



EU ACTIONS ALONG THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN ROUTE

March 2019

2018 saw a substantial increase in arrivals along the Western Mediterranean route, with over 65,000 irregular arrivals. In response, the EU stepped up its activities with partner countries. Along other migratory routes, the European Union has put in place an integrated approach in its migration policy, taking into account the "whole of the route". This involves **saving and protecting people's lives** at sea; **tackling irregular migration; fighting the business of smugglers and traffickers**, through close cooperation with partner countries and international organisations; supporting migrants and refugees along the route; and creating legal pathways and economic opportunities as alternatives to irregular migration. To take cooperation with partners even further, the same integrated approach is now being applied to the **Western Mediterranean** route.



EU ACTION AT SEA

The European Border and Coast Guard Agency supports Spain in controlling its external borders through maritime joint operations along its **southern coasts**: Joint Operations Indalo and Minerva, and in the **Atlantic**, Joint Operation Hera. The officers, vessels and aircraft deployed by the Agency in Spain assist the Spanish authorities with border surveillance, as well as search and rescue.

Currently the European Border and Coast Guard has deployed to Spain:



SUPPORT TO THE MAGHREB REGION

EU-Morocco partnership



For over 10 years, the European Union has been **Morocco's** strongest partner in terms of technical and financial support on migration. The EU and Morocco concluded in 2013 a **Mobility Partnership Agreement**. Cooperation also takes place through regional dialogues under the **Rabat process** and through the **African Union**.

€ The EU has committed since 2014 **€232 million** to support Morocco in better managing migration in addition to the **over €1 billion** to assist the country on equitable access to social services, democratic governance, the rule of law and mobility, job creation and sustainable and inclusive growth.



Socio-economic integration: Over **2,200 migrants** have received **information and training in job search and entrepreneurship** skills and **400 refugees and migrants** secured funding for their own **entrepreneurship projects**. **1,400 minor migrants** have benefited from **schooling** and **600 migrants** (40% female) attended **literacy classes**.



Institutional support and capacity building: The EU has been providing substantial support to Morocco in planning and managing migration policies, including the **National Strategy for Immigration and Asylum** adopted in 2014 to integrate migrants, and to develop sustainable return and reintegration systems.



Protection and rights: More than **2,000 minor migrants received information on their rights and have access to social services**. Over **7,400** vulnerable female migrants were provided with **social, medical and psychological support**. Projects have been launched to help with **integration**, legal empowerment of migrants and the fight against discrimination.

BORDER MANAGEMENT



The EU mobilised €140 million to strengthen the capacities of Morocco's border management authorities to protect vulnerable migrants, addressing irregular migration, and dismantling cross-border criminal networks involved in human trafficking and migrant smuggling. Spain is a crucial partner and closely associated to our work and talks with Morocco; the Spanish agency FIIAPP is currently implementing an EU Trust Fund €40 million programme on border and migration management.

EU-IOM JOINT INITIATIVE FOR MIGRANT PROTECTION AND REINTEGRATION



The **EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration in Africa**, launched in December 2016, continues to support vulnerable migrants with life-saving assistance and support services, such as food or water, medical and psycho-social support, as well as access to information, counselling or family tracing. At the same time, it helps strengthen migrant protection and sustainable reintegration systems. A flexible mechanism, it adapts to the specific needs of the people and the respective country.



Over 5,800 migrants will be assisted to voluntarily return from Morocco to their homes, where they will receive reintegration support over a period of two years. Over 62,000 migrants received post-arrival reception and reintegration support under the EU-IOM Joint Initiative. This includes 11,000 people in Mali, over 3,700 in Ivory Coast, nearly 10,000 in Guinea, almost 4,000 in Senegal and a similar number in The Gambia.

COOPERATION WITH COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN AND TRANSIT

Through the Partnership Framework on Migration, the EU has put in place tailor-made cooperation with African partners. The EU and Member States' efforts are being closely coordinated and all relevant EU policies and tools are used to reinforce cooperation, bringing tangible results.



Protection and assistance to vulnerable migrants

In addition to the substantial actions under the EU – IOM Joint Initiative, the EU, together with IOM, helped increase through the **Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)**, Mauritania's capacity to assist stranded and vulnerable migrants through legal, health and reintegration support.



Capacity building

To improve the capacities of governments to develop informed and sustainable migration policies, the EU supports the development of a **coherent** and **robust civil registry system**, both in **Côte d'Ivoire** and **Senegal**. These efforts aim to improving the management of public policies, the exercise of fundamental rights and economic integration.



Creating opportunities

Employability of youth and vulnerable groups: in **Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea, Mauritania**, as well as at regional level, programmes have been launched to strengthen micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises' capacities, as well as to increase job demand and to provide adequate training. These are pre-requisites for **sustainable employment perspectives**, especially for young people.

In all, **92 programmes** under the EU Trust Fund for Africa, worth around **€1.7 billion**, are in place **for countries of transit and origin** in the Sahel and Lake Chad region. They focus on strengthening resilience and improving economic and employment opportunities, while providing protection for migrants along the routes and enhancing states' capacities to fight criminal networks.



Effective return and readmission

The EU is following a cooperative approach with key countries of origin and transit to improve joint work on readmission. With the **six new readmission arrangements** agreed, the EU now has 23 readmission agreements and arrangements in place. **European Migration Liaison Officers** have been deployed to third countries, acting as key contacts with national authorities, while third countries' Migration Liaison Officers in EU Member States can help identifying potential returnees. The European Border and Coast Guard Agency has increased its capacity to coordinate and organise return operations.

FIGHTING SMUGGLERS AND TRAFFICKERS IN THE COUNTRIES IN THE GULF OF GUINEA



The EU is providing capacity building support, with over **€17.4 million** from the **EU Trust Fund for Africa**, for training and advice to national institutions in **Guinea, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo, Benin** and **Nigeria** to disrupt smugglers' and traffickers' activities, protect and assist migrants, and further support the judiciary.

In **Senegal**, the EU will assist the Senegalese Government through training and advice on investigation techniques, ensuring that cooperation is strengthened, also at regional level, between police, gendarmerie and the different Ministries involved.

REGIONAL DIALOGUES TO JOINTLY ADDRESS MIGRATION



The **Rabat Process** provides a platform to facilitate exchange and cooperation between partner countries on the migration route in **North, West and Central Africa and Europe**. In May 2018, participating countries reaffirmed their commitment to continue working together to manage migration by adopting the **Marrakech Political Declaration** and Action Plan.

The **Joint Valletta Action Plan**, adopted by European and African leaders in November 2015, has resulted in more than **1,200 initiatives**, worth over **€11.7 billion**, that address the **root causes** of irregular migration, promote **legal channels**, the **saving and protecting of lives**, the **fight against traffickers and smugglers** and facilitate **return, readmission and reintegration**.