://www.internazionale.it/essenziale/notizie/annalisa-camilli/2023/04/28/emergenza-migranti-lampedusa>

¹⁴ [When the "bulwark of humanity" shows the differential value of who and what is human: a year of the Red Cross in Lampedusa"](#)

¹⁵ [Evaluation of the Committee of Ministers: Italy's Failure to Implement the ECHR Judgment on the Lampedusa Hotspot.](#)

Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe ruled that Italy had failed to properly implement the judgment.

The Sea-Eye arrived at the Commercial Pier in Lampedusa at around 7 am. The Coast Guard's call at 5:24 am was not received, and the Mediterranean Hope (MH) team learned about the arrival at around 8 am. Initially, the information was unclear: reports mentioned a shipwreck, with three people taken to Lampedusa's Primary Healthcare Centre (PTE).

At around 8:30 am, the team reached the PTE to check if any support was needed. Of the three rescued young men, two were intubated, and one required an X-ray. The third was awake and was being questioned by the police. He recounted that he had departed from Libya at 10 pm on Monday. During the journey, he had been in the hull, lost consciousness, and woke up aboard the Sea-Eye. He remembered very little else. Despite his fragile condition after three days of travel and a recent awakening, he was interrogated about camps in Libya, criminal networks, and details of the journey.

Later, official information about the rescue emerged: 59 people of Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Syrian, and Egyptian nationality had been saved. Two had died, one was evacuated by helicopter from the Sea-Eye and transferred to Malta, three were at the PTE in Lampedusa, and 53 were en route to Porto Empedocle.

We brought dry clothes and hot tea to the emergency room and lent B. a phone so he could contact his family in Bangladesh. Meanwhile, the Red Cross was absent.

At around 11 am, B. was transferred to the hotspot, where at the time, there were no other guests—the so-called "Campo Zero". The other two young men were urgently transferred to Sicily for proper medical care.

B.'s father kept contacting us, worried because he had not received any further news of his son. The next day, around midday, we went to the hotspot gates so he could speak to his father again. We tried to arrange an external meeting, but after multiple refusals and unclear justifications, we were only allowed a conversation through the gate. Although B. had already been identified, he was

not given the opportunity to contact his family, as we understand that the Red Cross does not provide phones for guests.

B. was scheduled to be transferred to Porto Empedocle on Friday, 1st March, at around 8 am. Communications with his father and other individuals for the identification and repatriation of the bodies would continue for a couple of weeks.

28th February

Expansion of the hotspot system

At the end of February, the Porto Empedocle (AG) hotspot was inaugurated with a capacity of approximately 280 places. It was designed to ease the pressure on the Contrada Imbriacola centre and ensure quicker transfers from Lampedusa. During periods of high arrivals on the island, particularly in the last two weeks of March, it appears that many people were transferred from Lampedusa without being pre-identified, delaying the pre-identification process until they reached Sicily.

On 14 August, a Repatriation Detention Centre (CPR) was opened in Porto Empedocle (AG). Located next to the hotspot, it has a capacity of 70 places and is managed by the social cooperative Oltre Il Mare¹⁶. Shortly after its opening, the Agrigento police headquarters detained six Tunisian citizens inside the centre. However, on 28 August, two judges from the Palermo court ordered the release of five of them, ruling that their detention was not justified by specific reasons related to their individual situations¹⁷.

In May, the Italian government amended the Cutro Decree in an attempt to address judicial criticisms¹⁸. For asylum seekers from so-called “safe countries of origin”, an alternative to administrative detention remains the payment of a deposit ranging

¹⁶ The same cooperative that runs the controversial reception centre [Villa Sikanina](#).

¹⁷ [The applicants locked up in the CPR in Porto Empedocle are free.](#)

¹⁸ [A judge in Catania, in October 2023, refused to validate the detention of other asylum seekers in the Pozzallo CPR.](#) On that occasion, Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni appealed against the decision, bringing the matter before the European Court of Justice, [which has yet to rule on the issue.](#)

between €2,500 and €5,000, but this time the amount is determined on a case-by-case basis by the police commissioner. Previously, the deposit had to be paid before the identification procedures took place (essentially upon arrival). Now, it must be paid within seven days of being notified of the amount.

However, judges had challenged the previous decree not only because of the financial burden imposed on asylum seekers but also due to the lack of an individual assessment justifying detention. Furthermore, the courts questioned the legitimacy of detaining asylum seekers who were unable to pay the required deposit.

