

EN

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Answer given by Mr Brunner
on behalf of the European Commission
(18.9.2026)

The EU's new approach to migration and asylum is delivering results, leading to a sustained drop in illegal arrivals¹: illegal border crossings in 2025 were under half the total recorded in 2023 and at the lowest level since 2021.

The large-scale illegal arrivals in Ceuta of third-country nationals from Morocco is an unprecedented event that put at risk the integrity of the EU external borders. The Commission immediately offered financial and operational support to Spain to protect the external borders and ensure returns.

Morocco is an important partner, notably on migration and border management. EU financial support to Morocco aims to strengthen border management and the capacity to counter migrant smuggling. This cooperation has delivered tangible results with a significant reduction in illegal arrivals. The EU funding is conditional and consistently monitored through robust accountability mechanisms, including regular reporting, programme evaluations, verification missions and indicators linked to disbursement. The Commission is discussing with the Moroccan authorities how to further develop cooperation on migration, in particular on return and readmission, also as part of the negotiations of a comprehensive and strategic partnership.

The Commission is committed to preserving the security of the external borders. For this purpose, work is currently ongoing on a proposal to strengthen the mandate of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, as announced in the political guidelines of the President of the Commission.

¹ COM(2026) 45 final: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52026DC0045>.