(English version)

Question for written answer E-002328/26
to the Commission
Dick Erixon (ECR)
(8 June 2026)

Subject: Financing jobs in North Africa: how does it help the EU with borders and returns?

The EU is putting EUR 15 million into the EUR 80 million Social Entrepreneurship Fund (SEF), which includes a EUR 35 million debt fund and funds start-ups in non-EU countries in North Africa and the southern Mediterranean ([1]). The fund is part of the Pact for the Mediterranean, which also covers migration, yet the announcement of its launch says nothing about border control, returns or readmission ([2]).

1. How does this sum of EUR 15 million, and any further EU exposure that may arise from the debt fund and possible defaults, serve the EU's interest in protecting its external borders and securing the return of people who have no right to stay in the EU?

2. Is disbursement under the SEF in any way conditional on the partner countries cooperating on readmission and returns, and if not, why not?

3. Is investing in start-ups in non-EU countries the most effective way to achieve the EU's objectives in the region, which include reducing illegal migration to the EU?

Submitted: 8.6.2026

Answer given by Ms Šuica on behalf of the European Commission
(7 August 2026)

The Social Entrepreneurship Fund (SEF) ([1]) is a joint initiative of the EU with the KfW development bank and is anchored in the Pact for Mediterranean ([2]) as it delivers jointly on Pillar I (People: driving force for change, connections and innovation) and Pillar II (Stronger, more sustainable and integrated economies).

By supporting socially and environmentally driven innovation in the region, the EU contribution serves the EU's broader strategic interest in promoting stability, economic opportunity and resilience in the EU's neighbourhood.

Cooperation on migration, including readmission and returns, is pursued through dedicated policy dialogues, partnerships and instruments that are specifically designed for that purpose.

By creating decent jobs and supporting the digital and green transition the SEF helps address socioeconomic challenges in partner countries and so contributes to redressing the structural drivers that can contribute to irregular migration.

---

1 European Commission, 'EU presents new EUR 80 million fund for sustainable jobs and social impact in southern Mediterranean', 3 June 2026, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/mex_26_1246.

2 https://north-africa-middle-east-gulf.ec.europa.eu/news/joint-press-release-launch-equity-window-social-entrepreneurship-fund-sef-boost-sustainable-jobs-and-2026-06-02_en.

([1]) https://north-africa-middle-east-gulf.ec.europa.eu/news/joint-press-release-launch-equity-window-social-entrepreneurship-fund-sef-boost-sustainable-jobs-and-2026-06-02_en.

([2]) https://north-africa-middle-east-gulf.ec.europa.eu/what-we-do_en.