

# SOS MEDITERRANEE

IS AN INTERNATIONAL MARITIME AND HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO SAVING LIVES AT SEA

SAVE • PROTECT • BEAR WITNESS

We were founded in 2015 in response to the escalating humanitarian crisis in the Central Mediterranean and authorities' failure to take action to prevent more deaths.

Our mission is to rescue people in distress fleeing conflict, persecution, and extreme poverty. We provide critical care on board our ship the **Ocean Viking** and disembark them in a safe place where their lives are no longer at risk, their vital needs are met, and their rights are respected. Since 2016, we've operated **more than 430 rescue missions\*** in the Central Mediterranean. Survivors come from **50+ countries**; some are as young as newborns, and **80% of the children are unaccompanied.**



Once rescued, we provide immediate medical attention, psychological support, food, water, and clothing.

\*As of 17 April 2025

## THE SIX STAGES OF SEA RESCUE

<p><b>SEARCH</b></p> <p><b>1</b></p>	<p><b>COORDINATION</b></p> <p><b>2</b></p>
<p><b>RESCUE</b></p> <p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>PROTECTION ON BOARD</b></p> <p><b>4</b></p>
<p><b>MEDICAL CARE</b></p> <p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>DISEMBARKATION</b></p> <p><b>6</b></p>

## SOS MEDITERRANEE BY THE NUMBERS

**41,818** people rescued\*

(including 6,000+ women and 10,000+ children)



**436** rescue operations



**80%** of children traveling alone



**50+** countries of origin of survivors



**6** babies born on board



**31,853 people\*\*** have died crossing the Mediterranean

\*Figures as of 17 April 2025

\*\*Reported by IOM as of 8 April 2025  
Actual number is believed to be significantly higher



“We no longer want to think about violence or hunger.”

“Our family left Syria because of the war. We couldn't guarantee our child's safety nor her education. We spent more than a year in Libya, and this was our fifth time trying to escape by sea. The Libyan Coast Guard caught us four times and [forcibly] returned us to Libya. We were kidnapped; they wanted money in exchange for our freedom. If we didn't pay, they would have killed us, and sold a kidney or body parts. In May 2022, our boat capsized. We spent five minutes under the boat, without life jackets. Nine people died in front of us. I can still smell the fuel in the water. My four-year-old girl still wakes up at night, frightened, remembering this event. We try to help her forget.

When you are at sea, the water is all around you and then memories start coming back. When we saw your ship, we couldn't believe it: was this real? Our dream is to find education for our daughter. We want her to grow up safe and to give her a good life.”

**Hana and Bassem,** rescued in October 2022 with their young daughter

SOS MEDITERRANEE



at Sea  
**Saving Lives**



“It was the first time in my life that I had to [help] give birth to a baby in the middle of the sea. It was winter. The weather was rough. It was raining and the waves were very high. Medical evacuation was impossible. The baby's heart rate began to drop. There was no time to

lose. It was during my night shift, it had been a very long day, and we were all exhausted. But we managed the delivery well and the birth made everyone so happy!”

**Marina,** midwife on board, will never forget December 2016. After rescuing over 600 people, she assisted Cynthia, a woman from Nigeria, in giving birth to her baby, Favour, in the middle of the sea.



“In summer 2023, we witnessed firsthand the lack of resources [available] for saving lives in the Mediterranean. In August, we rescued more than 600 people from 15 boats in distress off the coast of Libya and between Tunisia and Lampedusa in the Ocean Viking's largest-ever rescue. In these 48 hours

of nonstop operations, it was clear that there were more people at risk of losing their lives than we could assist; the needs for rescue were far greater than the means.”

**Jérôme,** Deputy Search and Rescue Coordinator on board the Ocean Viking



Before embarking on perilous Mediterranean crossings, peoples' migratory journeys can span months and even years. They often cover thousands of kilometers, requiring dangerous crossings of the Sahara Desert.

Fleeing conflict, persecution, and unimaginable poverty in their home countries, migrants and refugees embark on arduous quests for safety. They brave harsh weather conditions and face exploitation by human traffickers. They often cross vast, uninhabitable areas such as deserts where they are sometimes abandoned without water and even shot at. Migrants are victims of robbery, physical violence, enslavement, torture, and extortion of all kinds during their attempts to reach a safe place.

## MEDICAL ONBOARD

When people are brought safely on board the Ocean Viking, they are in varying states of health and emotion—sometimes fearful, exhausted, overwhelmed, or relieved. Our priority is to address any medical emergencies before giving them the space to rest and regain a sense of stability.



Our onboard clinic is more than a place for medical treatment—it's a refuge where people can find privacy, speak to someone, and be treated with humanity. The medical conditions encountered are a direct result of the hardships endured on peoples' journeys—from crossing deserts to surviving imprisonment. The poor hygiene and sanitary conditions people experience, especially in detention centers in Libya, can lead to skin conditions, diarrheal diseases, and respiratory infections. Chronic illnesses are often exacerbated due to a lack of access to health care. People arrive with injuries, both physical and psychological, stemming from violence, torture, forced labor, or extortion. On board the Ocean Viking, everyone has access to a dedicated medical team, comprising a team leader, a doctor, a nurse, and a midwife.

