



Council of the European Union
General Secretariat

Brussels, 11 February 2021

WK 1925/2021 INIT

LIMITE

JAI

ASIM

MIGR

COAFR

MAMA

RELEX

WORKING PAPER

This is a paper intended for a specific community of recipients. Handling and further distribution are under the sole responsibility of community members.

MEETING DOCUMENT

From:	ES delegation
To:	Strategic Committee on Immigration, Frontiers and Asylum
Subject:	Non paper from the Spanish delegation "Spanish Proposal for a Toolbox for Comprehensive Migration Approach in the Maghreb, Sahel and West African Countries"

Spanish Proposal for a Toolbox for Comprehensive Migration Approach in the Maghreb, Sahel and West African Countries

February 2021

Mobility and migration are natural phenomena that can be a vector for socio-economic advancement when made in a safe, orderly and regular manner and in collaboration among countries of origin, transit and destination.

However, forced displacement of people, through irregular human trafficking and smuggling by criminal networks, provokes loss of lives, social and economic suffering both for migrants and their families and stress on host societies and on the political dialogue of the countries of origin, transit and destination of migrations. More importantly, it also damages human dignity. These enormous challenges jeopardize the development, stability and security of all those societies.

In recent years, Member States in the Southern external border of the European Union have become one of the main external destinations for irregular migration to Europe and are disproportionately affected by this, although the well-known consequences affect all EU countries.

Spain considers that facing this challenge must be a priority in the programming of the next multiannual financial framework, with a Team Europe approach, as a means to collectively implement the EU external dimension of the Commission Proposal for a new Pact on Migration and Asylum, the Comprehensive Strategy with Africa, the post-Cotonou framework and the NDICI.

Cooperation in the field of migration and development in the Maghreb, Sahel and West Africa has been notably reinforced in recent years, especially since La Valetta Summit in 2015. It has been made primarily through the EU Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) which has been of great benefit to the alliance among the EU, its Member States and particularly the countries on the Western African coast to fight against illegal migration and migrant smuggling networks.

In this geographic area the 2005-2006 migratory crisis proved to Spain that the fight against irregular migration required a stable and lasting effort in the medium- and long-term. In a broader context the 2015 migratory and asylum crisis proved to the EU that an all-embracing approach is essential. We collectively engaged accordingly through La Valletta Process, with a truly Team Europe spirit.

Migration is a structural fact in the EU relations with its Southern neighbourhood, Sahel and West Africa and opportunities and challenges alike will continue to be present. Consequently, in the new financial and political framework of the EU we must reset our comprehensive migratory approach.

On contents it should cover the whole range of cooperation activities, i.e. development cooperation projects, innovative programmes in legal migration management, or

reinforcement of operational and institutional capabilities of local security forces in the dismantling of trafficking networks.

In financial terms, the draft NDICI provides that 10% of the funds of the instrument should be dedicated to migration actions, but the modalities in which to frame these actions are still to be defined.

Since the EUTF will finish at the end of 2021 it is therefore necessary to ensure a sound financial instrument that addresses the needs in a comprehensive manner, ideally with its own flexible and reactive governance vehicle, in line with the approach set out in the Commission Proposal for a new Pact on Migration and Asylum. The EUTF has been a successful mechanism, mainly because of its flexibility and capacity of adaptation to urgent needs or demands by partners and it can serve as an inspiration.

In this context, Spain proposes a **toolbox for a comprehensive migration approach**: a package of actions that combines measures with an effective and short-term impact on flows and migratory management and others that address medium and long-term development challenges with an impact on migration. A **Team Europe approach on Migration** would allow the EU and its Member States to work together in order to achieve bigger, better and more tangible results, to the benefit of all. The proposed approach should be:

- a) A **multi-country approach** for Maghreb, Sahel and West African countries of origin and transit in the Western Mediterranean and Atlantic routes.
- b) A **comprehensive approach** that addresses four main axes:
 - i) Support for development programmes in economic, environment, climate, security and human rights areas; promotion of youth education, integration and reception of migrants in countries of transit and destination and of returnees in countries of origin, and good practices in orderly migration in general.
 - ii) Capacity building and operational support for migration management on the ground through locally based liaison officers, joint investigation teams, information exchange, training opportunities in order to build operational level confidence and trust, as well as direct funding.
 - iii) Promotion of security and stability for development to prevent human displacement.
 - iv) Enhanced policy dialogue with migratory partners, including through bilateral dialogue and partnerships as well as in the framework of the updated Rabat Process, backed with the aforementioned and other specific regional actions.
- c) A **comprehensive and partnership friendly approach** that involves all relevant stakeholders and enhances ownership on the ground.
- d) A **result-oriented approach** guided by the following principles for action: sustainability, complementarity, coherence, “europeaness”, comprehensiveness, win-win approach and transformative impact.

In order to assure the best effectiveness possible, these actions should be channelled through a combined use of **instruments** in accordance to the external action of the EU, including development cooperation, humanitarian aid, operational cooperation on the ground, direct budgetary support, financial cooperation and political dialogue.

A significant package of European **funding** over the period 2021-2027 would provide continuity in the work with partner countries. Budget support to countries of origin and transit has proven an extremely useful instrument for enhancing capabilities and obtaining increased cooperation. A specific financial package to State institutions with direct competence in the fight against illegal migration would also be required in order to ensure availability of funding for operational expenses related to the fight against illegal migration, as Spain already does in Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal and Gambia through bilateral programmes. These funds could also be supplemented by Member States.

Spain would be ready to mobilise an important funding package over the next years. The Spanish migration and development experience and capacity of dialogue with third countries in the regions referred can also play a major role.

Spain is aware that cooperation cannot solve in itself all the extraordinary complex and multidimensional challenges of contemporary migration, but it can actively contribute to make safe, orderly and regular migration a true common endeavour between the EU and its partner countries transforming the vicious circle of non-voluntary irregular migration into a virtuous circle for the benefit of all: migrants and their families and origin, transit and destination countries.