

# Partnership Framework on Migration: Commission reports on results and lessons learnt one year on

The report shows that the Partnership has stimulated partner countries in Africa to better tackle irregular migration and to fight smuggling networks. Joint efforts have helped increase assisted voluntary returns of stranded migrants, and supported job creation and social projects. Increased efforts have also taken place along the Central Mediterranean Migration Route since the adoption of the [Joint Communication on the Central Mediterranean Route](#) and the [Malta Declaration](#). This has led to a more efficient cooperation with partner countries and international partners such as the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Better coordination between the EU and Member States has increased the EU leverage on partners. However, it should be further stepped up to improve delivery, notably on reducing the irregular arrivals of migrants to the EU and enhancing cooperation between the EU and partner countries to ensure returns and readmission.

High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** said: *“One year ago, we launched the Partnership Framework based on the conviction that managing migration requires partnership and a comprehensive approach, based on the protection of the rights of migrants, on the fight against the traffickers of human beings, on the work on the root causes starting from poverty, conflicts and climate change. We have been working on a daily basis with the five priority countries and many others in the Sahel region, in West Africa and in the Horn of Africa. This common work has brought tangible progresses, among others on the fight against traffickers. And on assisted voluntary returns: since the beginning of 2017 more than 4,000 migrants voluntarily returned from Libya to their countries of origin, under the programme run in cooperation with IOM. We will keep working to increase even further cooperation with our African partners, to ensure that lives are saved, migrants are treated in dignity, and to make sure that we eradicate together the business model of those who exploit human despair.”*

## **Results under the Partnership Framework**

One year after the launch of the Partnership Framework, tangible progress has been made with the five African priority countries Niger, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Ethiopia. **Niger** is emblematic of what can be achieved under the Partnership Framework: the EU and Member States have closely coordinated their actions and cooperation, together with Nigerien authorities. Border controls and action against trafficking in human beings have been stepped up leading to the arrest of smugglers and a significant increase in Assisted Voluntary Returns of migrants from Niger to countries of origin.

Cooperation with all partner countries has significantly intensified, including through the presence of European Migration Liaison Officers in 12

partner countries. The EU has now a well-established partnership with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). Steps have been taken to facilitate returns and readmission of irregular migrants, but work on this front needs to be accelerated. Cooperation in the field of migration management has also been stepped up with a broader set of countries, in North and West Africa and Asia.

The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa has backed up the EU's political engagement by providing support to projects for job creation, access to education or border management in key countries. 118 projects have so far been approved. The overall level of resources available across the three regions covered by the Fund has increased to around €2.8 billion and its reach has been expanded to include Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana.

### **Steps taken along the Central Mediterranean Route**

To respond to the ongoing crisis along the Central Mediterranean Route, the EU has deepened its work with North African partners and with Libya in particular. A €90 million package has been adopted under the EU Trust Fund for Africa, to reinforce the protection and resilience of migrants and refugees (including in centres), and the host communities in Libya. In cooperation with the IOM, the Assisted Voluntary Returns and Reintegration programme has continued. In Libya alone, so far in 2017 more than 4,000 migrants returned to their countries of origin, which constitutes more than the number of migrants returned from Libya in the entire year of 2016. The three Common Security and Defence Policy activities, [EUNAVFOR Med Operation Sophia](#), [EU Border Assistance Mission Libya](#) and the EU Liaison and Planning Cell continue to contribute to the EU's fight against smuggling networks and engage with Libyan authorities.

In addition, the EU has increased its interaction with the Sub-Saharan neighbours of Libya, to address the northbound irregular migratory flows. On 5 June 2017, the EU announced its intention to support the operationalisation of the G5 Joint Force (composed by forces from Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria and Chad) for securing sensitive border regions with up to €50 million.

### **Next steps**

Work through the Partnership Framework will continue with increased political and operational intensity, taking into account that migration is a long term challenge. Available instruments and resources should be expanded, Member states' commitment and the number of Member States actively engaged in the common efforts should increase. The EU will continue to step up efforts in the field of return with partner countries, aiming at stable arrangements on return and readmission.

Given that the push factors for migration to Europe remain, delivering on all objectives of the Partnership Framework remains a key priority in the coming months and will require a continued and increased effort from all stakeholders involved. The European Council on 22-23 June will take stock of

results achieved and give further guidance on the way forward.

## **Background**

The Partnership Framework on migration with third countries under the [European Agenda on Migration](#) was launched one year ago as the EU's comprehensive approach to address the challenges of irregular migration and its root causes as part of the broader cooperation with third countries.

In parallel, complementary work continues under regional initiatives such as the Rabat and Khartoum processes, as well as on the implementation of the Joint Valletta Action Plan.

The Commission is presenting today also three progress reports on measures taken under the European Agenda on Migration. The pace of relocation has significantly increased in 2017 and resettlement is well on track, the EU-Turkey Statement continues to deliver results and progress in fully rolling out the European Border and Coast Guard has continued over the past months. However, the Commission is calling on Member States to step up their efforts to comply with their legal obligations and contribute fairly and proportionally to the EU relocation scheme, fill remaining gaps in manpower and equipment for the European Border and Coast Guard and ensure full implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement.

## **For More Information**

[Fourth Progress Report on the Partnership Framework with third countries under the European Agenda on Migration](#)

[Annex 1](#)

[Annex 2](#)

[Questions and Answers: Commission reports on results under the Partnership Framework on Migration and progress achieved along the Central Mediterranean Route](#)

[Factsheet on the Partnership Framework on Migration](#)

[Factsheet on cooperation under the Partnership Framework with \*\*Mali\*\*](#)

[Factsheet on cooperation under the Partnership Framework with \*\*Niger\*\*](#)

[Factsheet on cooperation under the Partnership Framework with \*\*Nigeria\*\*](#)

[Factsheet on cooperation under the Partnership Framework with \*\*Senegal\*\*](#)

[Factsheet on cooperation under the Partnership Framework with \*\*Ethiopia\*\*](#)

[Factsheet on EU – Libya relations](#)

[Factsheet on the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa](#)