The European Migration Network was established by Council Decision 2008/381/EC and is co-financed by the European Union.

Its objective is to meet the information needs of the EU institutions and of Member States’ authorities and institutions by providing up-to-date, objective, reliable and comparable information on migration and asylum, to support the decision-making process in the European Union in these areas. The European Migration Network also provides the general public with such information.

The European Migration Network is coordinated by the European Commission and consists of a network of National Contact Points designated in each Member State plus Norway.

The Spanish NCP is composed of experts from the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, and the Ministry of Justice and the General Prosecutor’s Office. It is coordinated by the Deputy General Directorate for Legal Affairs of the Directorate General for Migrations, General Secretariat for Immigration and Emigration, Secretariat of State for Migrations.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report describes the Spanish migration and asylum situation in 2017, based on a series of items that will be examined below. It should be noted, in any case, that no significant legislative changes were made in 2017, given the lack of a sufficient majority in Parliament, but progress continued to be made on implementing public policy and maintaining cooperation with countries of origin and transit.

I. Legal migration and mobility.

In 2017, no significant changes were made to actions relating to legal migration and mobility but progress continued to be made toward a positive outlook for migratory flows, bearing in mind, however, the current state of the Spanish labour market.

Economic Migration.

In recent years, the profile of migration to Spain has changed as migrants have become more qualified; in 2017, 13% of the work permits issued in this country were for skilled migration.

In 2017, further progress was made on assessing the impact of the skilled migration scheme and publicising it, in line with the 2017-2027 Strategy to Internationalise the Spanish Economy.

Support for this type of mobility is a constant, so that in 2017 a second round of the Rising Start Up Spain programme was launched.

Spain’s efforts in the Blue Card Directive negotiations and the transposition of the Directive on students and researchers should be noted, as mechanisms to promote and encourage the mobility of third country national within Europe.

Seasonal Migration.

In Spain, seasonal migration is essential, given the needs of the Spanish agriculture. Therefore, cooperation on migration is underway with the labour market to promote the collective management of hiring in the country of origin, which, in the case of Morocco, is considered a good practice for circular migration.

In 2017, the figures for legal seasonal migration rose exponentially.

Opening Up of New Legal Migration Routes.

In light of the Valletta Summit, Spain has defended the importance of setting up suitable channels for legal migration, which would take into account the needs and wishes of the countries of origin and transit. In 2017, Spain worked on the pilot projects on legal migration sponsored by the European Commission, advocating circular migration for employment, training or entrepreneurship in sectors and areas of interest to the countries of origin.

II. International protection, including asylum.

One of the challenges facing Europe, and therefore Spain, as part of Europe, is the arrival of an increasing number of people seeking international protection. Because of the commitments made at the Community level, Spain is seeing a direct increase in the number of asylum seekers, one of the most significant upward trends in the European Union.
Spain understands that solidarity is the principle that must be applied to these people and, to deal with this new level of international protection, it is gradually overhauling its asylum and reception and integration systems, with increases in budget and capacity and improved procedures.

III. Unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable groups.

There were no new developments in this area; however, it should be noted that last year the Framework Protocol on certain actions relating to unaccompanied foreign children (UFC) continued to be applied, improving coordination between all the institutions and government departments involved. This protocol has therefore been strengthened in the different regions with jurisdiction in this area using various methods, from signing protocols with the Autonomous Regions to organising meetings to determine the scope of the situation and handle the difficulties found.

IV. Integration.

In 2017 there were no changes in the major areas of action on immigrant integration, which is consistent with the results produced by the measures taken. In any case, a continuing effort is being made to strengthen and adapt integration policy to guarantee its coherence and prevent future problems due to increasingly diverse migratory profiles.

V. Illegal Migration.

Spain has continued to work with the countries of origin and transit to prevent irregular migration and fight smuggling and trafficking in human beings.

Even though, thanks to this cooperation, it has been possible to slow down this phenomenon, in 2017 illegal immigration into Spain was again at much higher levels than expected. According to provisional data from the Ministry of the Interior for December 2017, illegal immigration increased by 101.4% from the previous year.

The reactivation of migratory pressure in the western Mediterranean is currently causing the greatest concern. Therefore, despite an increase in illegal immigration along the routes through the Canary Islands (-37.8% down on the previous year) and Ceuta (-44%), there has been a considerable increase in entry through the Peninsula, Balearic Islands and Melilla, leading to an increase in entry by sea of 170.8%. Over land, the figures are better, even though they are not positive either, since a 1% decrease in immigration through Ceuta does not compensate for the increase through Melilla (9.6%), leading to an overall increase of 5.6%.

VI. Return.

In 2017 actions continued to be taken on return that applied the following basic principles: (i) setting up adequate instruments for return that respect human rights and the dignity of people, (ii) promoting cooperation with the countries of origin and transit to make return and, therefore, readmission an effective way to combat people trafficking, (iii) promoting voluntary rather than forced return, but using the latter when necessary, and (iv) creating a policy of reintegration parallel to the return policy.
VII. Actions against the trafficking of human beings.

The trafficking of human beings infringes on the higher values of the Spanish legal system enshrined in article 1 of the Constitution. Therefore, combating trafficking is a priority for Spain that results in a variety of instruments, plans and actions to provide the necessary, and growing, cooperation with the countries of origin and transit.

