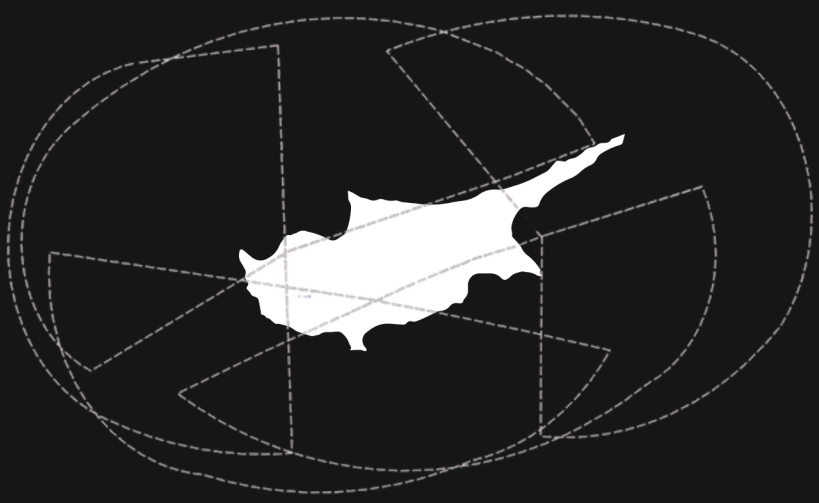
Cyprus Borderscape



Border Violence Monitoring Network

Graphic design: Serena Gramaglia

Table of Abbreviations

BVMN	Border Violence Monitoring Network
JRCC	Joint Rescue Coordination Centre
RoC	Republic of Cyprus
SAR	Search and Rescue
NM	Nautical Miles
LAF	Lebanese Armed Forces
CSO	Civil Society Organization
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

1. Introduction

The Cyprus Borderscape Platform was created as part of the Border Violence Monitoring Network's (BVMN) month-long research stay at the Cyprus Pavilion of the Venice Biennale 2024. The platform intends to collate and visualise various elements of the landscape of control that have (trans)formed the maritime area around Cyprus into a violent borderscape. Different intersecting elements were traced through secondary data analyses, presented in an interactive map with embedded incident summaries, collaborative posts, and timelines. By assembling this network, the platform recognises violence beyond individual incidents, rendering visible its systematic and deliberate construction through borders and enabling the attribution of responsibility beyond causality.

This platform is available at https://cyprusborderscape.com/.

The following report provides an overview of the research framework, detailing the scope, collection methods, and data visualisations (Sections 1-3). In Section 4, the data is analysed, summarised, and contextualised, incorporating the use of surveillance technologies, as well as the legal and financial contexts. More details are available on the platform.

2. Scope, Collection and Processing of the Data

The platform is divided into three distinct Sections: 1) an interactive map detailing different border incidents, 2) visualisations and infographics for social media, and 3) timelines of three particular incidents.

The following Section details the scope of and collection process for the data used in these three visualisations. The data included a set of different incidents such as pushbacks and missing persons in and near Cypriot territorial waters, as well as further research on surveillance technologies and legislative/political contexts.

2.1. SCOPE, COLLECTION AND PROCESSING OF DATA IN THE INTERACTIVE MAP

2.1.1. SCOPE AND CATEGORIES OF COLLECTED DATA ON THE INTERACTIVE MAP

The interactive map compiled data spanning six years from May 2018 until May 2024. The types of incidents on the map comprised pushbacks, attempted pushbacks, and cases of crossing that led to deaths and disappearances (the definitions for these incidents can be found in the methodology Section 2.2). Most of the data is open-source information. Additionally, in a few cases, some information was privately shared with BVMN researchers.

Information about the incidents was gathered through the analysis of documents, social media content, news media articles, and direct correspondence with relevant actors. These sources were identified using search engines, including Google dorking and source tracing. The collected material has been categorised into four categories: news, academia, NGOs, and state actors.

Where possible, secondary sources were traced back to primary sources; however, in many cases, this was not possible or verifiable. In cases where several sources were available, the information was cross-referenced with each other. In the case of conflicting reports, the contradictions were noted in the case descriptions in the captions for the respective incidents. For example, when news outlets named different numbers of people involved in an incident, a range was provided.

Due to the limited availability of sources for some events, full accuracy cannot be guaranteed. To enhance transparency, each incident includes tags with an overview of how it was qualitatively cross-referenced, as well as the source links when available. The incidents were categorised based on the definitions found in Appendix 1, and all sources listed based on categories in Appendix 2.

The map collects data on five categories of events of violence against people on the move that were on their way to Cyprus. The five categories of incidents are: 1) pushbacks from Cyprus, 2) pushbacks from Cyprus with chain refoulement, 3) attempted pushbacks from Cyprus, 4) deaths, and 5) missing persons. Some events fall into more than one of these categories. The incident categories were allocated based on their corresponding definitions, which are found in Appendix 3. The incidents of violence and any other forms of mistreatment mentioned were tagged. The categories were defined based on the definitions found in Appendix 4.

2.1.2. PROCESSING OF INCIDENT LOCATION ON THE INTERACTIVE MAP

Each event was colour-coded based on the specificity of its estimated location. Location specificity and accuracy are attributed and colour coded based on the quantity and quality of location details for each event, outlined in Appendices 5 and 6. The guidelines do not aim to reach the most accurate location but make the process of location assignment transparent.

We use calculation guidelines to provide transparency and structure when determining the location of incidents with varying information densities. Appendices 7-10 explain how the calculation guidelines were differentiated based on the type of incident. The information is categorised into two types: trajectory data, which indicates the direction and movement of travel, and distance data, which helps pinpoint specific locations along the route.

Additionally, the Search and Rescue (SAR) zone pictured on the map was taken from the Cyprus Airspace Management Cell's GIS (Geographic Information System) page. Territorial waters outline the twelve nautical miles (NM) off of a territory's coast over which a state has sovereign jurisdiction, and the Cypriot territorial waters shapefile was sourced from Marine Regions.

Lastly, the map also includes other geospatial information, including surveillance technologies such as camera, radar and mobile surveillance unit data as well as drones that are placed representatively in the bottom right-hand corner of the map. The range and number of radars were sourced from the Cyprus Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) (presentation). However, the data is not entirely precise due to the image's low quality and partial cropping. The camera data was sourced from the JRCC (presentation). Mobile surveillance unit data was sourced from the JRCC (website) and a two-year research project conducted by BVMN. Drone data was sourced from tenders (Drone 1 and Drone 2) and the BVMN research project.

