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MIGRATORY MANAGEMENT IN MOROCCO
– WHAT DO THE STAKEHOLDERS THINK?

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ABSTRACT

The transformation of Morocco from a country of emigration to a country of immigration has changed the migratory profile of the country since the 1990s. Morocco has become a country of origin, transit but also destination. In this context, migration-related issues are mostly associated with the presence of immigrants, whereby migration is framed through a securitizing approach. In the framework of this securitizing representation of migration, this paper aims to present and analyse the perspectives of stakeholders operating in the field of migration in Morocco, by intersecting the viewpoints of governmental and para-governmental stakeholders, CSOs and migrants. The analysis of these diverse perspectives allows us to better understand the place of migration in North–South (EU–Morocco) relations.

In memory of Noureddine Harrami (1965-2018)

INTRODUCTION

Migration and mobility represent a field of governance that is becoming increasingly vital and very controversial at the same time in terms of Euro-Mediterranean relations. The EU grants significant funding to enable Morocco to strengthen its migratory policy, particularly with regard to migrants hailing from the South. This Euro-Mediterranean cooperation was for the longest time characterized by fundamentally divergent points of view, interests and approaches. Cooperation between the EU and Morocco in the field of migration is founded on several approaches. One of these, the readmission-based approach, is perceived as an efficient solution for addressing bilateral cooperation limitations (El Qadim 2015). Within this perspective, EU countries exert pressure on Morocco and other southern Mediterranean countries to approve the establishment of detention centres. Negotiation between Morocco and the EU is not an end in itself, but rather an avenue whereby Morocco seeks to achieve autonomy in terms of migration management (El Qadim 2015).

It is in this complex context that MEDRESET Work Package 7 (WP7) aims to examine the overlaps and differences when attempting to understand and evaluate EU policies in terms of migratory cooperation in the Mediterranean, while examining the perspectives and priorities of stakeholders in Europe and countries south of the Mediterranean. Thus, the aim is to identify contradictions, conflicts or even convergences with current EU policies. Because of that, our

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study about Morocco analyses the policy frames of Moroccan stakeholders concerning the issue of migration and mobility, as well as EU policies in this field.

As described in detail in the MEDRESET WP7 methodology and concept paper (Roman et al. 2017), our analysis is based on the role of "policy frames" (Bleich 2002, Scholten 2011) or "policy narratives" (Boswell et al. 2011), which guide policy-making processes in the field of migration. Drawing upon Boswell et al. (2011), we look at the structure of policy frames as encompassing the definition of the policy issue, usually involving claims regarding the size and nature of the migration-related issue, the causes of the issue and how these causes can be manipulated by political and economic interventions, and finally the solutions suggested by migration stakeholders.

Using this global dynamic framework, our study provides an assessment of migration-related issues from the perspective of stakeholders, through two interview rounds. The first round, based on semi-structured interviews, was intended to provide an overview of the migratory issue in the Mediterranean. The second consisted of interviews conducted with a specific number of participants, already involved in the first phase, to confront and encourage them to react to the major results of the first series of interviews. Based on this premise, the analysis of migration policy frames in Morocco relies heavily on the information collected through recursive consultations with several stakeholders.

This work first presents the Moroccan migratory profile and its legal, political and institutional framework. Secondly, we seek to understand how Moroccan stakeholders represent the Mediterranean region in general and how they frame migration within a broader political context. In the core part of this paper, we analyse how migration-related policy issues are framed and how stakeholders assess the existing policy responses, focusing in particular on European policies. The final section of the study presents potential policy implications, future developments, and desired improvements relevant to EU–Morocco cooperation in the field of migration.

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON MOROCCO'S MIGRATION PROFILE AND LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 MIGRATION PROFILE

In Morocco's modern history, international migration seems like a somewhat old phenomenon. It is tied to the colonial history of North Africa, in the sense that the first colonial power in the region, France, initiated significant outflows (workers and military) and inflows (settlers) in the country. Migration had eventually two objectives: on the one hand, to solve the problem of manpower in host countries, and on the other to solve the demographic issue in Maghreb countries in general. These countries had witnessed a steep increase in population in the post-colonial period. Without considering the historic evolution of this migration, we will focus on the two dynamics of this migration, namely migration inflows and outflows.

1.1.1 OUTWARD MIGRATION

Standing at 3,300,000 people, Moroccan emigrants constitute 10 per cent of the Moroccan population. In 2009–2010, 106,000 people had crossed the Moroccan borders to settle abroad (HPC 2011). While Europe – France, Spain and Italy in particular – remain the top destinations, North America is once again a significant host space for Moroccans. Studies conducted in recent years show a diversification of regions of origin. The traditional form of migration, which is manpower mobility, continues particularly towards Europe, despite the quasi-total lack of official demand for Moroccan manpower. In 2009–2010, 30 per cent of recorded departures were driven by the search for jobs (HPC 2011). Such migrations are in their majority made illegal since the introduction of more stringent migratory policies in Morocco and Europe. In parallel to this traditional form of migration, outgoing mobility reveals other configurations, of which we mention four.

- Migration as part of family reunification: This migration was beneficial to migrants who had previously settled in Europe. It altered the migratory objective by allowing the shift from temporary and circular migration to fixation. Family reunification had incidentally led to the rejuvenation and feminization of the immigrant population. In 2009–2010, family reunification accounted for one fifth of observed departures (HPC 2011).
- Female emigration: This form of women's mobility, individual and autonomous, witnessed a significant development starting from the second half of the 1980s. It characterized the new mobility trends towards Spain, Italy and the Gulf countries before becoming the norm for historic destinations of Moroccans (France for example).
- Highly qualified migration: This migration is due to inherent factors tied to the professional, economic, social or political environments. Its development coincides with the redeployment in the North of a growth model relying heavily on skills hailing from the South. In the healthcare sector alone, the ministry in charge of migration affairs estimates that 6,000 Moroccan doctors practicing in Europe, which is the equivalent of the current deficit in doctors in the country.
- Student migration: The number-one destination is France, with 39,000 Moroccan students.² Other destinations are on the rise, such as Spain and Germany.

