



**Scirocco**  
**borderline-europe, Sicily – Part 11**  
**Palermo, 13.09.2021**



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Scirocco [ʃiˈrɔkko-Schirokko] is a south-easterly, hot strong wind that carries dust and sand across the Mediterranean to Sicily and Italy's north for often only a few hours. This short info in the age of the pandemic will be published from March 2021 in an approx. bi-weekly rhythm. The Scirocco replaces the Corona Update Italy.

### Political and Social Situation

The Italian Ministry of the Interior currently collaborates with the Red Cross and the Military Health Guide on a **strategy to vaccinate migrants and refugees against the Corona virus**. The [guidelines](#) are expected to be available by the end of September. So far, reference is made to voluntary and free vaccinations of arriving migrants and refugees with the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. These vaccinations would protect the people arriving in Italy as well as Italian staff and NGO workers. Such collective vaccinations are already carried out in several centers in southern Italy (on a voluntary basis).

Compared to 2020, **arrivals on the Italian coasts have increased again** during the three summer months of 2021: there were a least [73.8% more landings](#) than in the same period (June-August) last year. As a result, landings on the Italian coasts have once again found their way into the political spotlight of Italian domestic politics. The **ongoing verbal attacks** by [Matteo Salvini](#), leader of the Lega Nord party, against the independent Interior Minister Luciana Lamorgese are only one example of the repolarization and instrumentalizing of arrivals (we reported [here](#)). Whether these attacks will ultimately [backfire](#) on Salvini himself will be elucidated in the upcoming local elections.

### About Rescue at Sea

During the last two weeks, there has been an increase in arrivals on Lampedusa as well as the island of Lampione off the coast. [More than 300 people](#) arrived on these two islands in less than 24 hours. Additionally, [11 migrants from Tunisia](#) arrived on Sardinia. Arrivals of Tunisian citizens on Sardinia have been an [exception](#) so far. Time will tell whether they have deviated from the actual route or whether this is the beginning of a new route.

**Two dead bodies washed up on the beach of Lampedusa**. It is likely that these are [two of the nine deceased](#) from the shipwreck off Lampedusa on June 30 (we reported [here](#)). The two bodies were [buried](#) in Palma di Montechiaro (Sicily).

On the coast of Salento (southwest of Italy), a boat with [refugees of Turkish nationality alone](#) has arrived, seeking its way to Italy via Greece. This route is usually taken by people from Afghanistan, Syria, or Iran.



The Astral in the port of Siracusa. Photo by Livia Giuliani.

On September 4, Proactiva Open Arms' monitoring vessel [Astral](#) completed its two-week mission at sea, aiding 212 people. A day later, the [SEA-EYE 4](#) was able to bring 29 rescued people as well as itself safely ashore right before a strong wind whipped across the ocean. On the same day, Mission Lifeline's [Rise Above](#) set sail from Germany and will hopefully reach the central Mediterranean soon as no other civilian rescue ship is on mission at the moment.

## Situation of the refugees

In [Augusta](#) (Sicily), **migrants protested their continued accommodation on a government quarantine ship**, because they had already fulfilled the legally required quarantine obligation [on Lampedusa](#). Some people even jumped into the sea, but no one was injured. Quarantine regulations are repeatedly used to restrict the freedom of movement of people arriving in Italy for longer than necessary.



The quarantine ship GNV Azzurra. Photo by Emilio Caja.

At the end of August, the Prosecutor of Agrigento, Luigi Patronaggio, and some Carabinieri of CAN (Center against Environmental Offenses) met to discuss the **hygienic and sanitary situation of the hotspot of Lampedusa**. The meeting was initiated due to a [complaint filed by the League for the Protection of the Environment "Legambiente" and the Public Prosecutor's Office](#). They consider an open sewer to be a difficult case of environmental pollution as well as a [potential health risk](#) for the residents of the valley of Contrada Imbriacola, where the hotspot of Lampedusa is located. NGOs have been drawing attention to the poor conditions on site and the [complete overcrowding](#) of the hotspot for months. The 250 available places are again used by [up to 988 migrants](#).

In Ventimiglia located on the Italian-French border, the **living conditions of migrants are not less dramatic**: according to the re-

port "[The exacerbation of a crisis](#)" by the British NGO Refugee Rescue Europe, migrants in Ventimiglia are not only exposed to the often violent rejections at the border as well as many difficulties of daily life, but also to an [increased risk of infection and health risks](#) due to the Covid 19 pandemic as minimum security standards are eventually not met. Therefore, to improve the situation of migrants in Ventimiglia, the parish priest [Don Ferruccio Bortolotto](#) now calls for a first reception center in the city.

**For more information on the situation in Italy, see our [Streiflicht Italy](#) and our previous [Sciroccos](#) and [Corona Updates](#) on our [homepage](#).**

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