The work that Spain is doing in this area was recognised in the 2018 GRETA Report; however, significant challenges still remain, such as the appearance of new trafficking networks (i.e., of Chinese and Nigerian women) and the growing importance of new ways of trafficking human beings, such as forced marriage and trafficking for begging and committing minor offences.

In this context, Spain continued working in 2017 through the National Security Strategy and the 2015-2018 Comprehensive Plan to Combat Trafficking in Women and Girls for the Purpose of Sexual Exploitation.

VIII. Maximising the impact of migration and mobility for development.

One of the focal points of Spanish migration policy that has been defended at all levels is cooperation with the countries of origin and transit throughout the entire migratory cycle by (i) working with them to combat the root causes of migration, (ii) working together to build a space for legal migration, (iii) combating illegal forms of migration, people smuggling and trafficking and (iv) building paths to return and reintegration.

Migration and mobility are key factors in development if they are properly managed. Migration and development are therefore two closely linked factors and Spain defends the importance of cooperating on migration with the countries of origin and transit and on integrating migration policy into development policies.

Therefore, the 5th Spanish Cooperation Master Plan for the period 2018-2021, which was approved by the Council of Ministers on 27 March 2017 and contains the objectives and priorities that will guide the actions of Spanish cooperation during that period, recognises in its first chapter, in line with Agenda 2030, that the issue of migration is one of the current challenges of the context in which Spanish cooperation actions must be implemented.
1. LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

1.1. Economic Migration

1.1.1. Policy for admitting specific categories of third-country nationals.

A total of 103,927\(^1\) work permits were issued in Spain in 2017. This total was 7% fewer than the previous year.

By category, 64% of the residence and work permits granted came under the general immigration regulations. Of these, 60% were permits for employment by others and 4% for self-employment.

In addition to these permits, others were granted because of ties to the community or exceptional circumstances that took into account the circumstances of the applicant. In 2017, the latter type of permit, which also allows the holder to work, accounted for 21% of those granted.

Lastly, it should be noted that 13% of the work permits granted came under the skilled migration scheme.

Together with this brief analysis of the figures, it should be noted that in 2017 there were no policy adjustments for economic migration and the action lines of previous years continued to be followed.

**Skilled migration.**

Spain has had specific regulations since 2013 governing skilled migration that take into account the needs of companies based in Spain and their internationalisation. Since that date, Spain's migratory policy has also had an element of competitiveness.

It should be remembered that this special skilled migration scheme can be found in the section on international mobility of *Law 14/2013, of 27 September, on support for entrepreneurs and their internationalisation*. This law was not amended in 2017 but its impact has continued to be monitored and work is being done on publicising it among interested foreigners. In particular, on 8 September 2017, the Council of Ministers approved the 2017-2027 Strategy for Internationalising the Spanish Economy, which, among its measures, includes promoting the section on international mobility.

This regulation includes a set of permits and residence visas designed to facilitate the entry and residence in Spain of third-country nationals (from outside the European Union) who fit into one of the following categories:

- Investors.
- Entrepreneurs.
- Highly qualified professionals.
- Researchers and lecturers hired by universities, higher education and research centres or bodies, or business schools based in Spain.
- Workers subject to intra-corporate transfers.

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\(^1\)Source: Statistics on work permits for foreigners. Provisional data for 2017.
- Family members of the above.

Between its coming into force and 31 December 2017, **19,368 people** benefited from the international mobility scheme in Law 14/2013. **21,726 family members** were able to join them.

Estimates from the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness point to the creation of approximately **47,000 jobs** and investments linked with these categories of over **3.327 billion euros** since the law came into force.

The highly qualified professionals category accounts for 40.97% of the permits granted, followed by intra-company transfers (28.12%). The increased demand for highly qualified foreign professionals and intra-company movement demonstrates the growing internationalisation of the Spanish economy.

**Mobility in Ibero-American Space.**

The momentum of mobility in the Ibero-American Space continued to grow in 2017. As noted in previous reports, since the adoption of Law 14/2013, Spain has sustained a process of international collaboration and cooperation aimed at creating a framework for mobility that is either bilateral or multilateral so that Spanish companies and professionals can benefit from a migratory system at least as beneficial as that in Law 14/2013.

- **Bilateral plan:** negotiations for Memoranda of Understanding were started or have been encouraged with a number of countries, mainly in the Ibero-American Space, in order to set up a reciprocal system for dealing with qualified migration, similar to the ones already signed with Mexico and Paraguay. Such a scheme has been proposed with Argentina.

- **Multilateral plan:** after proving the viability of the mobility space alluded to in the Declarations of Veracruz (2014) and Cartagena (2016), in 2017 the General Secretariat of the Ibero-American Summit (SEGIB) sponsored the drafting of a Framework Agreement and the holding of high-level meetings in order to present a draft proposal of the Ibero-American Framework Agreement at the next Ibero-American Summit, which will be held in 2018.

As to the **groups** identified in the workforce, the following should be noted.

**a) Highly Qualified Professionals**

Spain has two types of residence permit for highly qualified individuals: the **Blue Card** (a permit stemming from the transposition of Directive 2009/50/CE); and, in parallel, **the permit for highly qualified professionals provided for in Law 14/2013**, which is more flexible and better meets the needs and requirements of the Spanish economy. It should be remembered that, since the definition of the subjective scope of this permit is flexible, it offers a migratory solution to the category of independent professionals that is linked with what is known as MODE 4.