2.2. SCOPE, COLLECTION AND PROCESSING OF THE DATA IN COLLABORATIVE POSTS

The collaborative posts, published both on the web platform and on Instagram, are based on the incident summaries (taken from the map) and additional information acquired during the development of the interactive map and a two-year-long research project conducted by the BVMN. This project therefore builds on combined analysis from the map and the research project that traced the development and implementation of border technologies in Cyprus since 2018.

Further contextualizing information was collected on social, political, and legal frameworks from publicly available data, such as newspaper articles, NGO reports, and European Commission documents. This helped situate cases within the broader systemic structures of border violence.

2.3. SCOPE, COLLECTION, AND PROCESSING OF THE DATA IN THE TIMELINES

In this project, BVMN presents three timelines from three case studies of different incidents between December 2023 and April 2024. All information is derived from publicly available sources.

The timelines were constructed from data collected using the same methodology as the map (see section 2.1.1). The data was then sorted into a chronological timeline. In some cases, information is lacking, however any gaps in knowledge are noted in the videos. Priority was given to data from survivors of the events.

3. Methodologies for Visual Representation

3.1. GEOSPATIAL REPRESENTATION

The map visualises incidents of violence. Each incident is color-graded based on the accuracy of its location. The incidents are categorised into different types of violence; some fall into more than one category. By clicking directly on an event, the user can read the description and sources of every incident that was identified. In some locations, there are several incidents embedded at one point. The map further documents various types of surveillance equipment used by the Republic of Cyprus. When possible, the range of detectability provided by the surveillance technology is indicated, according to information from the Cyprus authorities. Lastly, the legal delineations of territorial waters and the SAR Zone are indicated on the map. The user can activate or deactivate different incident categories, surveillance capabilities, and legal delineations at sea by ticking the boxes in the legend on the right-hand side.

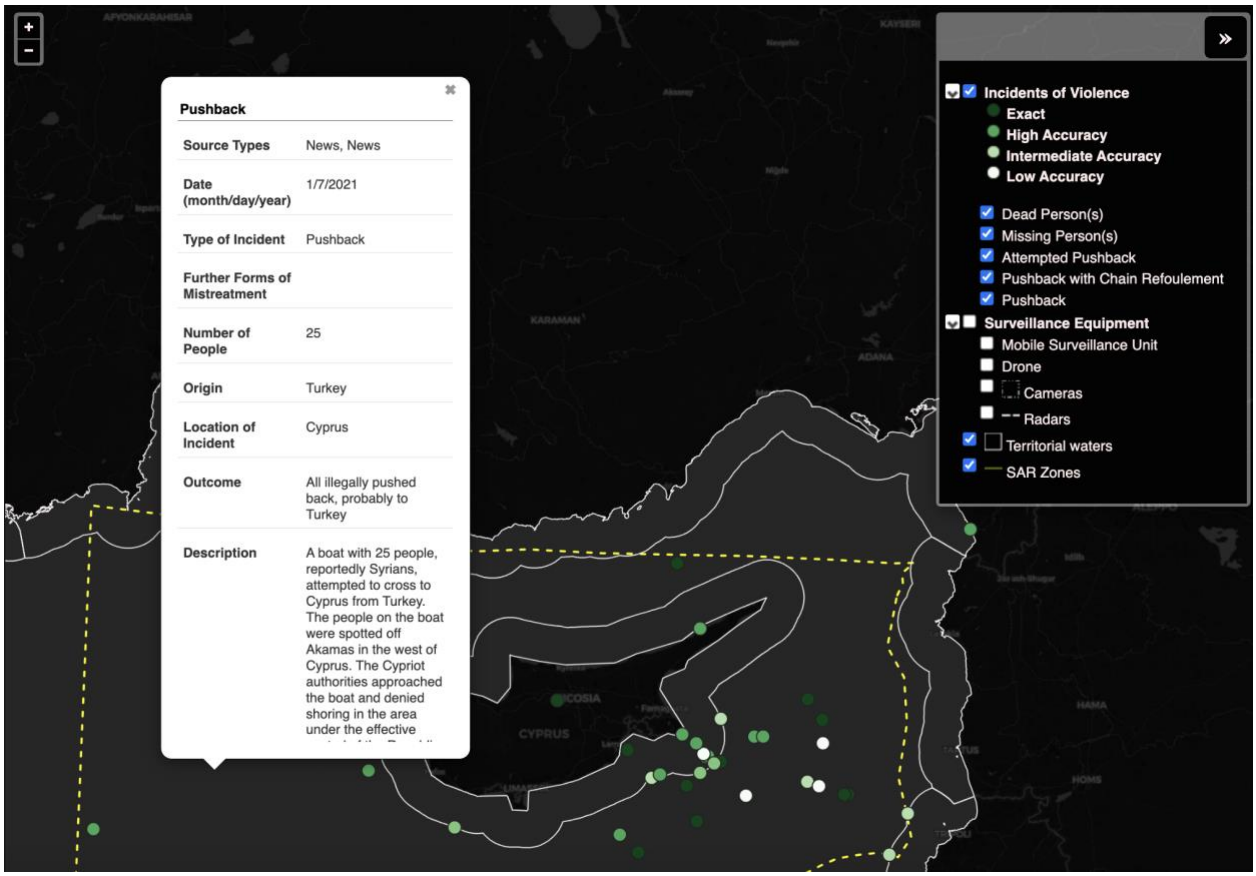


Image 1: A screenshot from the interactive map on the website shows one incident selected with the accompanying data pop-up.