1.1.2 INWARD MIGRATION

In parallel to migration outflows, a new phenomenon has arisen in recent decades: return migration. It is in this framework that the High Commission of Planning conducted a study in 2010, which had as its objective to identify the nature of this migration of return, and the way in which these migrants see it: as temporary or permanent (Mghari 2010). These returns concerned in particular retired people, but since the global crisis they have affected also immigrants in financial difficulty. In 2009 and 2010, 20,000 people chose to return to Morocco (HPC 2011).

It is thus important to indicate that migration management in Morocco was diversified before what we call today migratory policy. Hence, while encouraging the return of Moroccan migrants to invest in the country, European immigration was also encouraged. This policy was bolstered

² In 2016–2017, 39,855 Moroccan students were enrolled in higher education institutions in France. See French Ministry of National Education (2018).

by local incentivizing policies (tourism, lack of visa). These migration inflows have been socially visible since the economic crisis of 2008. They are primarily related to three national groups: France, Spain and Italy (Therrien 2014, Mouna 2016).

Migration originating from sub-Saharan Africa is considered part of this context. This phenomenon is visible in different cities, from the south to Casablanca, Fez or Rabat and particularly in Tanger, Ceuta and Melilla, in the north of the country. It is a transit migration towards Europe, which shows today nevertheless signs of sedentarization. On top of this migration, a new migratory form is developing, migration from the Middle East.

These migration flows are primarily the result of the political and humanitarian situation in Syria. Most of these migrants are refugees. According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the number of registered refugees keeps increasing, from 3,000 in 2014 to 4,269 in 2016 and 5,069 in 2018 (UNHCR Morocco 2016, 2018). Syrians constitute the largest portion (59 per cent), followed by refugees from Yemen (12 per cent). The Ministry in charge of migration affairs confirms that in 2014 Morocco granted residence permits to approximately 5,000 Syrians, prioritizing women and children.

The evolution of migration, including outward migration of Moroccans, return migration, migration from countries of the North towards Morocco, and finally inward migration originating from the South and the Middle East, has transformed the country's migration profile. This transformation is seen at different levels. At the political level, the States, in the North and in the South, perceive this migration as threatening their social cohesion. At the level of the social perception of this migration, we noticed the rise of a racist political discourse in countries of the North, and the emergence of discriminatory practices against migrants in countries of the South, like Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia.

1.2 LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

1.2.1 NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Migration constitutes an actual economic source for Morocco. As the country struggles to mitigate the increase in its import bill, it can rely on the remittances of migrants. Emigration is not only a way to regulate the labour market; it is also a way to transfer money. Remittances amounted to over 62 billion dirhams in 2016, and 24.39 billion dirhams between January and May 2017. Morocco is in third position in the MENA region in terms of remittances, with Egypt and Lebanon in the first and second position respectively. The migration of 2.6 million Moroccans born in Morocco is considered as a relevant bargaining chip in the relationship with Europe. This migration is followed by an arsenal of religious, linguistic, socio-cultural and economic actions. The State in Morocco hopes to maintain and promote its ties to these migrants. To achieve this goal, Morocco established a crucial institutional apparatus in charge of managing Moroccan migration in the world. This apparatus is constituted by: (1) a Ministry in charge of affairs of Moroccans living abroad (established in the 1990s); (2) the Hassan II Foundation for Moroccans Residing Abroad (established in 1990); and (3) the Council of the Moroccan Community Abroad (established in 2007).

In parallel to managing migration outflows, and following the evolution of migration, Morocco set in place a policy to manage migration inflows, which varies depending on the origins of such flows. Thus, with regard to migration originating from the North (Harrami 2015), the State established a series of fiscal incentives to encourage retired people to come live in Morocco. These incentives are primarily intended for French retirees. As for migration flows originating from the South, such as transit migration heading to Europe, Morocco has tightened its migratory policy. Under pressure from the EU, "a national strategy to fight illegal immigration" was adopted in 2003. This strategy is based on two main pillars. The first is an institutional pillar, which consists in the establishment of the "National Migration Observatory" and mainly the "Migration and Frontiers Surveillance Department" with regional and local branches. This department established seven regional delegations to cover provinces constituting the main emigration areas. The second pillar is the legal one, manifested in adoption of Law 02-03 concerning the entry and residence of foreigners in the Kingdom of Morocco, and illegal emigration and immigration.³

These apparatuses are aligned with the repression exerted in Europe. However, since 2011, new approaches have emerged, which are more open to the issue of integration (MCMRE 2015). These approaches also coincide with a large social and political mobilization in Morocco, linked to the Arab Spring. The constitution change following the pressure exerted by the February 20 Movement led to the establishment of several apparatuses:

- the right to vote for foreigners in local elections;
- the expansion of the scope of action of the ministerial department for the management of Moroccan migration, in charge today of migration affairs in general, which include migration flows coming to Morocco;
- a process of legalization was launched in 2013 (Moroccan Ministry of the Interior and MCMRE 2013), instructed by the royal court, following recommendations submitted by the Human Rights National Council (CNDH 2013); and
- the development of an asylum law (not yet presented to the Parliament).

These transformations have resulted from a global change that influenced the public management of migration in a context characterized by a significant mobilization within civil society about the issue of migrants: the proliferation of organizations defending migrants, the involvement of the major trade unions in defending migrants, and the rise of migrant-led organizations. This mobilization revealed the ignorance of Moroccan political stakeholders about the issue of migration, in the sense that a law relevant to foreigners was approved in July 2003 without any favourable or unfavourable reaction by the political parties. Only minor leftist parties with ties to the human rights movement and some trade unions presented a series of queries and denounced the securitizing approach used to deal with the issue of transit migration.

1.2.2 INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Morocco ratified several conventions related to the migratory issue; these conventions aim to protect the rights of migrants from all forms of discrimination.

3 The text of this law is available in French. See Morocco (2003).

International instrument	Date of signature	Date of ratification	Reservations/ Interpretative declarations
Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951		7 Nov. 1956 (succession)	
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1965	18 Sept. 1967	18 Dec. 1970	
International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 1990	15 Aug. 1991	21 June 1993	Reservation regarding arbitration in case of dispute in interpretation or implementation*
ILO Migration for Employment Convention (Rev.), 1949 (C097)		Not ratified	
ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (C143)		Not ratified	

Note: * Morocco does not consider itself bound by Art. 92(1) of this Convention. See UN Treaty Collection website: https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-13&chapter=4&clang=_en#EndDec.