In 2017, no regulatory changes were made but the promotion of this type of permit continued. As of 31 December 2017, a total of 7,936 permits had been granted to highly qualified professionals. The flexibility of the system has therefore allowed not only big companies (that have more resources) to benefit from it but also SMEs, which, according to the latest available data, employ 9% of the professionals who obtained one of these permits. This is the category with the highest

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number of permits granted for skilled migration. Venezuela, Brazil, India and the United States continue to be the four main countries of origin of these professionals.

In regard to the new Blue Card Directive that is being forged by the European Union, it should be noted that, since the Committee (COREPER) adopted a new “consensus” text for negotiations with the European Parliament on 25 July 2017 and the Parliament responded to it, no progress has been made on achieving a common position, as the Member States, Commission and European Parliaments have very different criteria for and visions of the Blue Card. However, the negotiations are still on the table and it seems that in 2018 an agreement will be reached based on keeping the national schemes, either in parallel or as a secondary option.

Spain is continuing to contribute to the discussions, defending an attractive Blue Card designed for the business world and insisting on the positive effects of mobility between countries of the European Union.

b) Intra-Corporate Transfers (ICTs)

With the transposition of the ICT Directive (completed in 2015), Spain now has two residence permits for intra-company transfers.

The first is the EU-ICT residence permit, with a right to intra-EU mobility, intended for executives, specialists and workers in training. The other is the national ICT residence permit, intended for transfers of categories other than those listed above. The national permit has a broad definition and includes certain categories of service businesses, such as service providers.

It should be noted that holders of EU-ICT residence permits issued by another EU state may move to Spain, after informing the Large Companies and Strategic Sectors Unit (UGE), regardless of the duration of their mobility, as permits issued by another State are valid for residence in Spain.

In 2017, work continued to be done on promoting these permits, without any regulatory changes being made.

As to the figures, since the entry into force of Law 14/2013, a total of 5,446 permits have been granted for intra-company transfers (up to 31 December 2017). This is the second category in terms of the number of permits granted. As far as the nationalities of the permit holders are concerned, the United States, China, India, Mexico and Japan continue to be the main four countries of origin, a demonstration of the business ties between these countries and Spain.

As to the sector, 61.02% of the transferees will work in the services sector and 13.18% in industry, a reflection of the many activities driving the internationalisation of the Spanish economy.

c) Seasonal Workers

As a group, seasonal workers are governed by the general immigration scheme contained in the LOEX³, which was not amended in 2017.

It is important to remember that, given the nature and characteristics of seasonal work, most of these workers are hired using the procedure known as the collective management of hiring in the countries.

of origin\textsuperscript{4}, while a minority of seasonal workers are hired using the \textit{procedure envisaged for temporary short-stay residence and work permits when employed by others} under article 67 of the LOEX Regulations\textsuperscript{5}.

The number of short-stay residence and work permits for employment by others granted to seasonal workers in 2017 was 221 (51 more than the previous year).

For the sixth consecutive year, Order ESS/1309/2017, of 28 December, extended Order ESS/1/2012, of 5 January, regulating the collective management of hiring in the countries of origin for 2012. Under this order, the hiring of workers for seasonal agricultural work is managed with the countries with which Spain has signed an agreement on migratory flows.

In 2017, 17,434 permits were issued using this method, a much higher figure than the 5,562 granted in 2016. This considerable increase was due to the peak strawberry and red fruit harvests in Huelva, when the need for manpower rose sharply. Therefore, from 2,094 Moroccan workers arriving for the crop seasons in 2016, there were 4,573 in 2017 and a total of 15,134 working on the current seasons.

In 2017, the main destinations for those hired in their countries of origin were Andalusia, Catalonia, Castile-Leon and the Balearic Islands and the source of the migrants was mainly Morocco but included Senegal and Colombia.

It should be noted that using a collective management system in the workers’ country of origin has led to a programme of circular migration being set up with Morocco, which is considered a good international practice.

\textbf{d) Entrepreneurs}

Since the approval of Law 14/2013, the Spanish model offers a national visa (for anticipatory activities lasting one year) and a residence permit (of two years) for entrepreneurs who were intending to start, develop or manage an innovative activity of special economic interest to Spain using fast, streamlined, flexible processes.

In 2017, no regulatory changes were made but promotional efforts continued. This led to the launch in 2017 of a \textit{second round of the Rising Start Up Spain programme}. This programme offers innovative entrepreneurs, whether foreigners or Spaniards living abroad:

- Free work spaces in Madrid and Barcelona.
- A non-reimbursable grant of 10,000 euros, for initial expenses.
- Assistance with obtaining visas and residence permits.
- Advice on contacting potential investors.
- Visibility in media outlets specialising in entrepreneurship.

\textsuperscript{4} Order ESS/1/2012, of 5 January, regulating the collective management of hiring in the countries of origin for 2012, which is extended annually.

\textsuperscript{5} Royal Decree 557/2011, of 20 April, approving the Regulations for Organic Law 4/2000, on the rights and freedoms of foreign nationals living in Spain and their social integration, after its amendment by Organic Law 2/2009.
Attendance at events held in Spain and meetings with Spanish multinationals.

The third round of the programme is currently open for applications.