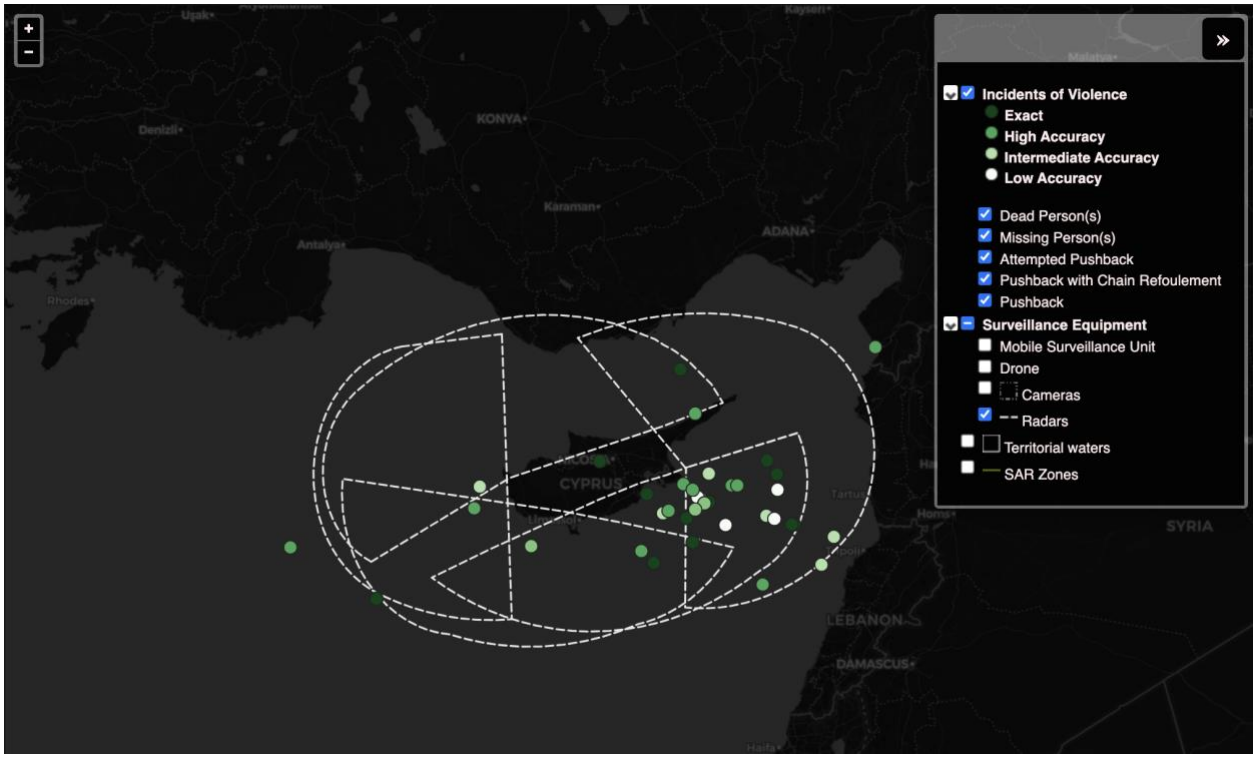


Image 2: This still from the map indicates the events represented as different colors of green circles (depending on the accuracy of the geolocation). It also shows the alleged range of detectability by radars with dashed white lines.

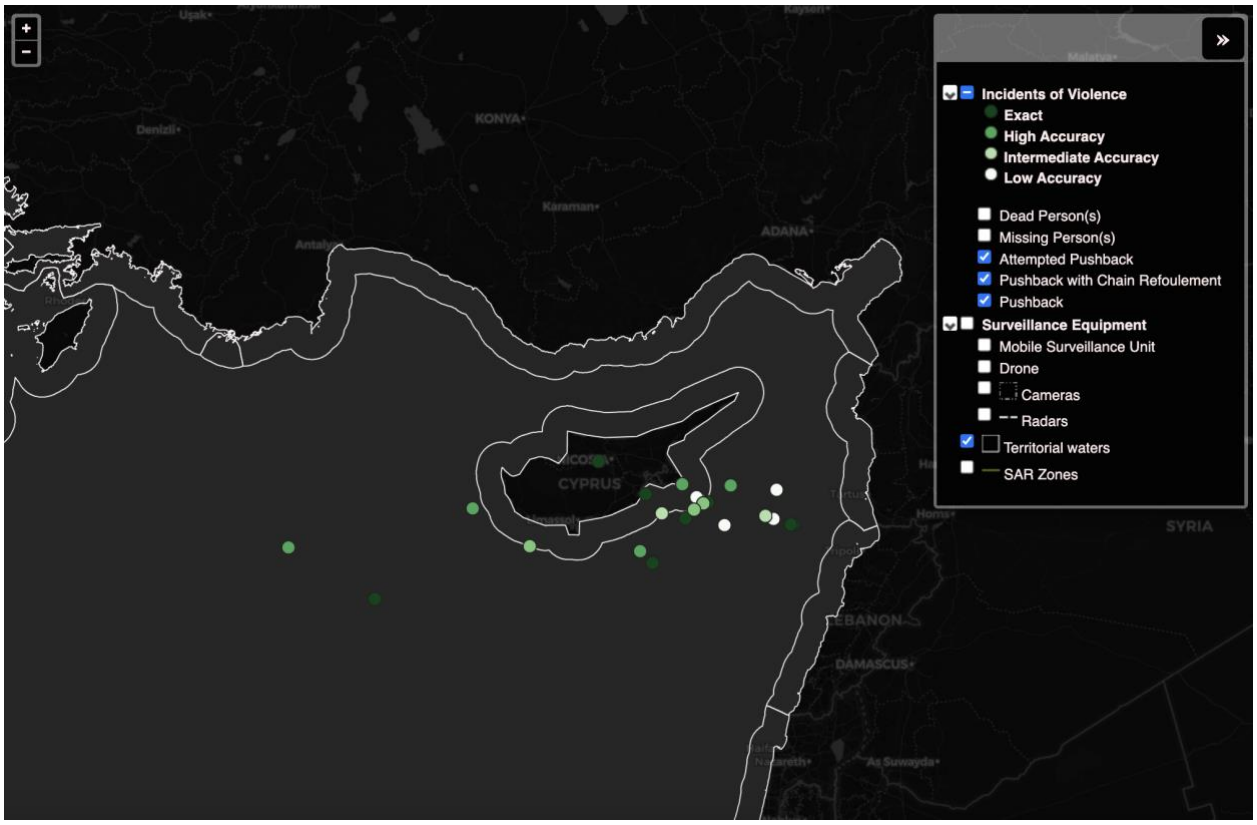
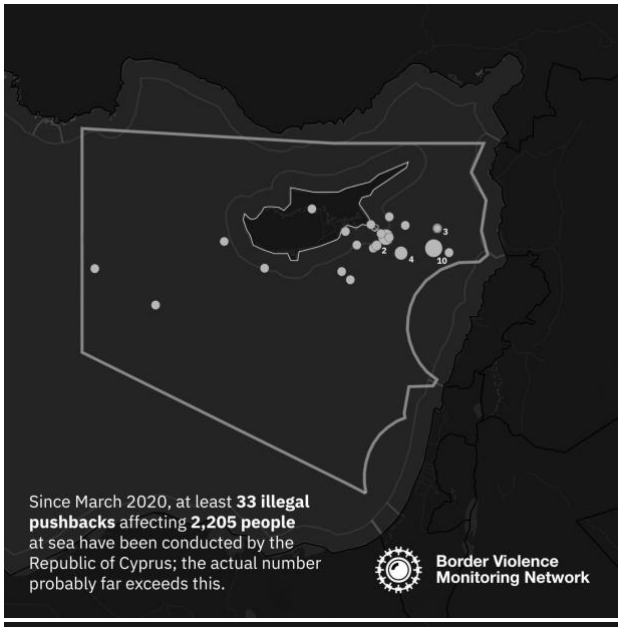


Image 3: Image indicating incidents of attempted and carried out pushbacks (see selection on the right-hand side) as well as the outline of the territorial waters in solid white lines.