**5,083 consultations** and **20 medical evacuations** between 2022 and 2024

€20

= one kit to treat hypothermia

€40

= tetanus vaccines for 4 people

€110

= one day of food for 10 rescued people

€200

= 5 rescue kits for survivors (containing drinking water, clothing, shoes, blanket, towel, hygiene supplies, and emergency snacks)

€300

= 10 life jackets

A day at sea costs

**24,000 euros**

SOS MEDITERRANEE'S vital rescue operations in the Central Mediterranean are only possible thanks to the collective support of individuals, businesses, and foundations. Donations, advocacy, and volunteering are all powerful ways to uphold our mission.

FACED WITH THE UNACCEPTABLE, LET'S ACT TOGETHER TO SAVE LIVES.

**No one should be left to die at sea.**

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS INCLUDE

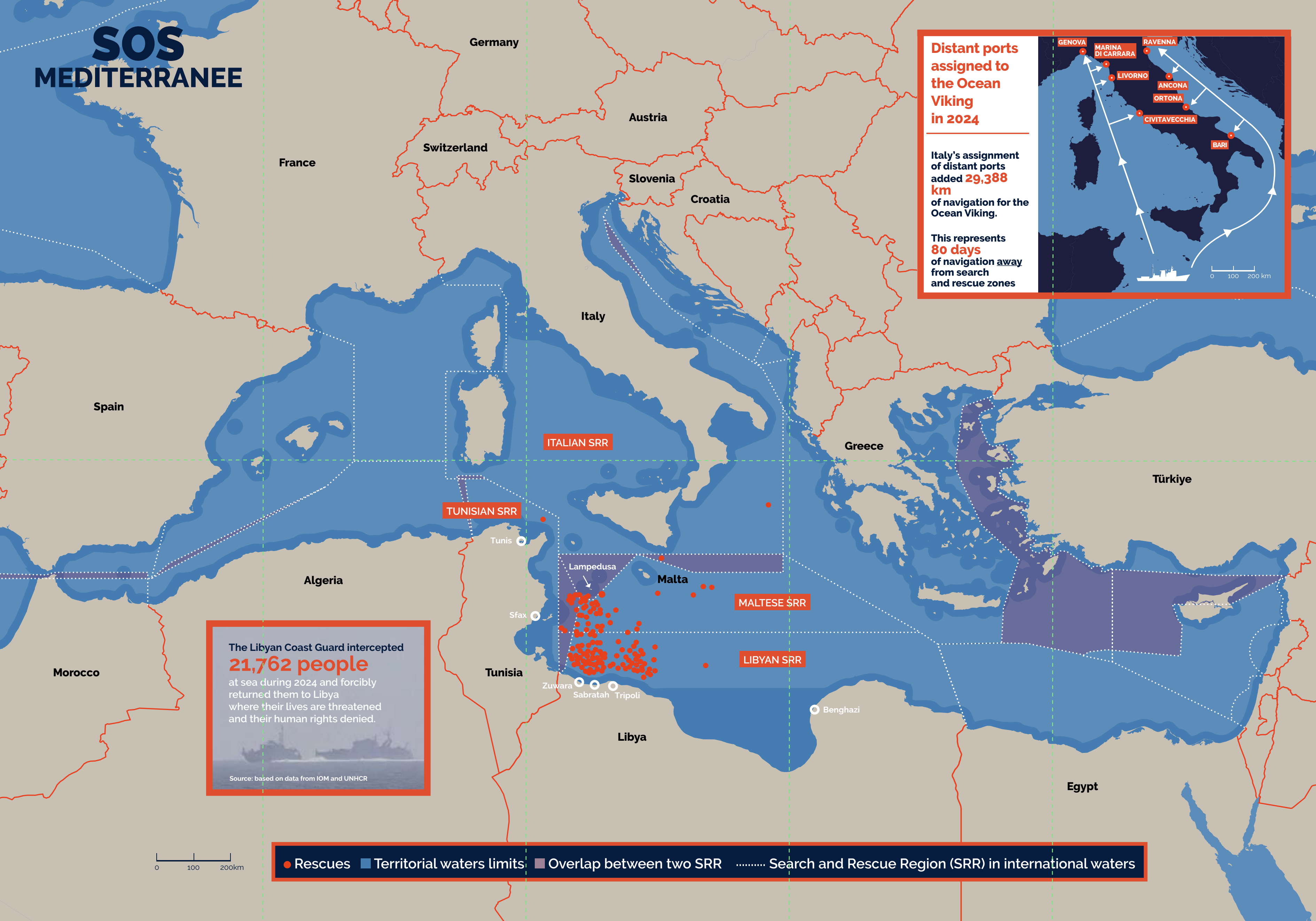
- ★ Special Mention of the French Republic's Human Rights Prize 2024
- ★ The Right Livelihood Award 2023
- ★ International Maritime Rescue Federation Award 2022
- ★ UNESCO Félix Houphouët-Boigny Peace Prize 2017

“Assisting people in danger is a moral and legal duty. It is not acceptable to let thousands of people drown before our eyes, without taking action!”

— **Sophie Beau,** co-founder of SOS MEDITERRANEE



# SOS MEDITERRANEE



### Distant ports assigned to the Ocean Viking in 2024

Italy's assignment of distant ports added **29,388 km** of navigation for the Ocean Viking.

This represents **80 days** of navigation away from search and rescue zones

The Libyan Coast Guard intercepted **21,762 people** at sea during 2024 and forcibly returned them to Libya where their lives are threatened and their human rights denied.

Source: based on data from IOM and UNHCR

- Rescues
- Territorial waters limits
- Overlap between two SRR
- Search and Rescue Region (SRR) in international waters

