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E-004317/2025

Answer given by Ms Šuica
on behalf of the European Commission
(9.2.2026)

The Pact for the Mediterranean ('Pact') sets out a framework of practical cooperation between the EU, its Member States and the southern Mediterranean partners in areas of mutual interest, including migration. It is built on the principles of co-ownership, co-creation, joint responsibility and flexibility. The latter principle allows for variable participation of Member States and Mediterranean partners in its initiatives and will ultimately determine the reach and the scope of the various initiatives under the Pact.

In light of its multi-faceted nature and complex causes, the Pact addresses the migration phenomenon across its initiatives, aiming to address root causes of migration by promoting stability, enhancing preparedness and resilience of partners, supporting economic growth and creating jobs through investments. In addition, under its first and third pillar, the Pact promotes a comprehensive, whole-of-route and rights-based approach, with a view to prevent irregular migration and break smugglers' business with enhanced border control, improve the protection of migrants in vulnerable situations, asylum seekers and refugees, pursue an effective return and readmission policy including safe and dignified returns and sustainable reintegration, as well as promote legal pathways in line with EU and national competences.

This approach is complementary and in full coherence with the efforts and priorities of EU external migration policy carried out at bilateral level, including in the framework of the Strategic and Comprehensive Partnerships, which have already achieved substantial results.

Between January and September 2025, around 116 000 irregular arrivals to the EU were recorded along the three Mediterranean routes (Central Mediterranean, Eastern Mediterranean and Western Mediterranean) and the Atlantic route to the Canary Islands. This represents a 17% decrease compared to the same period in 2024 and a 42% decrease compared to the same period in 2023.