The first migration-related accords signed by Morocco aimed at simplifying the process of recruitment and movement of Moroccan manpower in Europe. These agreements, established in the 1960s with certain European countries (France, the Netherlands, Belgium), organized the import of Moroccan manpower into Europe during the reconstruction phase post-World War II (recruitment requirements of workers in Morocco by employers from countries in question, migrant rights, etc.). However, these agreements were suspended by receiving States with the 1973 oil crisis and the subsequent economic crisis affecting Europe. Morocco made similar accords with Arab countries, signed in the 1980s with Qatar, Iraq, United Arab Emirates, Jordan, and Libya (Khachani 2008).

The current period is characterized by the development of a new generation of conventions and agreements aiming to control migration and limit mobility. Thus, the EU/Morocco agreement signed in February 1996 (and put into effect in 2003) sets fighting illegal migration as a top priority (Alami-M'Chichi 2005). Morocco also signed readmission agreements with some European countries, which facilitate the repatriation of illegal Moroccan nationals and even make police collaboration possible (access to biometric data) to identify Moroccan nationals in an illegal situation (agreement with Belgium for example, signed in 2016). Certain accords, as is the case for the one signed with Spain, go even further by allowing for readmission by Moroccan authorities of any foreigner in an illegal situation intercepted in Spain, if it turns out that he/she transited through Morocco (signed in 1992, but only published in the official Moroccan gazette in 2013).⁴

4 See "Aplicación provisional del Acuerdo entre el Reino de España y el Reino de Marruecos relativo a la circulación de personas, el tránsito y la readmisión de extranjeros entrados ilegalmente, firmado en Madrid el 13 de febrero de 1992", in *Spain Official State Gazette*, No. 100 (19 April 1992), <https://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-1992-8976>, published in the Arabic edition of the Moroccan Official Gazette No. 6214 of 19 December 2013, http://81.192.52.100/BO/AR/2013/BO_6214_Ar.pdf.

2. FIELDWORK IN MOROCCO

Within the framework of this field study started in June 2017, we focused mainly on civil society stakeholders. Twenty-seven interviews were conducted, with stakeholders based in Rabat, Marrakech, Casablanca, Kenitra, Fez, Meknes and Laayoune. They were all conducted in person, with the exception of one NGO in Laayoune (in Western Sahara), where we used the WhatsApp mobile application. The interview duration varied between 30 and 90 minutes. The table below summarizes the types of stakeholder, the interviewees' gender and the level of their intervention, be it national or local.

Type of stakeholder	Interviewee gender		Level of organization intervention	
	Male	Female	National	Regional/local
Governmental	2	1	3	
Para-governmental	5		4	1
Human rights NGOs and related NGOs	4	1	4	1
Solidarity with migrants NGOs	1	1	1	1
Alter-globalization movements	1		1	
National trade union	1			1
International and transnational NGOs	2	2	1	3
Migrants' organizations	5		4	1
Migration research organization	1		1	
	22	5	19	8
Total	27		27	

3. A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF STAKEHOLDERS' FRAMES IN THE AREA OF MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

3.1 FRAMING MIGRATION AND ITS CAUSES

Based on the interviewees' discourse, we can evaluate the awareness of different stakeholders about migration. The governmental stakeholders tend to mention general issues and even vague ones related to migration. This discourse references the economy, competitiveness for investors, social issues related to education, healthcare, housing, and political issues related to sustainable development (Interview 1).

The para-governmental and non-governmental stakeholders provide an analysis that emphasizes the uneven development between South and North and its consequences on population stability, the closing of the borders of the North and the repression of mobility in the Euro-Mediterranean space. The central position of migration arises as a strategic issue for the country in its relations with the EU.

Contrary to para-governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, organizations established by sub-Saharan African nationals mention connivance between Europe and regimes described as authoritarian in the South. Europe is said to support these regimes in plundering the wealth of these countries, which maintains misery and instability and forces people to migrate. Migration seems the result of economic injustice between the global North and the South. In this view, the EU has constructed a discourse based on phobia of migration, which leads to the rise of racism, xenophobia and tensions related to identity.

The civil society stakeholders' discourse focuses on the issue of human rights and at the same time on the most vulnerable components of migration flows, which include women. We can identify in the discourse of stakeholders from "national" NGOs issues relevant to migration such as protection of migrant rights – "the regression of human rights leads to the rise of certain phenomena, namely displacement of populations under inhumane conditions, violent arrests that do not respect people's rights, including racism" (Interview 2) – and the fight against human trafficking. Other priorities were cited, in second position after migration or at the same level as migration issues, such as regional security, the issue of Western Sahara, the borders with Algeria and the generation of wealth.

For migrant stakeholders, the main political issue in the Mediterranean region is explicitly migration:

The prevailing issue around the Mediterranean basin is the mobility of migrants and also their situation and the causes that forced them to go on this journey. Evidently, the main issue is migration policy, the dispersion of migrants, and their situation in host countries, namely Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya. The situation in certain countries is unstable. But also, what would be their situation when they reach the other side of the Mediterranean? We should also find out why black people leave their countries. (Interview 3)

The para-governmental stakeholders indicated as the most pressing issues: migration, the harmonization of development in countries of the South, fight against poverty, managing mobility while respecting human rights, and "looking at migration as a source of wealth" (Interview 4). The human rights-focused discourse of the Council of the Moroccan Community Abroad (CCME) is primarily related to the culture of activists serving on the Council. It should be mentioned that the CCME sparked the first legalization campaign in Morocco. Para-governmental stakeholders consider that the source of these issues is the uneven development of the two sides of the Mediterranean. This uneven development, resulting from the region's colonial history, negatively influences vital sectors in the South, such as education, healthcare and employment. They estimate that the EU's primary focus is now the security and safety of its borders at the expense of development. In their opinion, the efforts and resources produced to control circulation could have been more efficient had they been spent on development.