In addition to the positive effects of this particular programme, which contributes to Spain’s entrepreneurial ecosystem, on 31 December 2017, a total of 472 foreign entrepreneurs had benefited from the migratory category created by Law 14/2013 since it came into force. During this period, a total of 1,036 plans were analysed. Among those that received a positive report, 97 were from foreign students at business schools, advancing their international prestige. 90.10% of the plans that received a favourable report were for activities in the services sector, especially ITC. The top three nationalities of the entrepreneurs who received a favourable report were the United States (16.3%), Russia (7.5%) and Venezuela (6.8%).

e) Au Pairs

No new developments were noted in 2017.

1.1.2. Satisfying the needs of the labour market - admission policies.

Spain’s admission policies are necessarily linked to the labour market situation.

It is therefore necessary to take into account the fact that, in spite of improvements, in Spain levels of unemployment remain high. The unemployment rate for the fourth quarter of 2017 was 16.55%. In the last twelve months, the rate has fallen by 2.08 points, but it is still high, a circumstance that affects admission policies, especially when a noticeable downward trend is observed between the unemployment rate of the Spanish population (15.57%) and the foreign population (23.57%).

One of the priorities of the national labour and migratory policies is therefore to employ local residents, as the national employment situation is one of the factors that makes hiring people who are already resident in Spain rather than people who are not in the country a priority. For this reason, in 2017 the catalogue of hard-to-fill occupations (the main instrument matching admissions with the national employment situation) only kept open occupations in the merchant navy and sporting activities.

On the other hand, as noted in the preceding section, the Spanish agriculture has ad-hoc needs for manpower, i.e., for the strawberry and red fruit seasons. The temporary nature of this work has led to filling the vacancies using collective worker management in the countries of origin, in particular through the circular migration programme set up in Morocco. Given the increase in the number of applicants for this programme, new staff selection processes had to be opened up because, prior to 2017, it had drawn on people who had already taken part in previous editions (“repeaters”).

Lastly, it should be emphasised that, since the end of 2017, the European Commission, following the Valletta action plan and the goals of the Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular immigration, has been leading a debate to define legal migration pilot projects to promote the actions of the Member States that aim to open up legal migration channels (mainly circular and for employment, but also for training and entrepreneurship).

Spain has reported that these projects require prior institutional reinforcement and the full involvement of the authorities and the business sector in the country of origin. In addition, Spain understands that a component of reintegration must be taken into account, so that after they return, if they do, to their country of origin, migrants can contribute to the economic or social advancement of that country.
1.1.3. **Efforts to prevent “social dumping” and the erosion of labour laws.**

The activities intended to prevent social dumping and the exploitation of third-country workers can be classified by the time at which they are controlled by the public authorities: (1) when the control comes prior to permission being given to work and (2) when it occurs subsequently, when the real situation in which the employment activities are being carried out is monitored.

Under **prior control**, the general immigration scheme requires that the compliance of applications with the requirements of labour legislation be checked, before a residence and work permit for employment by another person is granted. Therefore, among the documents that must be submitted is the employment contract, with clauses that meet the terms of the current regulations and the collective agreement applicable to that activity, professional category and locality.

Under **subsequent control**, the Labour and Social Security Inspectorate (ITSS) checks that there is compliance with the labour and Social Security obligations and those regarding hiring foreigners, especially after the 2105 reform.

The control activities that meet the current Spanish immigration laws cover all economic sectors. However, the ITSS has tried to intensify its efforts in the areas in which there is a greater risk of illegal work by foreigners (i.e., catering and commerce).

1.1.4. **Other developments in economic migration.**

Nothing to report in this section.

1.2. **Students and researchers**

The admission and retention of international students and researchers is a priority. This fact is included in both the Strategy for Internationalising Spanish Universities (2015-2020) and the Spanish Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation for the period 2013-2020, which has, among its priorities, support for internationalising the Spanish science, technology and innovation system. From the point of view of migration, the section on international mobility in Law 14/2013 has contributed to this internationalisation by setting up a specific residence permit for R&D+i activities and by planning facilities for changing the status, in particular, of international students to the categories in the law (mainly highly qualified professionals and innovative entrepreneurs).

1.2.1. **Admission policy for students and researchers**

One of the goals of the Strategy for Internationalising Spanish Universities is to facilitate the entry of students, lecturers and researchers from third countries.

Promotional and publicity activities.

As part of this strategy, the major stakeholders involved, from immigration and education, have cooperated under a Cooperation Agreement signed in 2015. Among other items, this Agreement lists a set of good immigration practices for universities and immigration offices and creates an oversight committee to resolve the different practical issues arising.

In this context, **publicity** for the regulations on the admission of students and researchers has improved, both among **students and researchers** (information leaflets, improvements in the web-based information) and the **universities**. For example, a number of workshop and seminars were held with university internationalisation offices to explain and familiarise them with immigration
Representatives of the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and the Ministry of Employment and Social Security took part in these events.

**Legislative activities: the task of transposing the directive on students and researchers.**

In addition to publicity, in 2107 the work being done on transposing Directive (EU) 2016/801, known as the Directive on Students and Researchers, intensified. Although no regulatory changes occurred, progress was made on the provisions that will make it possible to fully integrate the contents of the directive into the Spanish immigration system. The transposition is, therefore, an opportunity for improving, from a regulatory point of view, the process for admitting students and researchers. In addition, the new intra-EU mobility system will remove barriers to migration and add value to the EU mobility programmes and those set up by the universities.

