

Chapter 7: Mobility and Migration

This chapter deals with commitment 9 in the Final Declaration of the 6th Summit: enhanced and reciprocal partnership for migration and mobility.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

Context:

- **Moving between places and across borders is much more than just crossing them. It is a journey of ideas, talent and cultures.** Culture and creativity is an area where Africa and Europe present a unique added value: Europe is revered and respected around the world for its culture, art and history, and Africa has demonstrated the value of its cultural dynamism in the areas of fashion, food and music.
- **The need to reshape the narrative remains: migrations are a key component of global history; there is no specific 21st century hike; Africa's migrants mainly move within their own continent; growing contrary demographic trends between ageing Europe and young Africa need to be addressed.** Over the past 30 years migration has increased, but not at the same rate as the global population. Looking at African migrations in Europe, only slightly above a quarter (27.2%) of African migrants live in Europe, while slightly above a tenth (12.7%) of all migrants in Europe are African. The majority of African migrants move within their own continent. Most are economic migrations, driven by the search for better prospects. In Europe, migrants continue to be a key solution to labour shortages.
- **For some time now, research has revealed public attitudes toward immigration in Europe are not uniform and clear-cut.** A 2023 public opinion study found that European natives in areas with a higher proportion of foreign-born populations tend to exhibit

less anti-immigrant sentiment. However, a temporary increase in the number of immigrants in a specific region is associated with a more negative outlook. This may help explain why prominent anti-immigration policies continue to be on the political agenda. Yet, there is evidence of changing attitudes at national level; for example, in France positive sentiments towards migrants surpassed negative sentiments in 2016. In 2018, 63% of Swedes reported that immigrants make the country a better place to live. Nevertheless, it is still challenging to develop policy propositions and political narratives that are comprehensive with these positive public attitudes towards immigrants.

Potential areas of action:

- **With the European Parliament elections in June 2024 there will likely be heightened attention in Brussels on intra-European debates on irregular migration.** In this context preventing irregular migration remains key. This underscores the need for sustained commitment and cooperation among EU member states to develop and implement comprehensive policies that not only deter irregular migration but also address its root causes. This balanced approach is essential for achieving meaningful and lasting solutions.
- **While the *Continent-to-Continent Migration and Mobility Dialogue* and the re-launch of the joint *AU-EU-UN Tripartite Task Force* aimed at addressing irregular migration**

have been welcome developments, action is needed from African countries to accelerate the readmission, repatriation, or reception of migrants and asylum seekers. Stronger enforcement of international and AU standards on human rights must be safeguarded to protect and save lives along the migratory routes, as well as those on the ground.

- **By 2050, Africa will potentially provide 796 million people to the global labour force.** Promoting both relevant education and training, as well as mobility is therefore key. AfCFTA must be accompanied by progress in other African initiatives such as the *Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons*, as for many businesses in Africa it is often easier to employ a skilled non-African expatriate than a skilled African expatriate. The *Youth Mobility for Africa* initiative, which includes the *Erasmus+* programme and *Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scheme* and aims to promote student exchanges and targeted scholarships and university collaboration, provides a significant platform for promoting skills exchanges for youth. This can contribute to providing access to talent where there is market demand.
- **Promoting mobility and skills exchanges should not lead to ‘brain drain’ undermining national development strategies.** Progressing with new programmes which aim to attract skilled talent from Africa to Europe, such as the *New Talent Partnerships*, can contribute to enhancing labour capital. Yet, ensuring a balance between policies and initiatives that provide mobility for skilled workforce, and opportunities for skills development, and take into account domestic development strategies should be prioritised: a) to avoid potential discrepancy on how these initiatives and programmes may potentially counter efforts; and b) to avoid ‘brain drain’.
- **Better and more equal Africa-Europe relations calls for progress in visa regimes.** Schengen countries have established a unified short-stay visa regime, allowing third-country nationals to visit any Schengen Area member for tourism or business for up to 90 days. However, Africans still face stringent visa requirements, with a high rejection rate. At the same time, the ease of access for EU citizen to African e-visas has increased dramatically since 2016.
- **Exchanges among African and European cities are developing, with great potential to contribute to the implementation of the 6th Summit commitments.** For example, the Mayors’ Dialogue managed by ODI, connecting more than twenty cities, from Lisbon to Amsterdam, Accra to Kigali and Abidjan, aims to build on the connections rather than the differences between cities, countries, and continents with a focus on practical innovations, local solutions and learning from each other’s experiences; these networks have great potential for scale-up.