State stakeholders focus their discourse on the consequences of migration on Morocco. In their opinion, the improvement of human resources is crucial for development and for strengthening the national economy. Thus, for governmental stakeholders, failing to establish sustainable development policies and closing borders prevent the circulation of knowledge, experiences and cultural exchange. Moroccan non-governmental stakeholders share the same views as the para-governmental ones. They mention economic causes including the

exploitation of resources by developed countries and multinational corporations, the spread of unrestrained liberalism, excessive debts of countries of the South, uneven distribution of wealth, youth unemployment and poverty. They also mention what they consider political causes, chiefly the absence of democracy in countries of the South.

Migrants mention the causes leading to their departure, focusing on the plundering of the wealth of the South by the economic forces of the North, and the complacency of the countries of the North towards non-democratic regimes in countries of origin. In expressing their views, migrants challenge migratory policies, as such policies focusing on border security rather than on migrants themselves:

the primary causes are local, namely the absence of democracy in countries of origin. The implemented policies are imposed by the IMF. However, they are not successful, they are disastrous. Dictatorships receive support from European countries. Much of Africa is unable to use Africa's wealth. In our countries, multinational corporations are the law and our politicians are simply the agents of these corporations. (Interview 5)

Certain interviewees of this group of stakeholders add socio-cultural and political factors: "The imperialism witnessed by Africans is first and foremost in our heads: the Africans consider that anything coming from abroad is better than them. It is a colonization of minds" (Interview 6), or

the causes are generally political, that is the management of our countries by our governments and governors. They are also socio-cultural: even if the youth are free, they are limited in their minds. There is a lack of education in the country, and they resort to crimes and then attempt to flee. They are also economic: people do not receive proper orientation, and they seek to improve their living conditions without being well-informed. (Interview 3)

The causes of migration are certainly many; they are political, economic, social, and cultural at the same time, but these causes converge and reinforce each other to lead to large waves of population movements. In their discourse stakeholders stressed: the causes of migration, which are related to the uneven distribution of resources; the problem of the exploitation of the wealth of the South by the North; and the stigmatizing and security-focused perception of migration. The EU aims to tackle the negative effects of migration, while at the same time, through its economic policies, it reinforces the causes of departure. Economic growth in the countries of the South is increasingly unbalanced in terms of distribution of wealth for the benefit of multinational corporations and corrupt political elites. What emerges from the fieldwork is a complex picture of migration, in which the different stakeholders identify the same causes of migration but do not share the same views about it.

3.2 AN UNABASHED SECURITIZING PERCEPTION

The various stakeholders agree on a series of known causes leading to migration in general. Populations move as a result of economic, political and climate factors. Poverty, unemployment, armed conflicts, environmental issues and development are the causes that lead to an increased mobility and migration. Some stakeholders of para-governmental and non-governmental organizations make a deeper reading of the situation by emphasizing other elements linked to the direct causes of migration. For instance, post-colonial domination relationships promote

uneven development leading to and maintaining migration: "The exploitation of the wealth of the South by the countries of the North, particularly the wealth of sub-Saharan Africa. The great powers pump the wealth out of countries of the South, and this leads to the impoverishment of these countries" (Interview 2).

This same point of view structures the discourse of the stakeholders who insist on some sort of connivance between the corrupt political authorities and governments of the North:

Social injustice; if we observe the situation of countries of origin, we notice that the leaders have never encouraged an even distribution of wealth. These leaders impose laws and policies which do not fulfil the needs of the people, so people are forced to leave their countries to seek a better life somewhere else. (Interview 18)

You know, we have wealth and resources and we have issues that we fail in managing because of the domination of European countries and also because of mismanagement by our governments. Governments unlock billions but these billions are mismanaged and unevenly distributed. (Interview 6)

International migratory flows have tripled in the last four decades because the number of factors instigating mobility has increased (social media, Internet, etc.): "The media portrays an image of Europe that fascinates the youth" (Interview 11), or as expressed by another activist originally from the Ivory Coast: "Propaganda on television and social media, broadcasted by the West shows that there, there is well-being, which is an element that instigates and encourages illegal migration" (Interview 10). Thus, Europe, which was a continent from which a large wave of migration departed, became the largest space of immigration in the world. This is a new phenomenon, seen as traumatic, and to which the response is border closure, as migration is no longer perceived as a factor of development, but rather as a danger.

The interviewees also indicated that the rise of a "trans-governmental" policy, aiming to regulate immigration within the EU, has also led to repercussions in the neighbouring countries. Since the beginning of the 2000s, Morocco has changed its reaction towards European accusations. Instead of denying the presence of migrants in its territory, it was able to use their presence as "geographical income" (El Qadim 2010). The EU security-oriented migration policy has expanded beyond the EU's territory, in areas where the population used to circulate freely, as it is the case of the ECOWAS countries with the Niamey Declaration on the coordination of efforts to counter illicit traffic of migrants and human trafficking of March 16, 2018.

Migration is a strategic sector in the relationships between North and South. Europe does not want illegal migrants, and Morocco finds itself in a strategic geopolitical position making it an entryway to Europe and in such position it would certainly think about the issue of free movement of people. [...] In bilateral agreements between the EU and Morocco, some items are about free movement, others are about restricting movement for security reasons. There is always a link between illegal migration, and sometimes with terrorism, or even countering human trafficking and maintaining national security. (Interview 19)

This securitizing perception of migration limits the fundamental right to movement, and it is within this framework that European countries made sure to externalize their borders:

"EU countries did not only externalize control over their borders but they also externalized migratory flows" (Interview 4). This wary and alarming perception of migration is the result of repeated economic crises in the countries of the North. These crises revealed a stigmatizing perception of migrants, and this is exactly how one of the interviewees remembers a speech of the former President of France:

Indeed, we have witnessed a selective migratory policy to attract skilled people; such policy is implemented by countries such as France, Spain, Canada and others. We may recall a speech of Sarkozy in which he gave the example of Moroccan female workers in Spain to say that EU countries did not need migrants anymore. (Interview 20)

The stakeholders note the double discourse of the EU. The European securitizing perception of migration goes against the reality we encounter today, since the largest mobility in the world today is occurring within countries of the South, according to a para-governmental interviewee. However, the EU also wants to stop this South–South mobility, because it considers it a step prior to departing for Europe. This security-oriented perception thus reflects Europe's phobia of migration:

Contrary to what is rumoured, migration in the world is taking place more between countries of the South than from countries in the South to countries in the North. This is not a made up fantasy, statistics reveal that. Death boats have probably encouraged the dissemination of false news. We wonder why there is a tendency to systematically link South–North migration to security and this link is never made when it comes to North–South migration. (Interview 21)

Finally, some non-governmental and para-governmental stakeholders question this European policy as well as policymakers in countries of the South: "The visible stakeholder both in the North and in the South is the Ministry of Interior. However, the police won't solve the problem" (Interview 7). "It should further be noted that border management policy and the agreements signed between North and South are the result of unequal relations based on blackmail and political pressure. In politics, there are always things that are left unsaid" (Interview 10). "Border control and the legalization of this control and then the institutionalization of the externalization policy through stricter laws" (Interview 12).

