

69% OF FRENCH SUPPORT MEDITERRANEAN NAVAL BLOCKADE

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Older voters, women, and the Right most favorable to proposal

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France's appetite to accommodate the never-ending torrent of illegal migration flowing into their country appears to have soured. While the state has introduced border controls along the Italian border, turning away some 200 migrants each day, a new poll has found that nearly 70% of the French population supports a military blockade in the Mediterranean Sea to stop the influx.

The [opinion survey](#), conducted by the French market research firm CSA Institute, was published on Wednesday, September 20th, and revealed that 69% of those surveyed back the establishment of a naval blockade in the Mediterranean Sea by states affected by the migration crisis, including France, Italy, Greece, and Spain, to prevent further influxes of migrants.

Notably, within the scope of the survey, women exhibited a slightly higher inclination toward advocating for the implementation of a naval blockade to prevent the influx of migrants, with 70% of women surveyed expressing support compared to 69% of men. Support for a naval blockade prevailed across all age groups surveyed, albeit considerably more so among the older population, with 73% of those aged 50 and up supporting the idea in contrast with 62% among those aged 25-34.

Unsurprisingly, the poll revealed a stark right-left divide on the issue. Most who identify as on the Left expressed opposition to the question: "Do you endorse the implementation of a naval blockade by the national navies of the affected states to halt the influx of migrants into the Mediterranean?" Supporters of the Greens were most likely to be opposed to the idea, at 61%, while 56% of supporters of La France Insoumise (LFI) and 50% of Socialist Party (PS) voters felt the same way.

Meanwhile, on the political Right, the desire to see decisive action to prevent any further migratory influx is sky-high, with 92% of Rassemblement National (RN) voters backing the

idea, and 90% and 86% of Reconquête and Les Républicains, respectively, supporting the idea as well.

So far in 2023, despite having promised to drastically reduce illegal migrant inflows, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni has overseen the arrival of some 130,000 illegal migrants in 2023, according to [figures](#) from the Italian Ministry of the Interior. Last week, [5,000 illegal migrants](#) landed on the island of Lampedusa, which has a population of just 6,000, in a single day.

In response to the unprecedented influx of new arrivals, France has established border controls with its neighbor along its southeast flank, prompting [accusations](#) that, in doing so, it is violating the EU's Schengen agreement and threatening Italy's economic competitiveness. Italian Transport Minister Matteo Salvini, who leads the right-wing Lega party is due to bring France before the European Court of Justice over its controls.

According to the latest [reports](#) from the Milan-based daily *Il Giornale*, France is every day rejecting some 200 illegal migrants who are trying to enter the country from Italy. As a result of these so-called "pushbacks" taking place at the Italian-French border, the Court of Justice of the European Union has issued a [rebuke](#) to the French government, with judges in Luxembourg saying that the pushbacks "can only happen as a last resort."