PARTNERSHIP FOR MOBILITY AND MIGRATION

The Ten Commitments Framework	Main Commitments
<p>COMMITMENT 9: Enhanced and reciprocal partnership for migration and mobility</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Promoting an enhanced and reciprocal partnership for migration and mobility II. Working to prevent irregular migration, enhance cooperation against smuggling and trafficking in human beings, support strengthened border management and achieve effective improvements on return, readmission and reintegration, including promoting voluntary return and facilitating sustainable reintegration of returned persons, and enhance migration dialogues between the two continents III. Deepening cooperation in finding durable solutions for asylum seekers, refugees, and vulnerable migrants in need of international protection and commit to revitalise the work of the joint AU-EU-UN Tripartite Task Force IV. Addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement and enhance cooperation on tackling all issues related to migration V. Further developing pathways for legal migration opportunities between both continents and within Africa within the available legal frameworks and respecting national needs VI. Addressing challenges posed by the brain drain, and invest in youth and women, notably through increased support for technical and vocational education and training

I. Promoting an enhanced and reciprocal partnership for migration and mobility

Examples of progress to date:

- There have been notable efforts to enhance migration dialogues between Africa and Europe, facilitated through the components of the *Africa-EU Migration and Mobility Dialogue (MMD)*:
 - Three migration dialogues: *Rabat Process*, the *Khartoum Process*, and the *Continent-to-Continent Migration and Mobility Dialogue (C2CMMD)*;
 - *Joint-Valletta Action Plan (JVAP) Follow-up*.
- At continental level: Progress within the C2CMMD framework, implemented by the *International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)*, rolled out a *Training of Trainers (ToT)* for the AU Migration Governance Training Programme held in Kenya on 3-7 July 2023. The 14 trainers represented 12 institutions from academia, research and the public sector. Delivered with support from the AUC, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the University of the Western Cape in South Africa (UWC), capacity-building efforts will continue with the certified trainers foreseen to deliver training course across the continent. Additional modules are under development targeting policymakers, local authorities, diplomats, media practitioners, and civil society representatives.
- At regional level multiple activities under the *Khartoum Process* have taken place, including thematic meetings and workshops focusing on climate change, human mobility nexus, innovative law enforcement tools to curb irregular migration, and the protection of and durable solutions for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Reinforcing the technical

seminars, the *Khartoum Process* leadership held its Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) on 15-16 March 2023 in Berlin, Germany to discuss key priorities and future plans, building a roadmap to reflect on what the immediate, medium- and long-term future holds.

- The *Rabat Process* held its Ministerial Conference in Cadiz, Spain on 13-14 December 2022 leading to the adoption of the *Dialogue's Political Declaration* and its new multi-annual *Cadiz Action Plan for 2023-2027*. The *Action Plan* presents Five Action Areas, which contains 10 objectives and 29 related actions, aiming to address the current and future challenges faced by partner countries. The Ministerial Conference was also the occasion to bring on board four new members of the Steering Committee (Niger, Nigeria, the Netherlands and Switzerland).

- The AU Flagship African Passport and Free Movement of People Flagship Project of the AU Agenda 2063 aims to remove restrictions on Africans' ability to travel, work, and live within their own continent by promoting the issuance of visas by Member States to enhance free movement of all African citizens in all African countries. Progress to date:

- Four countries (Rwanda, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, and Mali) have ratified the Protocol as of July 2022.
- The AUC and UNECA have launched a study to identify the benefits of the free movement of persons for implementing the AfCFTA. AfCFTA Secretariat, RECs and Member States co-organised an expert meeting in March 2023 to make policy recommendations on how to accelerate the ratification of the flagship in support of the implementation of AfCFTA.

II. Working to prevent irregular migration, enhance cooperation against smuggling and trafficking in human beings

Examples of progress to date:

- Two Team Europe Initiatives to combat illegal migration routes were launched in December 2022, focusing on the *Atlantic/Western Mediterranean* and the *Central Mediterranean routes* with overall funding of EUR 2 billion.
 - EUR 675 million EU-Tunisia Memorandum of Understanding, signed in July 2023, for a strategic and comprehensive partnership, which includes EUR 105 million allocated for migration management, including anti-smuggling operations.
- EU's *Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF)* has funded over 250 projects for a total value of EUR 5 billion over the past six years with its main purpose to address the root causes of migration, fight against irregular migration and promote the return and reintegration of migrants.
 - The NDICI-funded *Migrant Protection, Return and Reintegration (MPRR)* programme, implemented by IOM, responds to the needs of stranded and vulnerable migrants along migratory routes in African countries, through protection assistance, assisted voluntary return as well as reintegration support.

Coupled with the EUTF, other projects and policies include:

- *Renewed EU Action Plan* against migration smuggling from the period of 2021-2025 aims to strengthen cooperation and information sharing between EU countries and law enforcement agencies to investigate and prosecute smuggling networks.
- The *Africa-Frontex Intelligence Community (AFIC)* created in 2017, ended its project in 2023 to jointly identify key threats to effective border management in Africa. Project

outcomes have been handed over to border police analysts, which include the risk analysis cells of eight countries: Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo. Cooperation between the AFIC countries is foreseen to continue through workshops, plenary meetings, trainings, and other trainings in the future.