Among the activities involved in transposing the directive that should be highlighted is an event that took place in February 2017, organised by SEPIE (Spanish Service for the Internationalisation of Education), the National Police and universities and business schools. The conclusions from this seminar have been taken into account in the transposition.

**Exchange programmes.**

In 2017 work continued on managing and publicising the existing programmes.

SEPIE continued to manage scholarship and mobility programmes through cooperation agreements with foreign governments to include students and teaching and non-teaching staff in the Spanish university system. The programmes include: Science without Borders with Brazil, teacher training with Ecuador, a project with Colombia, current projects with Argentina and Paraguay, and projects being negotiated with Uruguay, Philippines and Uzbekistan. A Memorandum of Understanding was also signed with Kazakhstan so that Spanish universities are included on its lists for submitting bids.

**Erasmus+ (2014-2020)**

The new features of the 2017 announcements focused, firstly, on the inclusion of a new region, the Middle East, in the Cooperation for Development Instrument. This region includes Iraq, Iran and Yemen. Secondly, the European Commission launched a new challenge for the National Agencies in the countries in the programme for the voluntary inclusion of an additional appropriation for Tunisia under the European Neighbourhood Instrument with southern countries, to which Spain donated €700,000. A total of 68 mobility projects were awarded to other Spanish higher education institutions as a result of this call for proposals, with a total value of €15,264,207, which will allow 4,329 students and staff from Spain and 93 countries around the world to take part.

**1.2.2. Mechanisms and incentives for retaining students and researchers.**

Spain is continuing its efforts to retain international students and introduce them as talent into the Spanish labour market. The possibility is therefore proposed in the transposition of the Directive of

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6 Directive (EU) 2016/801 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2016 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing.
granting a residence permit for seeking employment pursuant to article 25 of the Directive (for researchers and students to remain in the country to seek employment or entrepreneurial activities).

1.2.3. Other measures relating to students and researchers.

In 2017, work continued on transposing the Directive.

1.3. Family reunification and family composition

In Spain in 2017 there were no changes in the area of family reunification.

It should, however, be noted that, in order to attract foreign talent, investment and entrepreneurs, Law 14/2003, of 27 September, on support for entrepreneurs and their internationalisation, favours the joint entry of the nuclear families of the groups covered by the law and speeding up and unifying the procedure under one single authority.

1.4. Information on legal migration routes and conditions

Information on legal migration routes is becoming an increasing priority. This information can divided into two major groups.

a) Information in campaigns, websites, special centres, etc. Information on the routes and conditions for legal migration are provided through the consulates and, where appropriate, departments of employment in third countries. The existence of departments of employment in Africa (Senegal and Morocco) and in Latin America should be noted. Information can also be obtained from the websites of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and the Ministry of Employment and Social Security.

b) As part of cooperation with third states. For example, programmes that include measures prior to departure tend to include the supply of information on visas and work permits and take place both in the member state and in third countries. The experience of the Moroccan circular migration programme in which Spain participates should be noted. Through it, Moroccan citizens can obtain in their country all the information they need prior to travelling to Spain.

1.5. Long-term residence and mobility within the EU of third-country nationals who are legal residents

Long-term residence.

From a regulatory point of view, 2017 produced no changes regarding long-term residents.

Mobility within the EU of third-country nationals who are legal residents.

Within the framework of the transposition of the EU-ICT Directive on intra-corporate transfers, Spain opted for an intra-mobility procedure by means of a notification. In 2017 one case of intra-mobility occurred in this context.

In regard to changes in 2018, work is being done on transposing the Directive on Students and Researchers, which includes intra-Community mobility for these categories. Spain has also opted to report researcher mobility, as occurs with the ICT Directive.
1.6. **Other measures regarding legal migration schemes**

One of Spain's priorities is to work on a legal migration scheme. In 2017 work was done on studying other possible legal migration projects as part of the initiative adopted by the European Commission.

1.7. **Schengen Governance**

Spain did not reintroduce any internal border control in 2017, although the internal frontiers with France were affected by the controls reintroduced by that member state. In 2017, Spain received regular Schengen evaluation visits (external borders, data protection, return, police cooperation, SIS-SIRENE and visas) and the reports are pending approval.

1.8. **Visa Policy**

In the area of data protection, Spain is launching a plan to strengthen compliance with the European VIS Visa Information System. In particular, the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation signed a contract with an external company to create a historical archive of all the data included in VIS, which can only be accessed with a court order. A data protection training programme will also be launched to strengthen individual skills in this area.

In regard to cooperation between the consulates of Member States, all the Member States are making a great effort to promote the general use of VISMAIL by consular offices.
2. **INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION, INCLUDING ASYLUM**

2.1. **Application of the Common European Asylum System (SECA) and the Development of Related Policies**

2.1.1. **Legislative changes, policies and practices.**

Last year there were no changes in asylum policy, which continued along the broad lines demarcated by international law and Community action:

- **At a global level**, Spain is taking part in the negotiations for signing a Global Compact on Refugees.

- **At Community level**, Spain has continued to defend the need to tackle migration and asylum policies with the European Union, focusing on the root causes of migration and conflicts, by combining short-term (to alleviate the current situation) and long-term measures. Spain is taking an active part in the negotiations to reform the Common European Asylum System.

- **At country level**, Spain has continued to double its capacity to handle cases and to give an appropriate welcome to asylum seekers and recipients.

