



PRESS RELEASE

***HIDDEN HARDSHIP OF AN UNNOTICED WORKFORCE:  
The economic lives of refugees and migrants in Tunisia***  
**Virtual launch on Wednesday, 3 November 10:00-12:00 (Tunis Time)**

**Tunis, 25 October, 2021** — The Mixed Migration Centre in North Africa and the Heinrich Böll Foundation in Tunis will release a joint study titled “Hidden hardship of an unnoticed workforce: The economic lives of refugees and migrants in Tunisia”. [Registration is open](#) for the launch event taking place on 3 November, from 10 AM to 12 PM (Tunis Time).

This study provides an overview of the economic situation of refugees and migrants in Tunisia, including their access to the labour market and their contribution to the local and national economy. It contains recommendations for the Tunisian authorities (national and local), international organisations, civil society and researchers.

*“We wish to strengthen the knowledge production about intra-African movements, particularly towards Tunisia. The study examines the livelihoods of migrants and provides important insights into the ways they navigate legal and socio-economic constraints. It gives visibility and voice to a hard working but largely hidden workforce from sub-Saharan Africa that is often deprived of basic rights. To develop a cohesive Tunisian migration strategy while providing effective protection for migrants and refugees, it is pivotal to understand their realities and needs.”*, stated Dr. Heike Löschmann, Director of the Heinrich Böll Foundation in Tunis.

*“Refugees’ and migrants’ contributions to the Tunisian economy and its development remain largely invisible. What are their economic situations today? In which sectors do they work and contribute to the economy? What are their specific points of vulnerability and what are possible solutions to improve their lives? Those are the main questions our study seeks to answer.”*, added Dr. Ayla Bonfiglio, Regional Manager of the Mixed Migration Centre in North Africa.

**Virtual launch event: Wednesday, 3 November 10:00-12:00 (Tunis Time)**

A hybrid launch event of the study will take place on 3 November, online and in-person in Tunisia, from 10 AM to 12 PM (Tunis Time). The 2-hour launch event will consist of a presentation of the key findings and a discussion, bringing together migration experts, local authorities, and migrant and refugee voices from Médenine and Tunis who will share their personal experiences. All are invited to register.

**To know more & register:** [mixedmigration.org/resource/hidden-hardship-of-an-unnoticed-workforce](https://mixedmigration.org/resource/hidden-hardship-of-an-unnoticed-workforce)

**Direct link to registration:** [zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_Osqpb7d-TU-1ClzmvHQpzw](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Osqpb7d-TU-1ClzmvHQpzw)

## Key findings at a glance

Below is a glimpse of the key findings put forward and further elaborated upon by the study to better understand the economic lives of refugees and migrants in Tunisia, in relation to their right to work, types of employment from a gender lens, students and their engagement in informal work, access to banking services, remittances, and contributions to Tunisia's economic development:

- Tunisia lacks key legislation to protect the economic rights and livelihoods of refugees and migrants.
- While often employed in the informal sector, refugees' and migrants' access to work and types of employment vary considerably by gender.
- Sub-Saharan students must often turn to informal work to cover their costs of living.
- Most surveyed respondents noted that their income in Tunisia was not sufficient for sending remittances to family members in their origin countries.
- A large majority of respondents reported a lack of access to banking services.
- Refugees' and migrants' contributions to the Tunisian economy and its development often go unnoticed since most engage in informal employment activities.

## About MMC

The Mixed Migration Centre (MMC) is a leading source for independent and high-quality data, information, research and analysis on mixed migration. Through the provision of credible evidence and expertise on mixed migration, MMC aims to support agencies, policy makers and practitioners to make well-informed decisions, to positively impact global and regional migration policies, to contribute to protection and assistance responses for people on the move and to stimulate forward thinking in the sector responding to mixed migration. MMC is part of, and governed by, the Danish Refugee Council.

## About HBF

The Heinrich Böll Foundation is a catalyst for green perspectives and projects. The foundation is affiliated with the German Green Party. It works with partners in over 60 countries and currently has 34 international offices, including the one in Tunis. The foundation works for a healthy and sustainable environment for current and future generations and defends human rights including those of migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons.

## For media inquiries, and information requests, please contact:

The Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBF):

Fabian Hepp — French, English: [Fabian.Hepp@tn.boell.org](mailto:Fabian.Hepp@tn.boell.org)

Wajdi Filali — Arabic, French: [Wajdi.Filali@tn.boell.org](mailto:Wajdi.Filali@tn.boell.org)

The Mixed Migration Centre (MMC): [north-africa@mixedmigration.org](mailto:north-africa@mixedmigration.org)