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**NOTE**

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From:	Commission Services
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Operationalization of the Pact – Action plans for strengthening comprehensive migration partnerships with priority countries of origin and transit Draft Action Plan : Morocco

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**DOCUMENT PARTIALLY ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC (06.12.2021)**

Delegations will find attached a draft action plan for Morocco prepared by the Commission Services.

The Commission would very much appreciate that the text of the draft action plan be handled with discretion.

**Draft Action Plan: Morocco**

<b>Overall EU Objectives – Lines to Take</b>
<b>DELETED</b>
<b>Goals for managing migration and addressing forced displacement – Lines to Take</b>
<b>DELETED</b>

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**Measures**

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## **Timelines for action**

### **A. Next Steps for engagement by EU and by Member States**

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### **B. Next steps for funding measures**

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## ANNEX I

### Existing EU cooperation and areas of engagement under the New Pact

#### i. Asylum/ international protection

- Morocco is increasingly a destination country and two rounds of regularisations have taken place (2013 and 2017).
- Developing the national asylum legislation and asylum system under Morocco's National Strategy of Migration and Asylum (SNIA) is subject to a €35 million "*Appui aux politiques migratoires au Maroc*" budget support programme under MFF 2014-2020. It has however seen little progress in recent years (framework laws have not yet been adopted by the government). Cooperation with UNHCR, allowing it to process asylum cases is exemplary for the region.
- Under the Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP) North Africa, projects to strengthen international protection for migrants and child protection with contribution from EU budget of around €3.5 million in the financial period 2015-2020. The last two projects were launched in January 2021. Implementation was led by the Italian Ministry of Interior, mainly with UNHCR and UNICEF as implementing partners.
- Protection of migrants in vulnerable situations, €6.5 million implemented by civil society organizations, from the EU budget under MFF 2014-2020.
- Enhancing self-reliance and access to rights for refugees in North Africa, implemented by UNHCR, €2.14 million from the EU budget under MFF 2014-2020.

#### ii. Addressing root causes

- Support to the migration legislative and institutional framework to promote social inclusion at the local level through enhancing employability of both the Moroccan diaspora and the migrants living in Morocco, implemented by ENABEL, €8 million under the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (2018-2022).
- Development pillar of the Regional Development and Protection Programme North Africa, Self-sufficiency of target groups and host communities is enhanced, support to civil society €2 million under the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, implemented by civil society organisations (2019-2022).
- Support to the Moroccan diaspora for the creation of economic activities and employment opportunities in Morocco, MEET – Africa Phase II, implemented by Expertise France €2.5 million under the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (2019-2023).
- Supporting South-South cooperation between Morocco, Mali, Senegal and Ivory Coast on migration and development, protection, and diaspora development implemented by GIZ and Expertise France - €8.6 million under the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (2019-2022).

#### iii. Migration governance and management

- €35 million budget support programme "*Appui aux politiques migratoires au Maroc*", to implement the National Strategy on Migration and Asylum, including with the adoption of the legislation on human trafficking, asylum and migration. It has supported amongst others the adoption of legislation on human trafficking, the operationalisation of the national commission on human trafficking and the efforts of the prosecutor's office to tackle it. By the end of 2021 a €1.5 million project in support of the national commission should further complement these efforts as well as a grant to civil society to provide direct coordinated support to the victims.
- €101,7 million budget support programme covering the period 2019-2021 to support the Ministry of Interior in managing irregular migration, respectful of human rights, including through border management, international cooperation and awareness raising. This includes

strengthening of cooperation with Frontex and Europol, human rights training of its staff, reinforced deployments along the borders, development of standard operating procedures for the identification of vulnerable populations, the awareness raising of minors on the risks of irregular migration. There has been a positive impact on Morocco's ability to intercept irregular border crossings as well as political dialogue with the EU – however the events of Ceuta in spring 2021 have shown possible weaknesses of this cooperation.

- €144 million border management package (EUR 70 million budget support completed in 2019, EUR 44 million programme managed by FIAPP, the International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies and €30 million programme managed by ICMPD, International Centre for Migration Policy Development, funded from EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa under MFF 2014-2020).
- A network of Mediterranean City-to-City Migration Profiles and Dialogue, implemented by ICMPD, €1.9 million from the EU budget under MFF 2014-2020.
- Morocco is also part of the:
  - Euromed Migration V regional project, €5 million implemented by ICMPD
  - Fight against migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings, including, protection of victims and children, implemented by UNODC €4.3 million, EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa
  - The Common operational partnership North Africa against Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking in Human Beings (COP), funded until 2022 from the EU budget under MFF 2014-2020.

#### *Awareness-raising Campaigns*

- Two recently launched projects ongoing until 2022 funded from EU budget: Safe Journey (ProgettoMondo – €966 240, Timeframe 01/12/2020 – 31/05/2022); Objectives: Safe Journey aims to contrast irregular migration with an informative Campaign about alternatives to it); Shababuna (Generalitat de Catalunya & others – €645 070, Timeframe: 18/01/2021 – 17/01/2023; Objectives: engaging and empowering the voice of diaspora communities within the EU to provide information and raise awareness to counter migrant smugglers' narratives for prospective migrants in Morocco.