3.2. VISUALISING INCIDENTS IN CONTEXT THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA COLLABORATIONS

The contextualising information, together with analysis of the interactive map, was shared in five posts on the platform and on Instagram in a collaborative effort between the Border Violence Monitoring Network, Forever Informed, and αφοα. We chose to share the information in the form of collaborative posts not only to document incidents of border violence but to raise awareness to the general public and foster solidarity, outside of the regular audiences interacting with the BVMN's information-sharing platforms.

The posts include visuals with maps of the incident locations or technologies, a summary of the information, and a caption in English, Cypriot-Greek, and Arabic, with an analysis of the frequency of different forms of violence. This information was contextualised with research on political, legal, and financial frameworks.


3
2
4
10
Since March 2020, at least **33 illegal pushbacks** affecting **2,205 people** at sea have been conducted by the Republic of Cyprus; the actual number probably far exceeds this.
Border Violence Monitoring Network


2
2
In addition to **33 illegal pushbacks** conducted by the Cyprus authorities, we identified **8 attempted pushbacks**.
In most of these cases, the pushbacks failed due to the Lebanese refusal to collaborate with the Cypriot authorities. With the newly agreed 1€ billion euro deal between the EU and Lebanon, such failed attempts would most likely result in an increased number of completed pushback operations.
Border Violence Monitoring Network


Since March 2018, BVMN has identified 16 incidents where deaths or disappearances were reported on journeys to Cyprus at sea. **38 people are confirmed dead** and **163 bodies are missing**. The actual numbers probably far exceed this.
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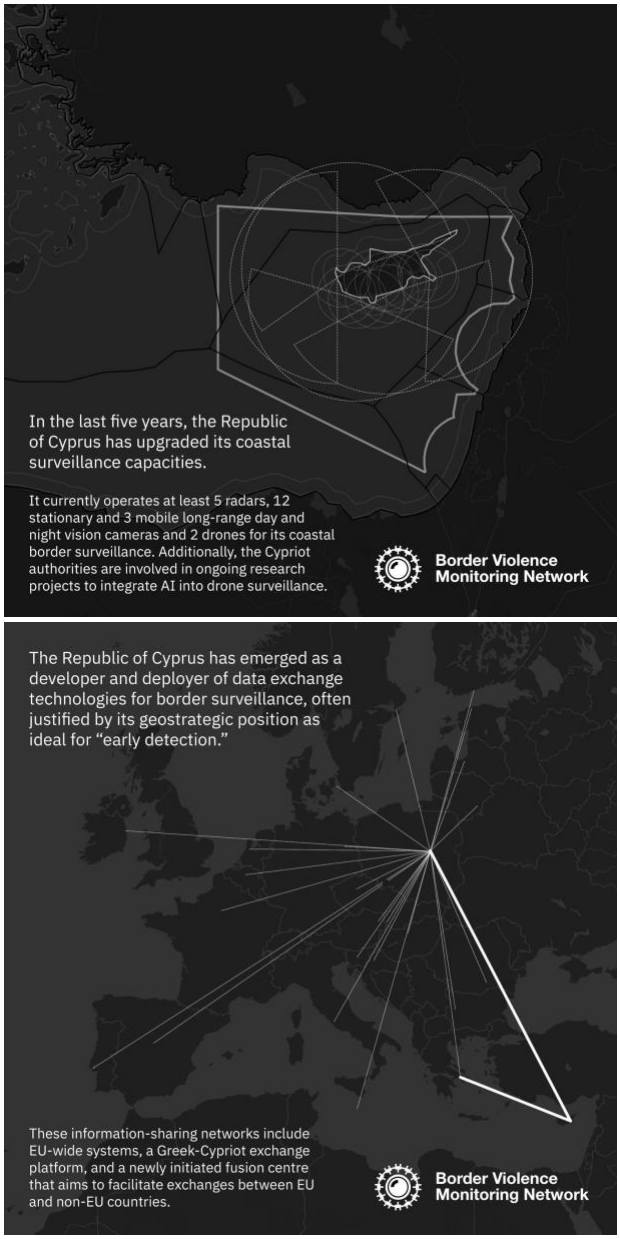

Image 4: The first image of all collaborative posts that identified particular aspects of the borderscape in Cyprus, including different forms of violence and surveillance technologies.

3.3. CHRONOLOGICAL REPRESENTATION OF INCIDENTS

The three timelines were assembled based on the chronological events in video format and then shared with a contextualising text on Instagram (in the same collaborative framework as mentioned above), then uploaded to YouTube and the Cyprus Borderscape platform. The sources are either named in the script or shown in the video. When secondary video footage was used, the original footage was linked in the description.

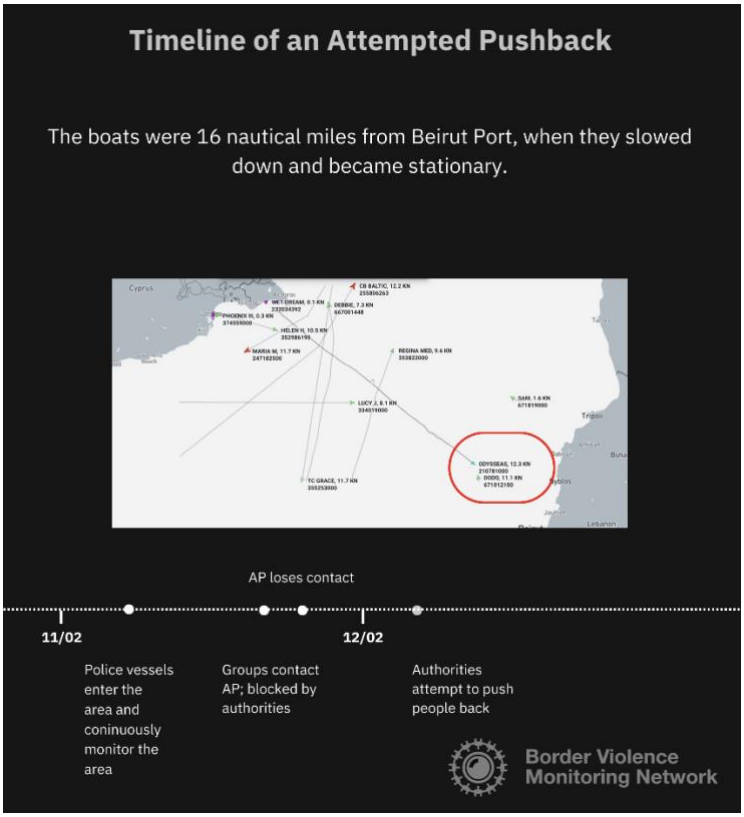

Image 5: Above is a still from the second video timeline that was later posted on an Instagram post. It makes use of MarineTraffic data, along with news articles, testimonies, and other sources, to describe the process of an attempted pushback to Lebanon.