2.1.1.1. **Access to the asylum procedure.**

The Spanish asylum and refugee office has launched a comprehensive plan to provide a suitable response to the growing number of applications for asylum. The plan involves both its size (it is probable that claims will remain at the same level as in previous years) and the operation of the system (its capacity must meet the latest needs) so that it can facilitate and speed up access to asylum procedures.

2.1.1.2. **Reception of asylum seekers.**

According to data from Eurostat, in 2017 Spain received 31,120 applications for international protection, a figure that was almost double that for the previous year (15,755 applications in 2016). The upward trend has therefore continued.

In addition, according to data from the Ministry of the Interior (2016), the Community regulation establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national, known as the Dublin Regulation, was applied in 2016 incrementally to the number of requests received by Spain from other Member States. 5,851 applications were received for takeovers and readmissions, an increase of 11.02% from the number recorded in 2015 (5,270). The number of requests received from Germany stands out while the countries that sent the greatest number of applications to Spain were Germany, France, Belgium, Switzerland and Sweden.

2.1.1.3. **Asylum procedures.**

In regard to access to information and legal counselling/representation (including on the border and during the asylum procedure), Spain has continued the work started in previous years by providing all information requested and guaranteeing the right to legal aid and the assistance of an interpreter.

Given the growing demand for information and legal assistance, various organisations and professional associations are implementing actions to attend to the latest needs of those seeking international protection.
For example, the Madrid Bar Association organised special guidance on asylum and providing free legal aid. Interested lawyers must take a preparatory course.

The Spanish asylum and refugee office is participating by providing training specialists. It is also planned to improve the telephone service for applications on the border.

There are various special procedures: border procedures, transits area procedures, accelerated procedures, admissibility procedures, priority procedures and any special procedure for selected cases.

The data on the applications made in 2016 (latest data from the Ministry of the Interior) indicate that applications made on the border accounted for 18% of the total. It should also be noted that in-country applications increased by 79.70%.

It should be noted that the efforts made in terms of capacity and procedures are showing results. In 2017, 13,345 decisions on international protection were made, a figure higher than in 2016 (10,250) and much higher than in 2015 (3,240).

2.1.1.4. Residence/entry documents and the rights/obligations of recipients of international protection.

There were no new developments in this area since there is already a solid legal and administrative practice in place.

2.1.1.5. Supply of information on residence/entry documents and the rights/obligations of recipients of international protection.

There were no new developments in this area since there is already a solid legal and administrative practice in place (see 2.1.1.3).

2.1.1.6. Withdrawing international protection.

There were no new developments in this area since there is already a solid legal and administrative practice in place.

2.1.1.7. Cooperation with third states.

Cooperation with third states is the basis of Spanish migratory policy. The special features of international protection mean that in these cases Spain is in line with the European Union and there were no outstanding changes in 2017, apart from continuing the existing action lines and ongoing cooperation work.

2.1.1.8. Other developments in asylum legislation, policy and practices.

The General Secretariat of Digital Administration (DTIC, until December 2016) promotes and coordinates the General State Administration’s rationalisation and digital transformation process and works with the other government departments to guarantee the interoperability, efficiency and effectiveness of the services provided to the public and to business. In this context, the asylum and refugee office has developed a new application for the comprehensive monitoring of applications for asylum, stateless and displaced persons. It is designed to cover the current regulations by following all the stages of the administrative procedure defined in Law 39/2015, of 1 October, on the Common Administrative Procedure for the Public Administrations, regarding the management of asylum application files both in-country and at the borders and in embassies. The office also
handles applications from stateless persons submitted in this country and monitors Spain’s quota of displaced persons.

2.1.2. Institutional changes in the asylum system.

No new developments were introduced in 2017, beyond the efforts to strengthen the capacity of the system.

2.1.3. Efficiency and quality of the national asylum system.

No new developments were introduced in 2017, beyond the efforts to strengthen the capacity of the system and improve the procedures so as to increase the quality and efficiency of the system.

2.1.4. Challenges for the national asylum system.

The increase in applications for international protection is the great challenge for the asylum system that is demonstrated by (i) the procedures and (ii) scope of the reception system.

In regard to the procedures, the exponential rise in the number of applications (they have multiplied by five in the last five years) has led to a delay in decisions, since the deadlines that must be kept for handling them, in accordance with the current legal framework, have been overwhelmed by the growth of the phenomenon.

The Spanish asylum and refugee office has therefore launched a comprehensive plan to provide a suitable response to the increase in asylum seekers, both in terms of numbers and the operation of the system.

The reception system has been overwhelmed by the increase in the number of asylum seekers in this country, despite an increase in its capacity and its budget. An overhaul of the system is therefore underway.

The effort made internally to coordinate actions between the State and the Autonomous Regions should be noted. In this regard, on 2 November 2017, the General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration sent a letter to the representatives of the Autonomous Regions and the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces thanking them for their involvement and participation in drawing up a Protocol for coordinating actions designed for applicants and recipients of international protection between the Ministry of Employment and Social Security, the Autonomous Regions and Local Authorities, which has been applied as normal practice since then.

Also, in January 2018, an agreement was signed between the Basque Government's General Secretariat for Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation and the Ministry of Employment and Social Security Directorate General for Migration, to guarantee the coordination of actions on procedures established to receive and integrate those applying for and receiving international protection.
2.2. **Relocation and resettlement programmes**

2.2.1. **Relocation.**

2.2.1.1. **Relocation mechanisms within the European Union.**

To date, Spain has relocated 1,359 people, 235 from Italy and 1,224 from Greece, making it the 9th state in terms of effective relocations.

