

Record number of migrants and refugees reached Canary Islands by sea in 2024

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Madrid, January 3 (RHC)-- At least 46,843 people reached Spain's Canary Islands in 2024 through the increasingly deadly Atlantic migration route, the country's interior ministry has said.

The European country received 63,970 migrants who arrived through irregular routes last year, the vast majority in the Atlantic archipelago, up from 56,852 in 2023, the ministry said reported.

EU border agency Frontex noted that irregular crossings into the bloc from January to November 2024 fell 40 percent overall but grew 19 percent on the Atlantic route, with people from Mali, Senegal and Morocco attempting to cross.

Years of conflict in the Sahel region, unemployment, and the effect of climate change on farming communities are among the reasons why people attempt the crossing. The Atlantic route, which includes departure points in Senegal, The Gambia, Mauritania and Morocco, is also the world's deadliest.

Last week, at least 69 people, including 25 Malians, died after a boat heading from West Africa to the Canary Islands capsized off Morocco.

A report by NGO Caminando Fronteras last month, said at least 10,457 migrants died or disappeared while trying to reach Spain by sea from January 1 to December 5, 2024.

Caminando Fronteras added that it was a 50 percent increase from 2023 and the highest toll since its tallies began in 2007, and attributed it to the use of ramshackle boats, dangerous waters and a lack of resources for rescues.

Migrant aid group Walking Borders also blamed a lack of action or arbitrary rescues and the criminalisation of migrants for the surge in deaths at sea. The aid group has accused European governments of "the prioritisation of immigration control over the right to life."

<https://www.radiohc.cu/index.php/en/noticias/internacionales/373289-record-number-of-migrants-and-refugees-reached-canary-islands-by-sea-in-2024>



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