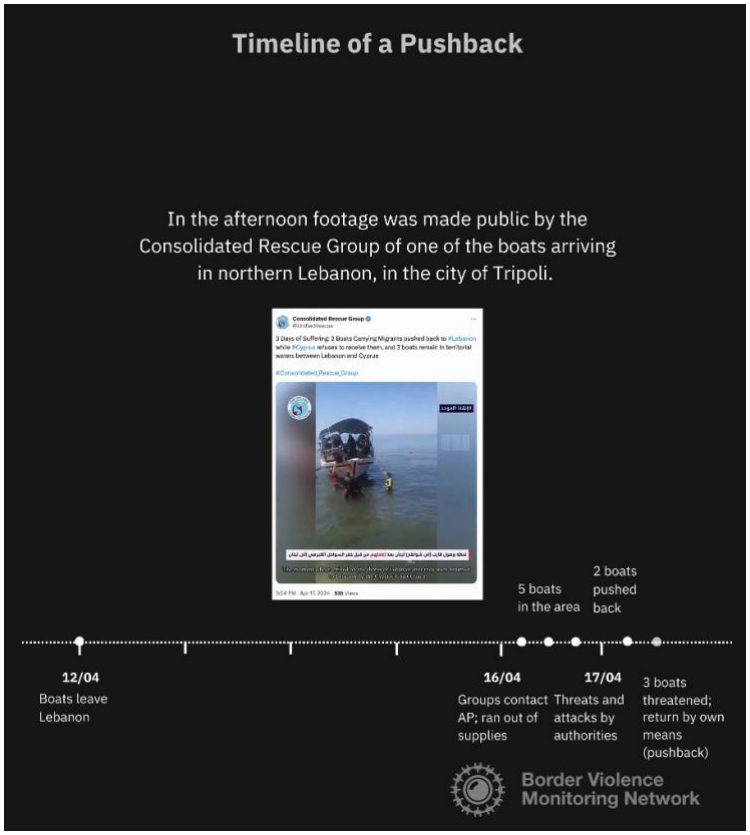

Image 6: Screenshot from the video timeline of a particular incident in April 2024.

4. Analysing the Cyprus Borderscape

Through these methods and tools, it became possible to identify not only instances of violence, but rather patterns of structural violence, as well as to identify different surveillance methods in use in the Cyprus Borderscape.

4.1. PATTERNS OF STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

The platform identified patterns of structural violence via categorizations of incident types and further forms of mistreatment categorizations. These were contextualised through external reports on political, legal, and financial frameworks. The geospatial analysis provided by the map shows 33 cases of illegal pushbacks, three with chain refoulement, eight attempted pushbacks, and 16 incidents where deaths or disappearances were identified.

The platform identified that between March 2020 and April 2024 at least 33 illegal pushbacks affecting 2,205 people at sea have been conducted by the Republic of Cyprus; the actual number likely far exceeds this. Pushbacks were conducted primarily from Cyprus to Lebanon. People on the move reported that they were mostly pushed back on vessels belonging to the Cypriot authorities, though sometimes, private vessels were rented by the Cypriot authorities. In some cases, pushbacks were carried out in cooperation with the Lebanese authorities, while in other incidents people were forced to return by their means.

In Lebanon, people on the move are facing repression; UNHCR protection registrations have been suspended since 2015, and people are subject to arbitrary detention, torture, and forced return to Syria. In several pushback cases, people on the move reported being forced to land in North Cyprus, where no asylum system is in place. Our research indicates the use of violent and illegal practices by the Cypriot authorities during pushback operations, some of which fall under the definition of torture or cruel, inhumane, and degrading treatment or punishment. Documented practices include threats with guns, dangerous maneuvers (such as creating waves and ramming boats), refusing medical treatment, non-assistance, beatings, and administering electric shocks. In three cases, it was confirmed that pushbacks resulted in chain refoulement to Syria, as Lebanon implemented a non-readmission policy for Syrians pushed back from Cyprus. In five additional cases, people were threatened with chain refoulement, though it remains unconfirmed whether it was carried out. BVMN has documented 116 instances of chain refoulement at other European borders since 2018. In addition to the 33 pushbacks, the platform identified eight attempted pushbacks.

The first timeline, detailing a pushback event on 17 April 2024, shows how different forms of violence overlap within individual instances of pushbacks. In this case, Cypriot authorities conducted pushback operations reportedly affecting 500 people, travelling on five boats. When the Cypriot authorities approached some of the boats, instead of offering assistance and rescuing those onboard as stipulated by international law (Art. 98 UNCLOS), the authorities left groups at sea without water or food. Reports state that at least 6 people fell unconscious likely as a result of high temperatures, dehydration, and hunger. Additionally, the authorities reportedly fired gunshots in the air, ramming the boats and creating dangerous waves around them with their vessels,

beating the individuals in the boats, and threatening to kill them. They eventually pushed them back illegally to Lebanon. Each of the three timelines highlights that these incidents are more than just points on a map or summaries; rather, they concern the lives of hundreds of people.

The EU has increased pressure on Lebanon to fortify its borders and stop movement by PoM to Cyprus through the €1 billion deal signed in May 2024. The deal stipulates for Lebanon to invest more in border enforcement and to stop irregular movement. It is possible that illegal refoulement may become standard practice in situations like the attempted pushback detailed below, as the pressure on Lebanese authorities to accept those pushed back intensifies. Further, there may be an increase in pullback operations from the Lebanese authorities as well as deportations of Syrians to unsafe conditions in Syria as a result of the deal. A portion of the money from the deal will be channeled into the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), who have reportedly been involved in a large number of pushbacks and pullbacks that have used violent practices, such as ramming boats, beatings, and throwing people into the water. These practices have led to reported shipwrecks and deaths, such as in the shipwreck of 23 April 2022, which tragically left seven dead and 33 missing, presumed dead, after the LAF allegedly rammed their boat.