The profiles of these people, who were received at national reception and integration system facilities, are as follows:

- By **age**: 837 are adults and 522 children.
- By **family situation**: 987 form part of family units; 360 are single adults and 12 are unaccompanied foreign children.
- By **nationality of origin**: 905 Syrians; 234 Eritreans; 200 Iraqis; 18 Palestinians; 1 from the Central African Republic and 1 from Yemen.
- By **sex**: 842 are men and 517 women.

It should also be noted that Spain is one of the countries that has experienced a higher rate of secondary movements as part of the relocation programme.

2.2.1.2. **National relocation mechanisms.**

No action has been taken on a bilateral basis.

2.2.2. **Resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes.**

Additional Provision One of Law 12/2009, of 30 October, regulating the right to asylum and subsidiary protection, provides for the creation of refugee resettlement programmes and the specification of the number of people that may be resettled in this country each year under such programmes.

This obligation was formalised in 2011 in the Annual Resettlement Programme that the Ministries of the Interior and Employment and Social Security took to the Council of Ministers for approval. The number of those resettled under these programmes has increased gradually in recent years.

2.2.2.1. **Joint EU resettlement programmes.**

Spain undertook to resettle **1,449 people** from third countries bordering on the conflict zone during the 2015-2017 period.

Having met 93% of its commitment, the Spanish government has approved the resettlement of another 1,000 people in 2018 and proposes to resettle another 1,200 in 2019.

In addition, the EU-Turkey Declaration of 18 March 2016 established a “1+1 mechanism”, according to which for every Syrian who was not seeking asylum or whose application had been rejected and was readmitted by Turkey from Greece, another Syrian would be resettled in the EU from Turkey.
In theory, the figures for those resettled from Turkey based on this mechanism will be deducted from the 18,000 resettlement places assigned to the governments of the Member States in the Council of 20 July 2015 (Spain was allotted 1,449 places).

As a result of the final distribution by the EU Council, at the proposal of COM, of the 54,000 people who in theory were going to be relocated around the EU from Hungary, Spain also undertook to take in 6,456 people, who could be:

- Relocated from Greece or Italy.
- Syrians from Turkey, in accordance with national or multilateral programmes for the legal admittance of people with an obvious need of international protection, in addition to the resettlement commitment assumed in July 2015 (which for Spain was 1,449 people and has been almost entirely met).

To date, **1,143 people** have been transferred, 440 from Turkey and 993 from Lebanon. The profiles of these people, who were received at national reception and integration system facilities, are as follows:

- By age: 637 are adults and 796 children (none of these children were unaccompanied, but were part of a family unit.
- By family situation: 13 were single adults and the rest part of a family unit.
- By nationality of origin: 1,429 were Syrian citizens and 4 Palestinians.
- By sex: 800 were men and 633 women.

2.2.2. National resettlement programmes.

In December 2017, the Council of Ministers adopted an Agreement approving the Spanish refugee resettlement programme for 2018, which included the arrival of a thousand people, in response to the call from the European Union.

The goal of resettling 1,000 people is in line with the greater efforts requested by the European Commission in its Recommendation of September 2017, intended for 50,000 people during 2018-2019.

With this number, Spain has continued to show its solidarity with and commitment to the European institutions as regards resettlement while negotiations are continuing for the reform of the European Asylum System.

The current programme includes selection criteria for those receiving resettlement measures, bearing in mind the priorities set by the UNHCR and the European Union Common Resettlement Programme.

To implement the programme, it is planned to conduct selection and identification missions on the ground, which is essential for the success of the programme as in this way the information provided by the UNHCR will be complemented by analysing the socio-cultural profile of those who could be resettled, in order to tackle their possible reception and integration into Spanish society.
3. **UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS**

No new developments were introduced in Spain in this area since there is already a solid legal and administrative practice in place for the protection of unaccompanied foreign children (hereinafter, UFC) and equal treatment for all children regardless of their migratory status.

Although it is not new, it should be noted that in order to better manage this increasingly important phenomenon, in July 2014 a Framework Protocol on certain actions concerning UFCs, which permits the coordination of the involvement of all institutions and administrations affected and was applied throughout last year, was approved. This protocol has been strengthened in the different regions with jurisdiction in this area and in different ways, from signing protocols with the Autonomous Regions to organising meetings to determine the scope of the situation and manage difficulties that have arisen.

Given the special vulnerability of the territories of Ceuta and Melilla, on 23 June 2017, the Council of Ministers approved a subsidy of €6,449,000.00 for these autonomous cities to improve the assistance provided by UFC reception centres, thereby increasing the amount of the subsidy by €3 million over 2016.

This subsidy is included in the integration goals of the Spanish National Programme of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) approved by the European Commission.

The purpose of the subsidy is to collaborate with immediate attention and reception of UFCs, provide them with information, guidance and psychosocial support and education and job placement.

3.1. **Unaccompanied children seeking asylum**

No new developments were introduced in this area, but it must be noted that the situation of UFCs has been prioritised according to their migratory status, so that there are no differences in treatment between asylum seekers and those who are not applying for international protection.