The dichotomy set up between legal and illegal migration is the main interpretative key used by governmental stakeholders. Illegal migration constitutes for them an issue against which States must mobilize. This point of view is not shared by the rest of the interviewed stakeholders. Indeed, stakeholders operating in para-governmental bodies denounce human rights violations committed in the framework of countering irregular migration. They attack what they consider abuses in controlling mobility:

They now want to keep migrants away from European borders, keeping them in the neighbouring countries of the South. The European fortress failed to restrain migrants. So, we are now in the phase of externalizing migratory policies and migration management through encouraging legal return, readmission and selection in departure zones for instance (integration courses in countries of origin and transit). (Interview 4)

For another interviewee: "The sorting centres they want to establish away from Europe are mind-boggling. A consulate is already a sorting centre. The issues of migrant reception and family reunification are set aside today" (Interview 7).

The stakeholders' discourse reveals the unabashed security logic of the EU towards migration. These stakeholders also highlight the heterogeneous nature of policies and discourses regarding migration. If on the one hand migration seems a political objective for countries of the North and the South alike, it remains difficult to discern a unified policy of the EU and the countries of the South. Countries of the South lose their sovereignty when it comes to migration-related issues, while the EU does not have a clear logic:

The EU has always been torn between economic needs and the legal rejection of immigrants. We need you but we do not need you! Various factors are at stake; but the EU pretends to ignore its need for migration. Moreover, migration policies are developed in Brussels. At the same time, they constantly change depending on the changes of political leaders. The extreme right does not share the same vision with social democrats. (Interview 8)

For national non-governmental stakeholders the main issue is the migration management model. Europe is accused of externalizing its own migration-related problems. This NGO activist in charge of migration in a human rights organization stated that:

The consequences of conflicts and the migratory issue have led European countries to establish policies that ensure the externalization of their conflicts and responsibility towards the South. When we mention externalization, we do not only refer to the development of policies, agreements or recommendations but also political interventions. For example, the current developments involving Italy and Libya, the intervention of the sea patrols under the pretext of migrant arrivals, other interventions under the pretext of controlling Tunisian borders upon the Arab Spring and also control in Morocco. It is the implementation and deployment of a whole military arsenal. (Interview 21)

The complexity of the migratory issue leads to diverse discourses and analyses by different stakeholders, as is the case with human trafficking, which is a new form of slavery in the opinion of the interviewees, and the expression of a lack of social security for migrants, reflected mainly in abuse at work: "Abuse of young African migrants given meagre salaries for long working hours in violation of labour laws" (Interview 9). The discourse of non-institutional actors remains critical, based on the fact that the EU establishes agreements and/or partnerships with countries of the South that are suitable to their own political and economic interests. The EU has made its own assessment of the state of migration and does not need any advice or recommendations, according to the interviewees. While defending a human rights protection approach, the EU is violating these rights by seeking to establish transit centres in Maghreb countries. Within this policy framework, Morocco plays the role of the policeman protecting the borders of Europe, in contrast to other countries such as Turkey, upon which the EU finds it difficult to impose certain roles.

Migrant stakeholders share the same opinion about the "externalization of Europe's borders in Africa" (Interview 10). They shed light on the living conditions of migrants in transit plagued

by "discrimination, racism, rape, aggressions, and they are the victims of mafias, in other words the smugglers" (Interview 3), or as expressed by another interviewee: "The smugglers who make a lot of money, the mafias that move in this zone, making fortunes at the expense of the Eldorado seekers with its lump of tragedies" (Interview 11).

Based on the interviews conducted with various stakeholders, the prioritization of migration-related issues differs depending on the categories of stakeholders and their background. It is in this sense that the national NGO stakeholders, as para-governmental bodies, perceived the Mediterranean as a space for sharing and exchange: "The Mediterranean must become a space for movement again. We are in a state of inertia nowadays" (Interview 7). They denounce that migration is thought of only as a problem, towards which countries must establish repression policies. The terminology used in these policies is revealing: the expressions "fight against migration" and "war against migration" are used. According to these stakeholders, institutional actors think only of migration and forget migrants, who are human beings, and this is a contradiction for countries that claim to promote human rights:

The large projects related to migration are security projects. Building walls and fences and also borders. This is the major issue for Europe regarding the South. Currently, we notice that the majority of European countries turn again towards self-isolation. The effects of these policies are fighting against foreigners, for spatial segregation and rejection of others. (Interview 12)

The security approach today is the result of the failure of migrant integration policies in Europe. The new policy chosen by Europe consists in prioritizing security and control of the EU's external borders and diminishing the number of asylum seekers coming to Europe: "If we look at the issue of migration, it is a strategic issue at the level of the Mediterranean, for example if we look at France, its integration model failed. In 2005, Spain tried to recover by legalizing migrants, but this move was not successful because there was no overall project" (Interview 6). The interviewees pointed out the plans developed by the EU, either with Turkey or with Libya. What counts for the EU is not the fate of migrants, but rather their arrival on European soil. The security challenges related to unauthorized migration are also mentioned as a source of concern: "No one knows who actually arrives among the youth and minors from sub-Saharan countries. Who knows, they might represent a source of danger for the security of our countries" (Interview 14).

