

**THE EUROPEAN UNION PLAN FOR EXTERNAL INVESTMENTS
IN AFRICA, IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION AND IN THE NEAR EAST
IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE MIGRATIONS AGENDA**

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PART II - RECOMMENDATIONS
***concerning the proposal – COM (2016) 586 final – for a
Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council***

1. There is a clear link between development's problems and migrations and this link involves millions of people. It has at the same time started - and it will widen in the coming years - a new international mobility, associated to the globalization and to the spreading of information via web. This new mobility finds unprepared both the EU and the individual member states. This Plan for External Investments, which is undoubtedly positive, should represent the first beginning of political and strategic choices able to tackle, without further delays, the whole management of the migratory phenomenon.
2. Being part of the new partnership framework with third countries within the European Agenda on migrations, the external investments plan will have to maintain a close relationship with the European development and neighbouring policies, with a clear leadership of the Commission and of the High Representative. The political and diplomatic dimensions and the partnership are extremely relevant and have the priority vis a vis the financial perspective, which is in any case indispensable. Furthermore, investments and employment creation are fundamental dimensions of the development policy, albeit not the only one. There is in fact no development without education, access to health care, social cohesion, environmental sustainability, social and economic justice. Everything has therefore to be closely linked to global policies for development, poverty eradication, sustainability, with a unified political leadership and with coherent specific evaluations on the additionality for development, results and impact.
3. The effectiveness of the plan will greatly depend on the entrepreneurship initiative, the motivation to "make enterprise", being aware of the possibility to answer to an actual need and to achieve profit investing in order to reach the best results, accepting the financial risk and challenges with an ethically inspired approach, respecting the person and the environment. This is requested also by the third pillar of the plan, addressed to promote in the partner country a dynamic and reliable entrepreneurial environment, which would remain uncompleted without explicit rules and modalities of investment, to be verified. The Commission should adopt the OCSE guidelines for international investments, that are already binding for all the OCSE member countries. The endorsement of these guidelines is compulsory also for reasons of coherence with the aims of the plan and the Agenda 2030 of the sustainable development goals.
4. The sectors of intervention of the plan are very wide. It is recommended to stress more the following areas: agriculture, reforestation, valorisation of uncultivated lands, contrast to land grabbing where the grabbing of huge extensions of lands leads to the impoverishment of local productions and the loss of control and access for the communities, the concession of legalised ownership rights in favour of local communities.
5. Although it is explicit in the concept of partnership, the regulation should identify the level of effective participation of partner countries to the governance of investment plans related to them, in the spirit of co-ownership, in line with the commitments to partnership of the Paris Declaration. These principles call for the participation of the partner country and the alignment to the national development context.
6. The forms of the financial participation in accordance with the possibilities of the partner countries should be also considered as integral parts of the overall blending strategy to cover the investments.
7. The principle "more for more" will have to include always the commitment of the partner countries to human rights, gender equality and valorisation of local communities. In more general terms, the

whole European plan for external investments will have to put these themes at the centre of its implementation, considering the fact that migration is also originated by their denial.

8. The guarantees system has a relevant leverage impact, encouraging also interventions in risky countries. In order to promote investments from SMEs, that are particularly appropriate to foster widespread entrepreneurship development at territorial level, the said guarantees should also be tailored for small investments and for reasonably long periods, considering the market's constraints faced by these enterprises.
9. It is believed to be particularly useful the presence, as observers in the strategic and operational bodies, of qualified representatives from the civil society – of partner countries and Europe –to ensure greater guarantee on the reliable economic and social effectiveness of the investments and to highlight and promote any possible synergy between the corporate and the civil society actions. The latter have networks of relationships with local communities where they operate and can drive the “for profit” system to respect the requisites of social and economic sustainability, the human and labour rights, the communities' s aspirations and therefore to respond comprehensively and permanently to the needs of partner countries. This, with the full recognition of the fact that only working as a system it is possible to foster, in political and social contexts characterised by high complexities, durable positive and effective results.
10. The plan should therefore encourage also the bilateral cooperation systems of the member states to promote a strong participation of their international cooperation entities, through the partnership with similar entities in partner countries involved in the external investments plan.
11. Considering the news and the weight of the investments plan, which could grow significantly after the first four years, it should be envisaged a more careful and widespread communication able to reach the enterprises – including the SMEs -, the civil society organizations, the European citizens, in order to promote the knowledge of the initiative and of its results.