

EU Neighbourhoods

Composed of countries with very diverse characteristics, the region of the EU Neighbourhood shares a close relationship with the EU, based not only on shared borders, but also on the increasingly shared objectives and standards for the governance of migration expressed through the EU Neighbourhood Policy, developed in 2004 and revised in 2015 to better address migration and mobility.

Migration trends in EU Neighbourhood countries

In the Southern Neighbourhood, North African countries have traditionally been countries of emigration towards European countries and the Gulf States. Currently, of over ten million North Africans living abroad, around five million live in Europe (mainly Algerians, Tunisians and Moroccans) and three million in Persian Gulf countries (mainly Egyptians and Libyans). Maghreb countries are also an important transit area for flows from Sub-Saharan Africa towards Europe, and more recently transit and destination for Libyan and Syrian asylum seekers. In Middle Eastern countries, forced displacement has been a major issue in recent years. At the end of 2016, countries in the Middle East hosted over 45% of all refugees globally, with Jordan and Lebanon playing a crucial role in receiving refugees from Syria.¹

The Eastern Neighbourhood is the origin of important emigration flows that have the EU and most importantly the Russian Federation as its primary destinations. Civil conflict in Ukraine has reinforced this trend with renewed flows of forced migration.

Overall, two main drivers of migration can be identified in the EU Neighbourhood: the search for better economic and work opportunities, and forced displacement. These movements can sometimes take the form of irregular migration and in some dramatic cases end up in trafficking.

¹ International Organization for Migration, *World Migration Report 2018*, Geneva 2018, pp. 64-65. Available at: www.iom.int/wmr/world-migration-report-2018



The EU entertains a privileged relationship with the countries of its neighbourhood, especially on the basis of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), which identifies some key issues as cooperation priorities in terms of migration, from support to asylum seekers, addressing the root causes of migration and displacement, to better cooperation on return, readmission and reintegration, the identification of skills gaps in order to facilitate reciprocally beneficial labour migration, as well as student and academic mobility.²

The achievement of ENP objectives is also supported by bilateral Action Plans and multilateral cooperation initiatives (Eastern Partnership in the East, and the Union for the Mediterranean in the South). In addition, many countries of the EU Neighbourhood have signed Mobility Partnerships (MPs) with the EU since 2008,³ as well as visa facilitation and readmission agreements, while in some concrete cases visa liberalisation has been granted (Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine).

According to MIEUX's experience, the following are the primary opportunities and challenges related to migration and mobility for the States in this geographical area.

² For further information: European Commission (EC)-High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy, *Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy*, Brussels, 18.11.2015, JOIN(2015) 50 final, pp. 15-17.

Available at: www.ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/neighbourhood/pdf/key-documents/151118_joint-communication_review-of-the-enp_en.pdf

³ Instrument created under the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM), MPs provide a flexible and non-legally binding framework for the management of migration and mobility between the EU and third countries. MPs signed with EU Neighbourhood countries are: Moldova (2008); Georgia (2009); Armenia (2011); Azerbaijan (2013); Morocco (2013); Tunisia (2014); Jordan (2014); and Belarus (2016).

Countering irregular migration and managing borders:

On the one hand, some countries in the region still have limited capacities in terms of border management, on the other hand, their geographical proximity with areas of migration outflows and with the EU, with which many countries have signed important agreements, make them important irregular migration transit routes.

Addressing trafficking in accordance with international standards and practices:

Trafficking in human beings (THB) is a key challenge for many EU Neighbourhood countries, as origin, transit and destination of trafficking in-flows. With many other vulnerable categories (women, children, etc.), irregular migrants are at particular risk of becoming victims of trafficking.

Developing and managing data and information on migration:

Many Neighbourhood countries have decided to improve their data collection and analysis mechanisms in line with a worldwide trend.

Enhanced management of labour migration:

Indeed, since labour migration is an important phenomenon for the region, many countries have taken steps to enhance their capacities in managing it.

Harmonisation with EU standards (MP, visa facilitation, etc.):

Due to the proximity and key shared challenges with Europe in the field of human mobility, harmonisation with EU standards have become an important trend in migration governance for EU Neighbourhood countries.

Migration and development, with a special focus on diasporas:

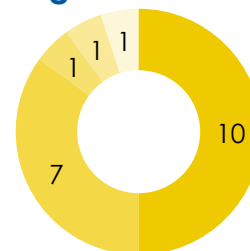
Countries of the EU Neighbourhood have important diaspora communities in Europe and around the world, and their remittances represent an important share of the national gross domestic product (GDP) (up to 20.5% in Moldova and 14.5% in Lebanon).⁴ Relationships with diasporas and their economic, social, cultural and human contribution to development in their countries of origin can still be further fostered.

⁴ World Bank, *World Remittances Data*, Updated December 2018. Available at: www.worldbank.org/en/topic/migrationremittancesdiasporaissues/brief/migration-remittances-data .

MIEUX in the EU Neighbourhoods

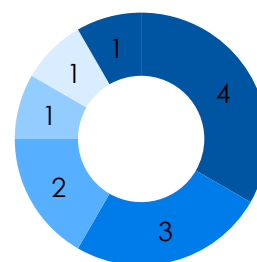
Since 2009, MIEUX has implemented 14 Actions in the EU Neighbourhood. The majority of them have focused on horizontal issues, such as public relations, communication and data management and irregular migration and trafficking. Other key topics such as labour migration, international protection, and asylum and migration policies have also been addressed.

