

6th Ministerial Conference of the Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development

13-14 December 2022
Cadiz, Spain

Discussion paper

Round Table 1: "Common opportunities and challenges arising from migration and mobility for Rabat Process countries"

Introduction

Migration dialogues are essential to foster political discussions, enhance inter-state dialogue and build mutual trust. For more than a decade, the Rabat Process has established itself as a successful and unique framework for consultation and cooperation on migration and mobility within which concrete initiatives reflecting the political will and priorities expressed by the partner countries can be implemented.

During the period 2018-2022, the Rabat Process has organised a rich array of technical and political meetings (virtual, hybrid or face-to-face) covering the entire spectrum of the Marrakesh Programme. The themes chosen reflect the importance the Dialogue partners attach to topics such as the root causes of migration, the migration and development nexus, remittances, labour migration, border management, the fight against human trafficking and migrant smuggling or return and reintegration. Several cross-cutting priorities defined under the Marrakesh Political Declaration were also addressed with the organisation of the first-ever thematic meetings on climate change and migration, and the role of local authorities and cities, alongside national authorities, in migration governance.

In addition, several knowledge tools were developed, such as studies, research papers, assessments and concrete recommendations aimed at enabling Dialogue partners' evidenced-based decision making and supporting the formulation of projects and technical programmes.

The Dialogue has also adopted increasingly operational working methods by developing innovative tools, such as "labelled" initiatives and actions led by the reference countries, introducing scenario-building workshops on future mixed migration, increasing synergies and collaboration with other migration dialogues and stakeholders (in particular cities and local authorities, civil society organisations and the private sector), and strengthening its communication strategy to the wider public.

The Rabat Process has also made significant progress in the area of governance to strengthen the ownership and involvement of all partner countries in the Dialogue, by endorsing the principle of enlarging the Steering Committee and introducing the reference countries' system.

All these activities and thematic exchanges have been carried out with the aim of finding appropriate and coordinated approaches to better address all aspects of migration and mobility in countries of origin, transit and destination.

With this same objective in mind, the Dialogue partner countries are preparing to adopt, at the Ministerial Conference on 13-14 December 2022 in Cadiz, the next multi-annual programme that will guide cooperation between the partner countries for the next five years (2023-2027). In their draft Political Declaration and Action Plan, the partner countries recognise that only a comprehensive and coordinated approach can ensure the success of our collective actions in the face of the complexity of the phenomenon of international migration and asylum. They also reiterate their concern about the consequences of protracted crises, conflicts, wars and irregular migratory movements, and their impact on increasing the vulnerabilities of migrants and refugees.

The Rabat Process region is currently facing several challenges. The continuing COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences on global migration movements, reducing human mobility and increasing vulnerabilities of migrants and refugees; the Russian-Ukrainian crisis and cascading effects on world economy, food and energy; the multiple effects of climate change, natural disasters and natural resource degradation; the escalating security, nutrition and food crisis, and threats to human development in West and Central Africa which continues to trigger massive population displacement in the region; the rapid population growth across the African continent and manifold implications, especially among young people, etc. Faced with these various challenges and the complexity of the migration phenomenon, a global, balanced, integrated and multidimensional approach between all the partner countries of the Rabat Process must be sought in order to achieve lasting and sustainable solutions.

Guiding questions

In this context, Ministers of the Rabat Process partner countries come together to exchange on their policy priorities in the field of migration. The 6th Ministerial Conference of the Rabat Process shall allow for an open debate to identify ways to tackle migration challenges in a joint manner through increased partnership and cooperation at bilateral and multilateral level.

The following questions will guide the discussions of the Round Table:

1. What are the main challenges, policy priorities and needs of your country in the field of migration?
2. What are the migration related implications of the multiple crises for your country specifically? Are there any policy responses you would like to share?
3. What role can migration partnerships and policy dialogues such as the Rabat Process play in addressing current and upcoming challenges in a coordinated way?