The Italy-Albania agreement and the Libra ship

In 2024, the Italy-Albania agreement, initially formalised on 6 November 2023, came into effect¹⁹. The Albanian government granted Italy the use of certain areas within its territory, where Italy has constructed and now manages three facilities: A first reception centre at the port of Shengjin, an identification and detention centre in Gjader, a prison designated for the detention of 'irregular' migrants with pending criminal proceedings.

The military vessel Libra, already known for its involvement in the 2013 shipwreck tragedy (often referred to as the "children's massacre"), is responsible for transporting individuals intercepted in the waters off Lampedusa²⁰.

In 2024, the Libra carried out two operations. The first operation ended on 16 October, when 16 migrants rescued off Lampedusa were brought to the Albanian port of Shengjin. Four of them were later returned to Italy, while the remaining 12 were detained in the Gjader centre pending the outcome of their asylum applications.

¹⁹ [Protocol between the Government of the Republic of Italy and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania on Strengthening Cooperation in Migration Matters.](#)

²⁰ On 11 October 2013, a boat carrying migrants, mostly Syrians, sank south of Malta, resulting in the deaths of 268 people, including 60 children. This tragic event, known as the "Children's Massacre," deeply impacted public opinion. The Italian military vessel Libra, initially only a few miles away, was involved in this dramatic incident. Despite the presence of several Italian ships nearby, the competent authorities refused to coordinate the rescue, arguing that the boat was outside the Italian SAR zone. Worsening the situation, a prolonged exchange of responsibility between Italian and Maltese authorities contributed to the fatal outcome. Subsequently, the Rome Tribunal recognised a "wilful failure to assist" by the Italian authorities, highlighting how their decision not to intervene played a crucial role in the tragic loss of life.

The second operation took place on 6 November. As 1,568 people arrived in Lampedusa between 4 and 6 November, the *Libra* transferred eight individuals intercepted south of the island to Shengjin—three from Egypt and five from Bangladesh. The Rome Tribunal, citing previous rulings, suspended the validation of detention for seven of them and referred the case to the European Court of Justice, with a hearing scheduled for February 2025.

Referring the case to the European Court of Justice marks an escalation in the complexity of these operations. Nonetheless, on 23 December, the Italian government announced the resumption of forced transfers to Albania, disregarding the pending EU Court ruling.

The Migration Observatory team closely monitors the evolution of these operations, seeking to understand their impact on those involved. So far, two key issues have emerged: the *Libra*'s operations appear to hinder and delay search and rescue efforts. On both days when the vessel was active, arrivals in Lampedusa occurred in an uninterrupted afternoon “window”, suggesting possible hours of standstill, likely due to the identification process of those deemed “non-vulnerable”.

Secondly, we have observed a widespread fear among many newly arrived people in Lampedusa of being deported to Albania. This fear, repeatedly expressed, highlights how the ongoing operations are fostering an atmosphere of insecurity and anxiety for those who are already in a state of extreme vulnerability.

The civil flee and the flow decree

The flow decree

In the Flow Decree “*Decreto Flussi*” of december 2024, new restrictions have been introduced regarding the rescue operations conducted by NGOs. Violations of operational rules can now involve not only the ship’s captain but also the shipowner, intensifying the penalties. Subsequent infractions follow a progressive scale:

- First violation: 20-day seizure and fine.
- Second violation: 60-day seizure and increased fine.
- Third violation: Confiscation of the vessel.

Additionally, NGOs are now required to immediately notify ENAC (National Civil Aviation Authority) and the National Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre in case of emergencies. Failure to report can result in fines of up to €10,000 and the seizure of the aircraft or ship. The time limit for appeals against seizures has also been reduced. The regulation introduces stricter requirements for rescue operations and a new regime for NGOs, including specific rules for aircraft used to support missions. Non-compliance with these provisions can lead to severe penalties, including confiscation of the vessel.

Moreover, the decree stipulates that a repeated violation within the past five years triggers harsher sanctions, not only if the repetition involves the same captain but also the shipowner or operator. The duration of the first administrative detention of the vessel can now be adjusted between 10 and 20 days, depending on the severity of the violation. However, the vessel will still be prohibited from navigating until the adoption of the prefectural order, adding further days of inactivity without the possibility of appeal.

These measures effectively hinder the presence of humanitarian vessels in the Mediterranean by criminalising sea rescue efforts. The consequences are evident, particularly in Lampedusa. In a joint statement, much of the civil fleet has denounced these provisions, which aim to weaken the legal duty to report the presence of vessels in distress.