The EU's deal with Lebanon adopts a similar approach to recent agreements that the EU made with Tunisia in 2023 and Egypt in 2024. This approach continues the EU's geopolitical efforts to externalise its inhumane migration policies, perpetuating a system of exclusion and brutality.

The second featured timeline shows the active involvement of European funding in pushback operations. On 13 February 2024, the Cypriot authorities attempted to perform an illegal pushback of a boat carrying 116 passengers en route from Lebanon. The exact details of events remain unknown, but research indicates that instead of providing assistance and rescuing the group, authorities abandoned them at sea, endangering them directly. One of the boats used in the operation was acquired using EU funding, highlighting the EU's direct involvement and facilitation of unlawful practices.

The platform further documents 16 incidents where deaths or disappearances were reported on journeys to Cyprus at sea. 38 people are confirmed dead, and 163 bodies are missing. The actual numbers likely exceed this. Our analysis includes all reports of deaths and disappearances from events where people are reported to have aimed to reach Cyprus. Incidents in Cypriot, Lebanese, and Turkish waters are included, as well as those from areas not under the effective control of the RoC.

These deaths and disappearances are not incidental; rather, they are the direct consequence of hostile Cypriot and European border

practices. Racist and exclusionary policies across the EU deny people access to safe routes, forcing them to take dangerous journeys. State-implemented visa regulations, travel restrictions, and border technologies enforce this landscape of control. In addition, the Cypriot government has used the COVID-19 pandemic and a never-ratified return agreement with Lebanon as justifications for pushbacks. Despite the ever-expanding funding and resources channeled into border surveillance technologies, often with the alleged purpose of intensifying SAR efforts, death tolls at sea continue to rise. In 2023, the IOM recorded the highest number of migration-related deaths since 2014. Many people go missing while en route and their bodies are rarely found, denying their families proper legal or religious proceedings, as well as preventing the grieving process and closure. This absence also prevents legal investigations and therefore accountability. Death is a structural part of Cyprus and the EU's necropolitical bordering mechanisms, turning the Mediterranean into a lethal seascape.

The third timeline shows the simultaneous unfolding of a situation of immediate physical danger alongside slower, structural difficulties of seeking accountability for those who die or disappear at sea. On 12 December 2023, a group of 85 people went missing on their journey from Lebanon to Cyprus. According to relatives who were in touch with the group, they had reached Cypriot waters just before their relatives lost contact. Despite Cypriot authorities having been alerted to the presence of the boat via Alarm Phone and having extensive surveillance equipment at their disposal, most people were never found. In December, two bodies washed up on the shore of Syria, one of whom was identified as Muhammad Al-Khasawneh, a passenger on the boat. Several other bodies washed up on shores in the area: one in Syria, eight bodies in southern Turkey, six in north Cyprus, and one in the south of Cyprus. It remains unclear if they belonged to the same group because state authorities have not attempted to identify the bodies. Their unknown identities leave families in continued uncertainty, preventing them from reaching any form of closure. To date, as of January 2025, the Cypriot authorities have yet to carry out a full investigation to determine the fate of the boat and its passengers.

4.2. SURVEILLANCE MECHANISMS

The platform additionally shows some of the surveillance capabilities belonging to Cypriot authorities. The majority of high and medium-accuracy specified incidents of violence, including the majority of border deaths and disappearances, occurred within the radius of radar technologies.[1] Most pushbacks and half of the border deaths and disappearances further fell into the radius of the radars that are known to be in use by Cypriot authorities. The capabilities of the technologies presented on the platform were based on information from the Cypriot authorities themselves. However, the actual capacities can vary based on boat size and weather. Nevertheless, the vast number of cases on the map that are in locations detectable with the existing radar capabilities casts doubt on claims by state authorities that purport the undetectability of people in distress.

The data thus raises concerns that the technologies in use by Cypriot authorities are used selectively. The selective use of technologies, analysed using geospatial analysis, is specifically evident in two cases from early 2024, where the authorities ignored information about boats in severe distress, refusing to search for people for days. Eventually, this led to the deaths of two children and three missing people.

The start of pushback operations coincided with the technologization of the Cyprus maritime border. In recent years, Cyprus has upgraded its coastal surveillance capacities with EU support. Between 2021 and 2027, Cyprus will receive nearly €50 million from the EU's Border Management and Visa Policy Instrument for increasing border control, with an additional €30 million announced in July specifically for upgrading its coastal surveillance. These acquisitions fuel the surveillance industrial complex, and include Israeli companies, such as Aeronautics Defense Systems that have developed drones for the IDF. The use of military technology to monitor the borders further contributes to the notion of migration as a security threat. Moreover, Cypriot authorities, partly with the University of Cyprus' KIOS Centre, have participated in three EU-supported research projects aimed at developing surveillance systems that provide pre-frontier awareness and threat assessments with the help of intelligent algorithms. These projects use borders as legally unregulated testing grounds for developing new technologies and reinforce the historical rendering of racialized people as "manageable" security threats, reducing them into data points to further train their algorithms.

Additionally, Cyprus has been increasingly engaged in data exchange programmes. These cooperations are becoming more and more consequential, as people cross directly from Syria and Lebanon to Greece and Italy to avoid the securitization of other borders. Cyprus and Greece have jointly participated in three research projects (CERETAB, REACTION, and NESTOR), two of which are directly aimed at developing a data exchange platform between the two countries. CERETAB gives Greece direct access to the live stream of Cypriot drone footage and makes it easier to communicate information on irregular migration. This information could be used for early

[1] The other location specificity categories were excluded from the analysis as the lack of specificity data prevents any assessments.

detection, allowing Greek authorities to prevent boats passing by Cyprus from entering Greek territorial waters, or to push them back to Turkish territorial waters.

Numerous CSOs and journalists have reported instances where Greece has engaged in pushbacks to Turkish waters. Forensic Architecture's Drift-back platform documents 2,010 pushbacks cases in the Aegean Sea. These operations have included deaths by non-assistance, abandoning people in life rafts at sea, and killing people by throwing them into the sea handcuffed. Further, Cyprus shares information for analysis and exchange in EU-wide databases such as the European Border Surveillance System. Its surveillance capacities are funded with EU support as they aim to serve not only Cypriot border enforcement but to turn Cyprus into a "main provider of security in the Mediterranean" for the EU. The information exchange extends beyond the EU. The UNODC is planning the establishment of a Fusion Regional Information Centre in Larnaca. The Centre has the purpose of exchanging surveillance information between different EU and third countries such as the UK, Egypt, Lebanon, and Jordan. This development also illustrates how the EU is shifting the responsibility for migration control to its external borders.