As for migrants' organizations, priorities regarding migration seem to be partially different. More specifically, the main priorities are actions in departure areas targeting the root causes of migration and aimed at raising the awareness of the youth about the dangers of migration. Additional priorities are establishing freedom of movement for migrants and reopening Europe's borders. The involvement of these stakeholders concerns Morocco as well, particularly with regard to racism and discrimination:

Migration is currently a challenge for all Maghreb societies. It reveals all the things that were hidden in those societies: racism, xenophobia and slavery. What is currently happening in Libya and Algeria is unacceptable, like torture, and it is not acceptable in 2017 to witness this kind of behaviour. Migrants have never threatened a society; on the contrary, it is them who are always threatened. (Interview 5)

Current policies are deemed unsuccessful as they do not tackle the root causes forcing populations and individuals to migrate. These causes are economic-, climate- and security-related (wars and armed conflicts). However, the other perverse aspect of these policies is the transformation of migration into a commodity exchanged between the North and the South: "The closure of borders, control and repression by States of the South, in exchange for assistance (by States of the North): accept readmissions and you will receive assistance. Migration management reflects the power relations between states at the expense of migrants and their rights" (Interview 7). However, the issue is not limited solely to blocking population movements and transforming the countries of the South into the policemen of the North. Europe needs migrants for its economy and to maintain balance in its social security funds. However, what interests Europe, according to another interviewee, is a labour migration bound to return, the migration of women and men alone "without family reunification, a migration that fills the vaults of pension funds in the North" (Interview 4). The same interviewee added that this Europe imposes its own migration policy everywhere by offering funding.

Despite the problems resulting from migratory management, the EU attempts to address the crisis by outsourcing its asylum and immigration policies to third countries. Within this securitizing dynamic, state stakeholders of countries of the South understand that these European policies also serve their own interest, as they allow them to postpone political reforms, while benefiting from the EU connivance. The EU presents no concrete offers to countries of the South, other than its contradictory approach based on human rights and closing of borders.

3.3 IS THERE A MOROCCAN EXCEPTION?

The regularization policy in Morocco has led to increased interest in the presence of migrants in the country, in the stakeholders' discourse. Such policy is deemed as necessary: "For us in Morocco, had they not come to us, we would have been forced on the medium term to go get them. Our birth rate had decreased significantly to 2.2 births per woman and our economy would have needed manpower" (Interview 8). Morocco is considered by migrant stakeholders as a blocking country: "We must urgently improve the living conditions of migrants in transit to Europe. We should listen to their problems, and provide them with free healthcare and fight against human trafficking" said a representative of a human rights organization (Interview 13). "We should regularize these migrants and allow them to have social security" added a trade unionist (Interview 9).

Several interviewees indicated that the Moroccan strategy consisted in positioning itself as the "good Maghreb student" fighting against illegal migration. The EU is certainly a significant partner for its neighbours in the South, but it plays along when it comes to externalizing the migratory issue. As for countries of the South, they seek to obtain the best quid pro quo, and sometimes they can even go along with the European obsession with border control to receive funding or other benefits.

However, what the stakeholders pointed out is that migration in Morocco has made it possible to develop a legislative framework and awareness within civil society. External pressures, the internal concern regarding the growth of this phenomenon, and internal security issues led to the enactment in 2003 of a law relevant to the entry and residence of foreigners in the Kingdom of Morocco (Law 02-03). This law, approved without any discussion and unanimously by all parliamentary blocks, reveals for some stakeholders the ignorance of political stakeholders

regarding this issue. This law came into effect on 20 November 2003, and contrary to the official discourse, it features a number of repressive measures:

Morocco is living a dilemma between its international commitments on the one hand and Law 02-03 on the other because we were among the first nations that have signed and ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. (Interview 8)

The state discourse sometimes goes against the discourse of civil society stakeholders, researchers and experts. Thus, security management is sometimes coupled with a stereotypical view of migration, particularly among public institutions. Some institutional publications have expressed this view and have even taken it further by calling migrants "black locusts" and "tsunami". Migrants are perceived as carrying contagious diseases to which the Ministry of Health should attend by imposing health measures: "Following a note published in 2003 aiming to grant the same healthcare services to all people living on the Moroccan soil including refugees and immigrants, the Ministry of Health established the Department of Health and Migration within the Directorate of Epidemiology and Countering of Contagious Diseases" (Interview 22).

Morocco seeks to set its migratory policy as an example to be followed by African countries. For governmental stakeholders, solutions set forth by Morocco alone or in partnership with its neighbours in the North are still efficient. This point of view is shared by some para-governmental representatives: "Solutions intended for immigration in Morocco are efficient because migrants have the majority of their fundamental rights (healthcare, education, etc.)" (Interview 15).

The issue of migration as a diplomatic issue is managed by the King himself; it is an issue which weighs heavily on relations with Europe, and with Africa as well. However, while governmental stakeholders speak of a Moroccan model, national NGO stakeholders criticize heavily the policy solutions implemented. They question the alleged success of the Moroccan migration policy: "There is no serious solution set forth by the State to address the problems faced by immigrants. The State abuses them politically and economically" (Interview 13). "These solutions are not successful. Morocco does not respect international agreements protecting migrant rights. Its policy maintains outward emigration. The lack of democracy prevents innovative solutions" (Interview 16).

Civil society stakeholders, particularly those actively defending human rights, maintain their position regarding migration and adopt a discourse that criticizes the institutions. Their knowledge of the migratory issue and their claims are based on a number of reports mentioning that the human rights and fundamental freedoms of migrants are not respected. However, migrant stakeholders have a different position. They denounce migration policies as "selfish":

The countries hosting us have no other choice. They are obliged to accept migrants. Morocco's distinctiveness in terms of the policy it adopted to legalize the situation of migrants, is not found in other countries, not even in Europe. Of course in Europe human rights are respected, we are given shelter and blankets and also food but at the same time they do not accept migrants. (Interview 3)

This discourse, while highlighting the positive elements of the Moroccan experience in the field of migration, it also points out the limitations of that policy. Thus, on the one hand migrants in Morocco do not have shelter like in Europe, but on the other hand Morocco is also a country where the human rights situation is criticized.