«Once again, it seems the goal is to make life impossible for those saving lives and documenting the daily violations of international law occurring in the Central Mediterranean. Another harmful, propagandistic, inhuman law, as well as clearly illegitimate.»

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The community work of the Migration Observatory continues in its tenth year of activity, carried out through numerous awareness-raising, educational, and support activities for the local population and people on the move. The main objective has been to build a network of solidarity between people and associations in the area, with a constant commitment to valuing culture, memory, and dialogue.

The Lampedusa library

The collaboration between Mediterranean Hope and the Iby Library in Lampedusa continues to thrive. This space serves as a reference point for understanding the needs of both adults and children, allowing for the design and implementation of targeted activities for the community. To date, the library is open twice a week for young children, hosts after-school programs for older children, and opens once a week for a collective crochet session for everyone. In addition to these events, the library is a space for meetings, debates on current issues, book presentations, and training sessions.

Italian language schools

Also at the library, Italian language lessons are held, attended by around three or four people throughout the year. Despite the small number of people reached by this initiative, one of the students who attended the school regularly achieved excellent results: in October 2024, she took the exam for the A2 certification and passed it. Following this first milestone, she will continue her studies with the goal of obtaining the B1 certification in the future.

Welcome kit – No Border Books

In collaboration with the IBBY Library of Lampedusa²¹, which has been bringing silent books to the border of Europe for 10 years, and the collective of Tunisian and Sub-Saharan women, FreeFemmes–Artisans for the Freedom of Movement²², the Observatory launched the Welcome Kit project. The goal is to bring books to the Favaloro pier. A Welcome Kit consists of fabric backpacks containing colored wax crayons and a wordless silent book, decorated with silkscreen prints created by the children of Lampedusa during creative workshops. The distribution, which began in March, has received extremely positive feedback. The book, in particular, allows for an immediate escape through imagination and creativity from the more or less emergency situation that the children experience during the first stages of arrival at the Favaloro pier. Furthermore,

²¹ [Biblioteca IBBY Lampedusa \(@bibliotecaibbylampedusa\) • Instagram photos and videos.](#)

²² [FreeFemmes. Artigiane per la libertà di movimento.](#)

as reading is a peaceful activity, it also provides an opportunity for parents or guardians of the minors to relax after hours or days spent in uncertainty.

In 2024, approximately 600 kits were distributed. Initially, the project collaborated with the FreeFemmes collective, and later partnered with the Moda Operandi tailoring project, a multicultural social tailoring initiative, which produced around one hundred backpacks²³. The project was presented at the Bologna Children's Book Fair²⁴ and at the Cantieri Meticci association in Bologna in April 2024. In addition, some kits were distributed to Seawatch, the House of Many Cultures in Scicli²⁵, and the Cantieri Meticci association in Bologna to test them in other contexts and expand the distribution network. The Welcome Kits continue their journey with children, as reported by various operators across the country.



Workshops at school

In the first quarter of 2024, we continued our collaboration with the Pirandello School, where the teaching staff invited Mediterranean Hope's operators and volunteers to share testimonies about their work related to migration issues. The Pirandello Institute has been identified as another crucial space for engaging the community and conducting educational activities. Mediterranean Hope carried out workshops and seminars with

²³ [MO. Moda Operandi \(@mo.modaoperandi\) • Instagram photos and videos.](#)

²⁴ [Bologna Children's Book Fair.](#)

²⁵ <https://www.mediterraneanhope.com/casa-delle-culture-scicli/>

middle and high school classes, both in symbolic migration locations on the island and in the classrooms.

Awareness and outreach

Recently, public meetings were organized on the Central Mediterranean migration route and the issue of borders, followed by discussions with activists, scout groups, missionaries, associations, and passing tourists. In particular, on August 21, the traveling exhibition *From Tripoli to Lampedusa: Evacuate Human Rights Defenders from Libya*, conceived by Refugees in Libya and the Alliance with Refugees in Libya, was held in collaboration with Mediterranean Hope, Maldusa, and Agricola Mpidusa. The exhibition tells the story of the 100 days of protest outside the UNHCR office in Tripoli, which led to the creation of the Refugees in Libya movement.

In collaboration with Maldusa and Agricola Mpidusa, a cultural review was also organized at the agricultural cooperative's headquarters.