MIEUX Actions in the EU Neighbourhood



- Horizontal interventions
- Irregular Migration and Trafficking in Human Beings
- Migration and Development
- International Protection and Asylum
- Legal Migration

Thematic areas within horizontal interventions



- Public Relations and Communication
- Data Management
- Migration Policy and Strategy Development
- Migration Legislation
- Human Rights
- Training and Capacity Development



Through its experience in this area, MIEUX has been able to support EU Neighbourhood countries in addressing key challenges while fostering better migration governance at national or trans-national levels. Below is a selection of some of the interventions that have taken place since MIEUX's inception.

Moldova (2017 – 2019)

Objective To reinforce the operational capacity of the Border Police Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in communicating more effectively with the public, in particular civil society, on irregular migration

Result Communication plan for media crisis situations

Azerbaijan (2011-2012)

Objective To strengthen the capacities of Azerbaijan's relevant authorities to fight against irregular migration

Result Report highlighting the main gaps and needs of the national migration framework, and formulation of a set of recommendations with regard to the enhancement of domestic migration legislation

Jordan (2016 – ongoing)

Objective Developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to enhance staff operations and services for two shelters for Victims of Trafficking in Amman

Result Standard Operating Procedures

Tunisia (2012 – ongoing)

Objective To contribute to the improvement of migration management and policies in Tunisia by building capacities on evidence-based policies.

Result Analysis of gaps and needs, and a set of recommendations to enhance migration data management in Tunisia

Belarus (2016 – 2018)

Objective To contribute to supporting the Belarusian authorities in enhancing the management of labour migration, with a special focus on the legal framework

Result Report analysing Belarus's Legislation on External Labour Migration and provision of a set of recommendations to enhance it in line with international standards

Eastern Partnership I and II

Objective I: To introduce the Justice and Home Affairs's vision and priorities under the external dimension of the Stockholm Programme to the EU Eastern Partnership Countries

II: to provide a platform of consultations and exchange of practices in the field of migration between EU and EP countries.

Result Two regional conferences and an international roundtable discussion to identify key issues for future cooperation among Eastern Partnership countries

Enhanced migration governance in the EU Neighbourhoods: the way forward

Dramatic events have been linked to migration phenomena in the EU Southern Neighbourhood region in recent years. However, important developments have also shed a different light on human mobility in these regions, for example, the strong willingness shown by some States to enhance their migration governance frameworks by



promoting legal migration channels. In this context, according to MIEUX's experience, the points below would consolidate such efforts.

Further addressing the reality of mixed migration flows: Especially in the Southern Mediterranean, asylum seekers, economic migrants and trafficked people frequently travel side by side along the same migration routes in "mixed migration flows". It is key for public authorities dealing with migrants to build an approach able to recognise and address the complexity and multi-dimensionality of these flows, both in order to guarantee the respect and protection of their human rights and to support the effectiveness of migration management responses.

Further engage in the development of a clear and common understanding, standards and approach at national and international levels to address trafficking: Despite a sincere commitment to fight trafficking and protecting its victims, a shared understanding of what is THB, and how to address it, also according to international standards, could be further fostered in some countries. Capacity building initiatives and sharing of experiences at international level to align with international standards and practices might therefore prove essential. For instance, in Jordan, MIEUX is working closely with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and other international organisations to develop internationally organised Standard Operating Procedures for two reception shelters in Amman.

Strengthen coordinated data collection and sharing, also through a specific institution dealing with migration data: In many countries, one key obstacle in building evidence-based migration policies is the unavailability of data on migration. In many cases, different institutions, organisations or agencies produce migration-related data in their respective fields of competence, but frequently these outputs are not shared and assembled together to produce a comprehensive picture of human mobility. Therefore, strengthening coordination mechanisms for data sharing among relevant stakeholders or initiatives aimed at creating or strengthening institutions with specific responsibilities on migration data (like the MIEUX-supported Tunisian Observatory on Migration) could also be considered.

Further foster the harmonisation of national laws and policies with international standards and legal instruments: Migrant workers find themselves in a position of exclusion and vulnerability and are frequently subject to discriminatory employment practices and abuse. The ratification and implementation of international standards and legal instruments from International Labour Organization (ILO) can strongly support a fairer and human rights-based governance of labour migration. MIEUX has worked on an Action in Belarus to support national authorities in assessing the ratification of ILO Convention 97 (Migration for Employment Convention) of 1949.

Enhance cooperation between the EU, EU MS and EU Neighbourhood countries in the field of migration and development: Diaspora communities are an important resource for development and therefore further avenues to involve them should be explored. The EU and EU countries could be instrumental in supporting this also from an operational point of view. For instance, stronger partnerships between countries of origin and destination in the EU could improve the mapping of diaspora communities.

Further support a peer-to-peer approach to allow exchange on migration issues between the EU, EU Member States and EU Neighbourhood countries: As already mentioned above, exchange on migration issues and alignment towards common standards are an integral part of the close relationship between the EU and EU Neighbourhood Countries. In this sense, a peer-to-peer approach to capacity building is beneficial, as it allows both: a) support to partner countries in their efforts to strengthen their migration governance frameworks; b) the building on trust, partnership and mutual learning. Through such an approach, in the last ten years, MIEUX has been fostering enhanced migration governance and strengthened partnership between the EU and EU Neighbourhood countries.

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