#### **iv. Returns, readmission, reintegration**

- The Commission has a mandate to negotiate an EU readmission agreement with Morocco since 2000. The last negotiation round took place in 2015 when negotiations were suspended. A reinforced dialogue and enhanced cooperation on readmission is needed, including potentially the relaunch of parallel negotiations on readmission and visa facilitation agreements.
- Work with Member States and the European Return and Reintegration Network (ERRIN) on reintegration assistance to returnees. Through Caritas International Belgium a total of 269 Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration schemes have been granted since June 2016.
- EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration (as of 30 March 2021) 1 939 people assisted to return from Morocco and 80 assisted with post-arrival reception/reintegration in Morocco.
- Under the €35 million budget support programme, the return of thousands of migrants to their countries of origin in line with IOM standards has been facilitated.
- ERMES III project, pre-departure assistance, return counselling, reintegration, implemented by CEFA ONLUS €0.6 million, supported by the EU budget under MFF 2014-2020.

#### **v. Legal migration and mobility**

- The Commission has a mandate to negotiate a visa facilitation agreement (2013). Only one negotiation round took place in 2015 when negotiations were suspended.

*Ongoing projects:*

- PALIM (Pilot Project Addressing Labour Shortages through Innovative Labour Migration Models Belgium),
- THAMM (Towards a Holistic Approach to Labour Migration Governance and Labour Mobility in North Africa, Germany, Belgium, France),
- HOMERE (High Opportunity for Mediterranean Executive Recruitment, France),
- YGCA (Young Generations as Change Agents).
- Mentor II (Mediterranean Network for Training Orientation to Regular migration, Italy),
- MOVE GREEN - Co-development for innovation and employment in green and circular economy between Andalucía and Morocco, Spain) and an additional one,
- WAFIRA (Spain) is under evaluation.
- They support mobility schemes, traineeships, internships in various sectors for Moroccans.
- THAMM, HOMERE and Mentor II are multi-country programmes. These projects are financed through the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa and the Migration Partnership Facility, funded under the EU budget.

**vi. Regional approach**

- “South-South Cooperation on Migration” project in collaboration between Morocco and several West-African countries, e.g. Senegal and Ivory Coast, implemented by GiZ, supported by € 8.6 million under the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa.

**ANNEX II**

**Member States' bilateral engagement**

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## ANNEX III

Key figures and trends
<b>Irregular migration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Illegal border crossing of Moroccan nationals to the EU: 6 319 in 2021 as of 31 July, of which 4 273<sup>1</sup> to Spain via Western Mediterranean and Western African route (2 310 in the same period of 2020). In the whole of 2020, the number of Moroccans arriving to the EU stood at 17 121 (8 020 in 2019).</li> <li>Irregular arrivals from Morocco: In 2021 as of end of August, 8 421 arrivals from Morocco were registered to mainland Spain and Canary Islands, compared to 5 709 in the same period last year<sup>2</sup>. A total of 19 935 arrivals to Spain from Morocco were recorded in the whole 2020.</li> <li>Illegal stay of Moroccan nationals in the EU: 41 220 in 2020 (41 535 in 2019), of which 18 175 in Spain, 8 710 in France, 3 340 in Italy.</li> </ul>
<b>Return</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moroccan nationals ordered to leave the EU: 33 645 in 2020 (34 750 in 2019) of which 11 980 in Spain, 8 510 in France, 3 463 in Belgium. In the first quarter of 2021, 5 365 Moroccan nationals were order to leave the EU, of which 2 405 in France, 870 in Belgium and 535 in Spain.</li> <li>Return rate: 8% in 2020 (29% in 2019). The return rate in the first quarter of 2021 was 12%.</li> <li>Highest return rate in 2020: 100% in Romania, 26% in Sweden, 24% in the Netherlands</li> <li>Lowest return rate in 2020: 0% in Hungary, Slovenia, Malta.</li> </ul>
<b>Asylum</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First time asylum applications by Moroccan nationals: 6 775 in 2020 (8 950 in 2019) of which 1 215 in Slovenia, 945 in Spain, 900 in Germany. Based on provisional data from EASO, in 2021 as of 12 September, 9 530 Moroccans lodged asylum applications in the EU+, of which 47% were lodged in Spain, 12% in Austria, and 11% in Italy.</li> <li>First Instance asylum decisions: 5 465 in 2020 (7 550 in 2019). 2 730, in 2021 as of 30 June 2021.</li> <li>EU recognition rate: 8% in 2020 (8% in 2019). 10% in 2021 as of 30 June.</li> <li>EU recognition rate incl. humanitarian protection: 10% in 2020 (9% in 2019). 13% in 2021 as of 30 June.</li> </ul>
<b>International Protection in Morocco</b>

<sup>1</sup> This data does not include the estimated 7 000 – 9 500 arrivals in Ceuta between 17 and 18 May 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Data from REME 2020 August report and REME 2021 August report, produced by NCC-Spain Eurosur. While the data for August 2021 expressly refers to arrivals from Morocco to mainland Spain and the Canary Islands, the data for August 2020 does not specify the area of arrival.

- Registered refugees and asylum seekers hosted in Morocco: according to UNHCR 14 952 people of concern in 2021 as of 31 March (13 549 at the end of 2020), were present in Morocco (8 491 refugees and 6 461 asylum seekers) - mostly Syrians (4 705), followed by Guineans (2 054) and Cameroonians (1 256).

#### **Legal migration**

- First time residence permits: 133 009 in 2019 of which 62 996 in Spain, 35 094 in France, 15 972 in Italy – no available data for 2020.
- Total valid residence permits: 1 960 323 at the end of 2019, of which 810 539 in Spain, 524 969 in France and 428 813 in Italy – no available data for 2020.

#### **Visas**

- Short stay visa applications to the EU: 180 443 in 2020 (705 293 in 2019) of which 84 627 handled by France, 68 971 by Spain, 7 985 by the Netherlands
- Share of Multiple Entry Visas (MEVs): 50.6% in 2020 (42.9% in 2019). Visa refusal rate : 23.6% in 2020 (20.5% in 2019)

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