Funded under the EU's national and regional 2021-2027 financial envelopes, several actions and initiatives were launched covering all aspects of migration and mobility including:

- Migration management and preventing irregular migration (e.g., various measures under the EC's *Action Plan for the Central Mediterranean*);
- Return, readmission and sustainable reintegration (including a EUR 170 million regional programme on migrant protection and voluntary return and reintegration);
- Cooperation against the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings (e.g., *Anti-Smuggling Operational Partnership* with Niger; regional anti-smuggling actions);
- Addressing forced displacement (e.g., regional actions for Sub-Saharan African on durable solutions, climate-induced displacement and urban displacement, amongst others, as well as the emergency transit mechanisms for evacuations from Libya to Niger and Rwanda);
- Strengthening asylum systems; cooperation on border management (through several programmes covering security and border management);
- Legal pathways (e.g., various mobility initiatives including *Erasmus+*; preparation of possible talent partnerships);
- Investment in skills, education and employment prospects, notably of youth and women.

III. Deepening cooperation in finding durable solutions for asylum seekers, refugees, and vulnerable migrants

Examples of progress to date:

- The *Taskforce* met on 1 November 2022 and 20 March 2023. The following commitments were made:
 - Increase engagement and alignment across multilateral forums and enhance EU-AU cooperation on helping Libyan refugees together with the UN.
 - Reaffirm step-up efforts to further support the development of non-discriminatory legal and policy frameworks for migrants and refugees, based on international and AU standards and human rights, with the aim of protecting and saving lives along the migratory routes and particularly in Libya.
 - Enhanced use of *Emergency Transit Mechanisms* in Niger and Rwanda, reiterating the need for coordinated support from the international community to ensure safe and regular pathways for migrants.

IV. Addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement and enhance cooperation on tackling all issues related to migration

Examples of progress to date:

- Various programmes funded through NDICI-GE across three pillars: geographic programmes, thematic programmes and rapid response actions; and coupled with EFSD+, which provides an integrated financial package including grants, budgetary guarantees and other financial instruments.
- The AU signed a three-year agreement with the IOM to focus on key areas of governance, continue addressing the root causes of irregular migration, and engage in thematic research as part of the migration intersectionality.

This reinforced the aims of the AU's *Migration Policy Framework for Africa (MPFA)* and *Plan of Action* for the period of 2018-2030.

- Scaled up policy and programming in the field of displacement and migration related to disasters, climate change, and environmental degradation Update on Migration Partnership Facility: the MPF has launched 49 projects involving 18 EU Member States and 12 Partner Countries in Africa (out of 24 Partner Countries in total).

V. Further developing pathways for legal migration opportunities between both continents and within Africa

Examples of progress to date:

- With a budget of 9.88 billion EUR for 2021-2027, the *Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)* was established to fund a range of initiatives including resettlement, humanitarian admission and transfers, integration measures, and infrastructures for the reception of third country nationals.
- *Migration Partnership Facility (MPF)*, first launched in 2016, has since launched 48 projects in collaboration with 16 EU Member States and 8 Partner Countries in Africa (out of 16 Partner Countries in total). The MPF continues to manage projects dedicated to supporting mobility schemes between EU and Partner Countries to support youth employment and strengthen cross-border partnerships.
- In April 2022, the EU adopted the Skills and Talent package that aims to address labour

market needs linked to current demographic trends and skill shortages in the EU. The package includes legal, operational and policy initiatives, such as the *New Talent Partnerships*, mobility schemes for work or training at all skill levels, anchored in broader cooperation on migration management. Talent Partnerships have been launched with Morocco, Egypt and Tunisia and under preparation with Nigeria and Senegal. The Talent Partnerships aim to combine direct support for mobility schemes for work or training with capacity building and investment in human capital, including skills development, technical and vocational education and training and work-based exchange schemes. The aim of these actions is to ensure a proportionate win for partner countries, EU member states, business communities on both sides, and those individuals who benefit from the partnerships.

- An Assessment of *Legal Labour Migration Frameworks* in Africa was updated in 2023 with support from the AU, ILO, IOM and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). The continental assessment lauded the efforts of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Ministerial Employment and Labour Committee and the COMESA Business Council (CBC)- for the consistent engagement through policy dialogues and sharing of best practices for the former, and proposals on the gradual elimination of visa requirements within the COMESA region for the latter. Progress is also underway with COMESA and ILO's work within the *Southern Africa Migration Management Programme (SAMM)*, focused on labour migration and the development of regional databases.
- Support will continue at regional level through a comprehensive programme to maximise the development potential of free movement of persons and migration within a more secure and rights-based ECOWAS in the context of the regional integration process.

VI. Addressing challenges posed by the brain drain, and investing in youth and women

Examples of progress to date:

- During the 6th Summit, the EU *Opportunity-driven Skills and VET in Africa* was announced aiming to improve access to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) throughout the continent. The EU Commission provided funding for pilot projects in seven countries to develop TVET curricula and provide training for teachers and instructors.
- Ethiopia, Togo, and Ghana have made steps to developing its TVET ecosystem with special priority given to core sectors such as agriculture, tourism and manufacturing. These efforts will be key to boosting growth and facilitating economic and social growth.
- September - October 2023, the second call for the EU *SIFA Innovation Window III* was launched to continue supporting innovative approaches to skills development and *TVET projects* in Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Togo and Tunisia. Thematic areas focus on digital tools and skills, women's entrepreneurship, and training innovation in informal sectors particularly for vulnerable people.