5. Limitations of research

It is important to acknowledge that the platform only provides a small snapshot of the Republic of Cyprus' bordering system. The actual borderscape encompasses injustices and actors beyond what is assembled. The interactive map is particularly incomplete, as many cases of border violence remain unreported. For instance, at the time of the platform's publication (September 2024), pushbacks were estimated to occur at a daily rate, according to the Centre for Fundamental Rights at the University of Nicosia. However, the absence of reported information made it impossible to document and include those cases.

As such, information on the incidents that was included in the interactive map was often scarce or conflicting. Still, it was decided that every incident would be included where we found any reported details,believing that each one, regardless of the amount of available information, was important to share.

However, due to the differing information densities, neither the website nor this report is intended as legal evidence, and the locations depicted on the map are for visualisation purposes only. As previously mentioned, technologies' actual capabilities depend on dynamic factors such as weather Thus, this analysis aims to highlight the structural harm within the Cypriot borderscape rather than assigning causality to individual cases. In addition, some of the technologies included on the platform were implemented recently, and their capacities may not apply to earlier incidents.

The web platform is intended as a tool to understand structural violence and ignite collective awareness of injustice, mourn the tragic deaths and disappearances, and stand in solidarity with the resistance of people on the move against all forms of border violence.

6. Conclusions

The Cyprus borderscape platform and this accompanying report underscore the systemic violence, injustices, and human rights violations embedded in Cyprus' border practices, contextualized in a broader European framework of racist and exclusionary migration policies. Through secondary data analysis, the platform identified 33 illegal pushbacks, including three with chain refoulement, eight attempted pushbacks, and 16 incidents of deaths or disappearances involving people on the move. These figures likely underestimate the scale of border violence, given the limited availability and reporting of incidents. Violent mistreatment of people during pushback operations was identified, some of which may fall under the definition of torture or cruel, inhumane, and degrading treatment or punishment.

The increase in technological surveillance along Cyprus' maritime borders, funded and supported by the EU, contributes to the externalization of migration control and the reinforcement of a securitized approach to migration. While ostensibly aimed at improving SAR operations, these technologies are selectively deployed, raising concerns about their role in facilitating pushbacks and contributing to a lack of accountability for the resulting loss of life.

The report also illustrates that the racist and exclusionary migration policies, exacerbated by geopolitical agreements and EU-funded surveillance technologies, force people on the move into dangerous journeys, creating a lethal landscape in the Mediterranean, where death and disappearance are not incidental but systemic outcomes of necropolitical border regimes. The absence of accountability and identification for many who perish at sea further denies justice and closure for their families, reinforcing the dehumanization inherent in these policies.

Ultimately, this platform seeks not only to document incidents of border violence but to raise awareness of the structural inequities at play, foster solidarity with people on the move, and challenge the normalization of violence at Europe’s borders.

The online platform on the Cyprus Borderscape, while completed in September 2024, aims to be a living archive that is not exhaustive and is intended to be expanded.

We rely on and invite everyone to fill this archive with further information about incidents. If you have information that you think could contribute to this project, or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact research@borderviolence.eu.

This research built on existing knowledge and was only possible through the reporting and activism by many actors over the last years. We thank everyone that has made this work possible. We especially thank Nicos Trimikliniotis for sharing extensive

documentation of pushbacks with us and Alarm Phone for sharing incident locations.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Definitions of Source Categories

Category	Definition
News	Any information gathered from either print media, online newspapers, or TV news. In most cases, these were secondary sources
Academia	Any information gathered from academic reports or through personal contacts with academics.
NGOs/INGOs	Any information gathered from activist groups, non-governmental organizations or international organizations. In most cases these were secondary sources, ranging from testimonies of PoM, but also state sources
State actors	Any information gathered from people acting as state actors. We have included authorities from the North of Cyprus, which we do not recognise as a state, though they have similar information access/sources to state actors.

Appendix 2: Sources

Category	Source
News	Kıbrıs Postası, Reuters, The Guardian, AP News, ntv, Cumhuriyet, The Daily Star Lebanon, DW, Al Jazeera, PhileNews, Cyprus Mail, Kathimerini, Knews, Politis, France 24, SigmaLive, AlphaNews, The Public Source, Cyprus Times, ABC News, Arab News, Info Migrants, CNA, Wikipedia, Reporter, ant1live, naharnet, The New Arab, Neos Kosmos, euronews, Megaphone, Daraj, North Press Agency. In some cases, the articles were accessed with the help of the Wayback Machine by the Internet Archive.
Academia	Nicos Trimikliniotis
NGOs/INGOs	Cyprus Refugee Council, Human Rights Watch, UNIFIL, KISA, CEDAR Centre for Legal Studies, Aegean Boat Report, Watch The Med by Alarm Phone, ECRE, Consolidated Rescue Group, IOM, EuromedRights, Border Violence Monitoring Network.
State actors	Department of State, Frontex, Cyprus Ministry of Interiors, Turkish Coast Guard, Cyprus Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC).

Appendix 3: Definitions of Incident Categories

Category	Source
Pushback	A pushback is "the informal cross-border expulsion (without due process) of individuals or groups to another country" (sourced here). Pushbacks from Cyprus are pushbacks from within the Cypriot SAR (search and rescue) zone coinciding with the Nicosia FIR (flight information region), the Cypriot territorial waters or land territory under effective control of the Republic of Cyprus (RoC).
Pushback with chain refoulement	A pushback (see definition above) with chain refoulement is a pushback to the country of departure and then subsequently a pushback to another third country, often their country of origin.
Attempted pushback	An attempted pushback (see definition above) is categorized when sufficient evidence has been presented on the intention of conducting a pushback either through statements or practices preparing a pushback. However, due to various reasons, no pushback was conducted.
Dead person(s)	An incident involving the confirmed death or deaths of people on the move is tagged with this category.
Missing person(s)	An incident involving missing people on the move is tagged with this category.

Appendix 4: Definitions of Further forms of Mistreatment Categories

Category	Definition
Ramming of boat	Deliberately colliding with a boat carrying people on the move to cause damage or intimidation.
Threats with guns	Using firearms to intimidate or coerce people on the move.
Handcuffing	Restraint using handcuffs, often used to limit mobility of people on the move.
Use of electric shocks	Using devices like tasers to administer electric shocks.
Beatings	Physically striking people on the move with repeated blows, sometimes resulting in injury.