August 30th: *From Crisis to the Normalization of Violence in Tunisia: Racism, Vulnerability, and Forms of Resistance by Sub-Saharan Migrants*, with Khaoula Matri, Associate Researcher at the Institute for Contemporary Maghreb Studies.

September 6th: Screening of *Dritti contro il cielo* – Documentary by Niccolò Falsetti, telling the story of football in the Shatila refugee camp in Lebanon. The screening was followed by a discussion with the organization Un Ponte Per.

September 13th: Screening of *Foragers* – Documentary by Palestinian artist and filmmaker Jumana Manna – exploring the tension between the practice of foraging and the absurdity of the Israeli state’s prohibition of it.

Ecumenical commemoration of 3 October

As every year, an ecumenical commemoration was held in Lampedusa to remember the 368 victims of the shipwreck on 3 October 2013. The initiative was promoted by the Diocesan Office for Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue (UDEDI), the Archdiocese of Agrigento, the Parish of San Gerlando in Lampedusa, and the Federation of Evangelical Churches in Italy (FCEI). It was an event open to all those wishing to pay tribute to the victims of this tragedy and keep the focus on all the people who continue to lose their lives while attempting to cross the Mediterranean and other borders in search of a better future.



Public square events

Lampedusa out of the ghetto!

On Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th May, we organised the event “Lampedusa Out of the Ghetto!” in collaboration with the Ostello Solidale Dambe So, Agricola Mpidusa, Terra! APS, the Provincial Association of Chefs and Pastry Chefs of Agrigento, and the Mamma Li Turchi Band. During these two days, over forty participants on Saturday and more than two hundred on Sunday evening, mostly from Lampedusa, gathered to discuss, listen to music, cook, and watch short films on the theme of work. The event explored the connection between the freedom of movement for migrant workers and the fight against exploitation, with the presence of agricultural workers, Gambian musicians, and the screening of short films from the Rosarno Film Festival, offering a decolonised perspective on the migration issue. This highly participatory experiment was positive and paves the way for new popular initiatives, with the certainty of engaging the local population.

The poster is divided into two columns for Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th. Saturday's events are held at Agricola 'Mpidusa, and Sunday's at Piazza Brignone. Each day has two time slots with specific activities like field visits, inaugurations, free meals, and film screenings.

SABATO 4	DOMENICA 5
AGRICOLA 'MPIDUSA	PIAZZA BRIGNONE
DALLE 18.30 ALLE 20.30	DALLE 20 A MEZZANOTTE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">🌿 Visita ai campi dell'Agricola 'Mpidusa🌿 Inaugurazione dell'evento e presentazione dei progetti Mediterranean Hope (Osservatorio sulle Migrazioni, Ostello Dambe So), SOS Rosarno Agricola 'Mpidusa🍷 Aperitivo gratuito!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">🎵 Liscio in piazza! Musica di Pippo Fragapane🍴 Cena gratuita! Fusione tra cucina senegambiana e lampedusana, con i prodotti dell'Agricola 'Mpidusa e delle Terre Occupate Giuseppe Di Vittorio, Foggia A cura dell'Ostello Solidale Dambe So e dell'A.P.C.P.🎬 Proiezione del cortometraggio vincitore
DALLE 20.30 ALLE 22.00	Musica e danze fino a mezzanotte
<ul style="list-style-type: none">🍴 Cena gratuita!🎬 Proiezione cortometraggi selezionati dal Rosarno Film Festival "Fuori dal Ghetto"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">🎵 Musica e danze fino a mezzanotte con Pippo Fragapane & Mamma Li Turchi, Talla Mana & Terema Magazy Gianluca Greco, Simone Palomba, Mario Vultaggio

Santa Lucia

During the Feast of Santa Lucia, on 13 December 2024, the Observatory took part in various initiatives at the Christmas markets held in Piazza della Libertà. In the days leading up to the event, the team prepared and then distributed arancine and mulled wine together with the beneficiaries of the island's Day Centre for Mental Health, in collaboration with Agricola Mpidusa. Meanwhile, an initiative was organised with the students from the after-school programme to sell second-hand clothing. The funds raised were donated to Mediterranea Saving Humans through Barbara Cassioli, who, during those same days, completed a two-month journey from Bologna to Lampedusa to connect with social and community initiatives and lead a creative workshop on the theme of dreams.



CREDITS

This report was produced by the team of the Lampedusa Migration Observatory, Mediterranean Hope – Refugee and Migrant Programme of the Federation of Evangelical Churches in Italy (FCEI).

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