The most active organizations working with migrants, namely Caritas and Planet Migrant, also tackle the policy solutions that were put on the table:

With regard to the issue of migration, the policy solutions put on the table to limit migratory influxes do not work. We instead notice the opposite: they only lead to increasing influx and catastrophic damages. The human rights of migrants are not respected; migrants are mistreated at the borders or even discriminated against because of racism in transit countries. For example, when we hear of the sinking of a boat causing the death of 500 people, they did not just die; they were killed by their policies. (Interview 17)

I cannot assess them, because honestly, policies are set in place, but what is actually happening on the ground is really unbelievable. We notice inconsistency in the discourses. There are two realities; people are not concerned with the policies set in place. (Interview 5)

It is within this framework that NGOs and human rights organizations have been able to widen their margin of action to apply pressure, so that they can ensure control over the treatment and the situation of migrants and asylum seekers in Morocco. This pressure, and in particular the alarming report issued by the National Human Rights Council, has led to two campaigns of regularization of migrants in 2014 and 2016:

We have noticed an increase of the migration phenomenon while Morocco did not have an adequate legal framework. This is how the development of a public policy started in terms of migration. Phases 1 and 2 of migrant regularization followed. Some did not benefit from that and they have the right to stand before the Board of Appeal led by the National Human Rights Council. This Board is constituted of representatives of the Ministries of Interior, Cooperation, Justice, Health, Labour and Education, as well as other institutions and organizations. Morocco is one of the few countries to have this kind of Board, particularly in which civil society participates. The Board's work is very rigorous and is conducted based on well-defined criteria. (Interview 21)

These two regularization campaigns seem more of a charity action rather than the first step of an integration process. The impossibility of setting forth their right to residence and their socio-economic rights means that migrants live in a discriminatory situation (Mouna et al. 2017).

For para-governmental stakeholders, political options relevant to migration are inefficient and reflect the perverted logic of the governance of mobility in the North and in the South. The reality on the ground is thus confronted with the discourses; the experiences that emerge from the field are ultimately more important as they reflect the suffering of these migrants, according to the perception of the stakeholders.

3.4 MIGRATION: NATIONAL INTEREST OR COOPERATION WITH THE EU?

Despite the stakeholders' criticism of the EU and its unequal relation with the migratory issue, interviewees confirm that the EU is one of the key partners. As indicated by an interviewee from the Ministry of Health:

In its policy, the EU distinguishes between the good and bad guys in order to award grants through deals. However, following the events of the so-called Arab Spring, the EU considered that its policy no longer worked. So it developed another policy called "Mobility Partnership" in the form of action plans which include readmission. This is the case of the partnership agreement signed with Morocco in 2013. (Interview 4)

Within the framework of this scheme, the EU finances several programmes aimed at facilitating the settling of migrants in Morocco, among which we identify the "El Wasit" programme 2016–2017 (75 million euro). This programme aims at reinforcing organizations' ability to promote civil society in Morocco, particularly those working on migration. Thus, the objective is to improve the protection of migrants' rights. The EU avoids addressing criticism regarding migration policies. So, the discourse of officials focuses on the praise addressed to Morocco for its policies related to hosting, regularization and integration of migrants while respecting their rights. The gender approach has a significant status in these programmes, which anticipate dealing with the changes in migration trends in Morocco. According to civil society stakeholders, it is the EU that decides in the majority of cases the type of projects to be implemented. It is both a financial and security issue:

There are projects subsidized by the EU and targeting women, calls for proposals set the gender approach as a condition. For instance, we were able to run a programme titled TAMEKINE. It focuses on the issue of migrant women (whether pregnant or with a young child) access to healthcare. There are relatively fewer women than men but the number of women is gradually increasing among migrants. However, it should be mentioned that women's situation during migration is dramatic; they are targeted as a vulnerable group with specific needs, as in the case of unaccompanied minors. (Interview 19)

Thus, migration is not considered as a matter of cooperation, because the EU is perceived as the one imposing its own policies on countries of the South. Moreover, people working on the issue know very little about the problems:

Every time we have the opportunity to meet with the people in charge, we draw their attention to the fact that they are not capable of dealing with this issue. Migration is tied to three stakeholders: the hosting country, the country of origin and the transit country; all of them and the migrant should be taken into consideration. The EU cannot decide unilaterally in Brussels. We know that the people handling this issue do not have the necessary knowledge allowing them to develop a relevant migratory policy. (Interview 8)

The EU promotes two types of cooperation: on the one hand cooperation with the country of origin aiming to prevent departure and encourage return; on the other hand cooperation with transit countries aiming to close migratory routes (Chiron 2017). The EU policy portrays

itself as respecting migrants' rights. While the arrival of migrants triggered the conscience of civil society stakeholders who decided to spearhead defending the rights of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, the people they defend still live in dire conditions.

The Moroccan state and the international and national organizations alike have become the implementers of this policy:

The international organizations are being used by the governments of the North and by the EU. The UNHCR, for example, is now visible in Morocco because of the programmes financed by Europe. It has become an asylum externalization instrument in Morocco. We can say the same thing about the IOM. In Morocco, the IOM is funded to a large extent by Europe (particularly the Rabat Process). The UNDP actions in terms of migration (migrants' integration in development, the joint initiative) are funded by Europe. The National Human Rights Council is also funded by Europe. Moroccan NGOs also receive European funding. Even the ministerial department in charge of migration affairs receives European subsidies, through the SHARAKA programme. (Interview 4)

This situation prevents convergence of public institutions' action and leads to the scattering of interviewees, since the EU action is conducted within targeted partnerships. This "marginalizes the parliament as legislator" concludes the same interviewee.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS FOR EURO-MEDITERRANEAN COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

The EU migration policy has succeeded in changing the Mediterranean from being a space of exchange into a wall. According to the interviewees, this policy seems to go in the direction of granting more visas to Moroccans in exchange for toughened security measures towards migration originating from sub-Saharan Africa. Migratory policies in the South as well as in the North of the Mediterranean have not only failed, they have also created new phenomena: "other problems, including slavery, exploitation of women in the Maghreb countries" (Interview 11). Some interviewees, like non-governmental and para-governmental Moroccan stakeholders, consider that countries in the South agree with Europe on repressing mobility:

You speak of solutions [laughs]. There are no solutions because they do not want to solve the problem, I mean the European countries but also our governments because for them the issue of migration is an important political bargaining chip for their interests. The Europeans give subsidies and at the same time they install the barriers and prevent people from moving, so which solutions are you talking about! (Interview 17)

The EU seems to be the source of the problem, because the only aim of its cooperation policies is to close the borders: "There are no political solutions for the issue of migration. On the contrary, all measures taken by either the countries of the North or the countries of the South are strategies aiming to consolidate control of major powers over this space. The issue of migration is nothing but a cover to legitimize this objective", says a transnational female stakeholder (Interview 19). Some denounce the repressive migration policies imposed by the EU:

There are two sides: one powerful and the other weak. So, solutions are not the result of peer-to-peer dialogue. The North imposes its own solutions on the governments of the South, and the latter do not succeed in convincing their citizens and civil societies of the soundness of these solutions" (Interview 23).