Detention	Holding people on the move in custody.
Creating waves with boats	Maneuvering vessels in a way that they create large waves in order to destabilize, drown, or intimidate boats carrying people on the move.
Stealing of possessions	Taking personal belongings from people on the move without permission.
Injuring people	Causing general physical harm to people on the move.
Family separation	Forcibly separating family members from each other.
Non-assistance	Failing to provide rescue to boats in distress.
Refusing medicine/medical treatment	Denying medical care or medicine to people on the move.
Lack of food and/or water	Withholding essential sustenance from individuals.
Delayed Rescue	Intentionally postponing rescues of people on the move.

Appendix 5: Table with Location Accuracy Attributions

Classification	Available Information
LOW ACCURACY/SPECIFICITY	No data OR departure location
MEDIUM ACCURACY/SPECIFICITY	Cardinal direction from shore AND the exact location at the shore OR approximation of location at the shore, based on details of the journey
HIGH ACCURACY/SPECIFICITY	Exact distance from shore (in nautical miles) AND cardinal direction from the shore OR location at shore
EXACT	Coordinates shared by people on the move OR social media verification

Appendix 6: Flowchart with Location Accuracy Attributions

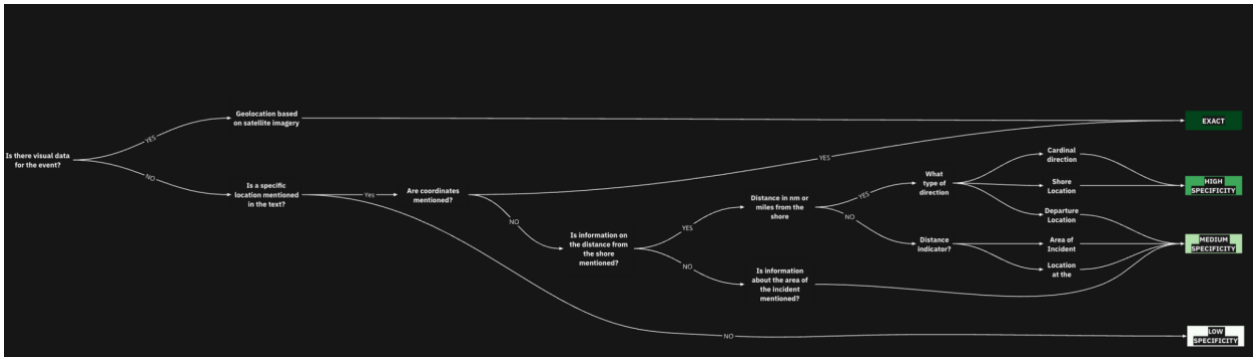

Image 1: A flowchart that demonstrates how the determination of high, medium or low specificity/accuracy was made when geolocating incidents.

Appendix 7: Target location guidelines

Target locations were identified based on the incident type. Pushbacks, attempted pushbacks and pushbacks with chain refoulement indicating the location where the people were detected. And dead and missing person(s) locations indicating where the person was found, or went missing.

Incident	**Type of Location**
Pushback	The location indicated or identified is the location where the people were detected. Deviations of this are described in the “context” field.
Attempted pushback	The location indicated or identified is the location where the people were detected. Deviations of this are described in the “context” field.
Pushback with chain-refoulement	The location indicated or identified is the location where the people were detected. Deviations of this are described in the “context” field.
Dead Person(s)	The location indicated or identified is the location where the dead person(s) was/ were found or, if they were not found, died. Deviations of this are described in the “context” field.
Missing Person(s)	The location indicated or identified is the location where the person(s) went missing. Deviations of this are described in the “context” field.

Appendix 8: Location guidelines

Named locations were determined based on the guidelines differentiating in the specificity of location e.g. a city or country.

Information	**Guideline**
Location of city, district or defined small strip of land	When a city, district or defined small strip of land (such as a national park) location was named, we determined its location based on the generic coordinates given by Google, when typing in "[location name] coordinates".
Country or administrative area	When countries or large administrative areas were named, we chose determined generic location points for the location calculation Cyprus: The generic location chosen is the area of Cape Greco (generic coordinates given by Google) Lebanon: The generic location chosen is the city of Tripoli (generic coordinates given by Google) Syria: The generic location chosen is the city of Tartous (generic coordinates given by Google)

Appendix 9: Direction guidelines

Directions from locations were calculated based on the guidelines differentiating the information density based on cardinal directions and specific departure and arrival locations.

Information	Guideline
Cardinal direction	If a cardinal direction is named, the following angles were used: ● North: 0° ● North-East: 45° ● East: 90° ● South-East: 135° ● South: 180° ● South-West: 225° ● West: 270° ● North-West: 315°
Specific departure and arrival locations	If specific departure and arrival locations were named and no specific locations were known, the angle between the locations was calculated to determine the direction.
No direction information, but shore location known	If no direction information was known, but a shore location was, the direction was chosen based the cardinal-geographic area of the location and their assigned angles ● Location in Cyprus

	○ Location is in the north (cardinal area): 360/0° ○ Location is in the east: 90° ○ Location is in the south-east: 135° ○ Location is in the south: 180° ○ Location is in the west: 225° ● Location in Lebanon: 270°

Appendix 10: Distance guidelines for Incidents

The distances were calculated based on the guidelines of types of information given, differentiating e.g. between specific distances provided, administrative sea area provided and no information provided on the distance.

Information	**Guideline**
Distance from shore in nm, km or miles (with a margin of error of ±1 nautical mile)	If a specific distance in nautical miles, kilometers or miles is named, we first determine the closest shore location from the location information, and then measure the distance given in the determined direction.
Undefined distance from shore location with administrative sea area	If a specific shore location and an administrative sea area (such as territorial waters) is named, but no distance information is given, we first determine the closest shore location and then in the determined direction, the median distance between the shore location and administrative water boundary.
Undefined distance from shore location	If a specific shore location, but no distance information is given, we first determine the closest shore location and then in the determined direction, find the location on the territorial water boundary.
Undefined distance without shore location, only journey information	If the only information given is the journey (between two countries or administrative land areas), the distance was calculated at the median location between the departure and arrival location.
Exact coordinates	If an exact location can be found through coordinates shared by people on the move or via cross-referencing social media/visual data and satellite imagery, we will provide the exact coordinates and determine them by putting them into Google maps.