Based on this observation, the current solutions only serve the interest of Europe, and some activists accuse the Moroccan government of using the issue of migration in its relations with Europe: "The current solutions do not solve the problem. The Moroccan government uses the issue of migrants on the political and social levels" (Interview 13). Some stakeholders evaluate the position taken by the Moroccan government positively, like this unionist for instance: "Morocco's reaction is positive. It implements a good management of migration through regularizations" (Interview 9). It should be mentioned here that the stakeholders who do not work directly on migration tend either to present the idealist discourse of the State regarding the exemplary Moroccan migration policy or they use this issue to denounce the lack of human rights and political repression.

For migrant stakeholders, the Mediterranean corresponds to a political and geographical reality. This reality is characterized by a central issue: migration and mobility. Migration is the result of uneven relations between countries on the two banks of the Mediterranean. The interviewees insist on the need to confront the root causes of the problem. They insist on the convergence of interests of European countries and dictatorships established in the countries of the South. This prolongs, according to the interviewees, the plundering of the richness of African countries and in turn helps protect the dictators. Thus, the migration issue remains unsolvable as long as we do not address the root causes. The EU policy focuses on the protection of its own interests and the perpetuation of the European domination by supporting the established regimes. European policies in the field of migration have not only failed but have also had perverse effects, including increasing the power of mafias and facilitating human trafficking.

At the political level, the EU seems powerless before the various crises in the south and south-eastern Mediterranean basin (Libya, Syria, Yemen and Egypt). The political turmoil in many countries of the region has transformed the Mediterranean Sea today into the deadliest migration route in the world. Europeans continue to perceive migratory phenomena from a security perspective and the EU policy seems to worsen the situation, as it presents a double discourse. On the one hand, it ignores the lack of democracy in the political systems of countries in the South, and requires from these countries (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, etc.) active participation in the management of migration flows, through strengthening control and repression apparatuses. Externalizing European borders is certainly not a solution. This policy only worsens the situation in countries south of the Mediterranean; it destabilizes the African region and weakens it even more, as is the case for the strained relations between Algeria and Morocco, or the relations between the Maghreb region and sub-Saharan Africa.

The EU takes advantage of the volatile political situation in countries of the South to justify its security policy; it imposes its own laws and regulations in the area of migration and mobility, and therefore it limits the sovereignty of countries of the South in terms of decision making. The so-called "migration crisis" is the direct consequence of Europe's policies towards the countries of the South. Europe has always relied on authoritarian regimes to maintain a security-based approach to migration.

Based on the viewpoint of interviewed stakeholders, there are different aspects that reveal criticism towards the EU migration policy in the Mediterranean. We start with the national legal framework on the right to asylum. The lack of a law concerning the reception and hosting of asylum seekers puts many migrants in a vulnerable position. Political instability in the region will probably force Morocco to host more asylum seekers in the future. Thus, the EU would have to provide support and additional financial resources to aid the development of an appropriate hosting system.

The EU seems to be the main source of the problem for civil society stakeholders, as it is the decision-making side in the majority of cases, in terms of the types of projects to be implemented in countries of the South. The EU sets conditions on the humanitarian and development aid it provides based on a securitizing approach, which is in contradiction to any humanitarian approach. However, in order to be successful, the EU migration policy should be based on the principle of a win-win partnership on the one hand, and should be thought of as a cooperation factor on the other.

Sub-Saharan African NGO stakeholders mention connivance between the European States and the regimes described as authoritarian in the countries of the South. According to these stakeholders, Europe supports these regimes only to stop migration. For these stakeholders, the EU regrets the era of Gaddafi and Ben Ali's dictatorships. However, the lack of democracy in countries of origin and the disastrous policies imposed by the IMF are the main causes of migration flows. Multinational corporations have transformed the political actors of countries in the South into agents that work for them. Therefore, the only way for these stakeholders to stop migration is to stop the plundering of the countries in the South by the North. We concluded with the stakeholders that Europe seeks to address the consequences of its disastrous economic policy in Africa, but at the same time it fuels the causes of this migration by supporting the regimes established there and the multinationals plundering Africa's resources. All stakeholders seem opposed to the pressure exerted by the EU, which seeks to transform Maghreb countries into migrant detention centres. For these stakeholders, Europe seeks to deal with the contradictions between EU Member States regarding the management of migration. The EU develops agreements and/or partnerships with countries of the South that fulfil its own political and economic interests only. It does not present anything concrete to countries of the South, other than its contradictory approach based on human rights and the closure of borders. The EU decides unilaterally at Brussels. For the stakeholders, the solution to the migration issue lies in the EU's action in favour of peace, human rights, democracy, governance, environmental sustainability and the eradication of poverty, while raising youth awareness about the dangers of migration routes.

Several stakeholders criticize the new Moroccan migratory policy. This policy, heavily reliant on regularization, is supported by EU funding, which is aimed at supporting the settling of migrants in Morocco. According to the stakeholders, the EU spends thousands of euro in order to give a good image of migration management in Morocco. Migration is therefore dissociated from its economic context in order to be presented from a cultural perspective. These funds must be dedicated, as explained some stakeholders, to funding job creation projects for migrants and for Moroccans as well. To this end, the focus should be on the needs identified by the stakeholders themselves, and not on those imposed by projects from Brussels.

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ANNEX: LIST OF INTERVIEWED STAKEHOLDERS

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