3.2. **Other vulnerable groups of asylum seekers**

Measures to clarify the definition of vulnerable groups (VG)

It has been proposed to include as VGs those that were established in article 21 of Directive EU 2013/33\(^7\), to which AMIF calls for proposals would be directly applicable and would serve as a benchmark for calls for proposals for the integration of immigrants and voluntary return, by determining those that would be taken into consideration depending on the aim of each call for proposals, without excluding other VGs or vulnerability criteria that could be specific to each one. For example, the group gender violence victims should be expressly included. Although all the calls for proposals include as the reference point for the projects the concept of vulnerable people, the following codes are proposed for the purposes of statistical treatment:

**Codes for vulnerable groups:**

- VG1 Minors

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VG2 Unaccompanied minors
VG3 People with disabilities
VG4 Elderly people
VG5 Pregnant women
VG6 Single-parent families with underage children
VG7 Victims of human trafficking
VG8 People with serious illnesses
VG9 People with mental disorders
VG10 People who have suffered torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence (other than gender violence)
VG11 Victims of gender violence
VG12 Homeless people (specifically for RV programmes)
VG13 Other vulnerable people

Identifying to which of these vulnerable groups people belong is the task of professionals from the different organisations and centres responsible for receiving and integrating third country nationals.

3.3. Unaccompanied children not seeking asylum

There were no new developments in Spain in 2017 regarding unaccompanied children not seeking asylum, because it must be borne in mind that, in the case of UFCs, Spain prioritises their status as children rather than as migrants, so that most measures are adopted regardless of their migratory status.

3.4. Other vulnerable groups not seeking asylum

As stated in the preceding section, what is established there has been used as a reference for vulnerable groups that are not seeking asylum.
4. INTEGRATION

4.1. Integration of third-country nationals

4.1.1. Integration through socio-economic participation.

There were no notable new developments in 2017 in Spain's immigrant integration policy, which, in any case, has continued to adapt to the changing migratory profiles. This continuity is consistent with considering integration to be a bulwark of Spanish migration policy since, even in a negative economic situation, no serious social conflicts have occurred between the migrant and domestic populations nor has an increase been observed in xenophobic attitudes in society.

Therefore, in 2017 there were no changes in the main areas of action on immigrant integration, apart from a continuing effort to strengthen and adapt integration policy to ensure consistency and prevent future problems.

The essential ways of strengthening the policy, with the ultimate aim of integrating increasingly diverse profiles, include the following measures:

a) Measures in the education system.

Education is a strategic factor in the social integration of immigrants, especially of future generations, and therefore it is (i) a suitable instrument for preventing intolerance, (ii) the main instrument of social mobility, helping to overcome economic and social barriers and improve the future prospects for people and (iii) a key factor in employability.

It is therefore not possible to have cultural integration or participation in economic and social life without a high-quality, inclusive education system.

In Spain, therefore, all minors (under 18’s) have a right to education. It is also obligatory for those under the age of 16, regardless of their administrative situation. To guarantee this right, foreigners who have children in their care must present evidence that they are being educated when they renew their residence permits or apply for long-term residence (article 9.4 of the LOEX).

The laws that regulate education in general terms, such as Organic Law 2/2006, of 3 May, on Education, and Organic Law 8/2013, of 9 December, on Improving the Quality of Education, take into account these factors when identifying the following as principles of the education system: quality education for all students, regardless of their situation and circumstances, and fairness, which guarantees equal opportunities, inclusive education and non-discrimination and acts as an element that compensates for personal, cultural economic and social inequalities.

The composition of foreign students in Spain is increasingly diverse: it is enough to note that, among non-nationals under the age of 16, 25.8% are of Moroccan origin and 24.9% Chinese. The education system therefore must adapt and establish as its priorities: strengthening the school network, promoting language learning, preventing early school leaving and ensuring academic results similar to the national average.

The Spanish education system therefore takes into account the situation of students who enter the system late because they come from other countries or for some other reason. In cases where students require a different type of education from the norm, they will receive education in accordance with Organic Law 2/2006, of 3 May, on Education.

It should be noted that the Autonomous Regions have jurisdiction over education. Their education authorities are responsible for adopting measures to ensure that parents and students receive the required guidance regarding the rights, duties and opportunities arising from entering the education system. These authorities generally start extracurricular programmes to help with a lack of
knowledge of the Spanish language and try to compensate for educational inequalities, prevent truancy, increase the participation of families in schools, train teachers and create awareness in the classroom of violence and racism.

At the state level, the Secretary General for Immigration and Emigration (Ministry of Employment and Social Security) finances a series of extracurricular educational programs that are implemented through subsidies to non-profit social organisations. In addition, reference must be made to the cooperation agreement signed by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport and the Autonomous City of Ceuta, with the aim of satisfying the educational needs observed in the city: academic failure, early school leaving and problems of employment and social exclusion.

Lastly, it is a priority to prevent possible situations of discrimination in the classroom. The following actions are therefore of importance:

- The Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport’s Strategic Plan for School Existence (2016-2020), which identifies immigrants and minorities as being vulnerable groups.

- The FRIDA Project, to prevent and detect racism, xenophobia and intolerance in the classroom, launched by the Ministry of Employment and Social Security's General Secretariat for Immigration and Emigration, through the Spanish Racism and Xenophobia Observatory (OBERAXE) and with the cooperation of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport's National Centre for Research and Innovation (CNIIE).

b) Measures to improve language abilities.

A knowledge of the language is essential for the social and professional integration of immigrants into the host society. Public programmes are intended to provide immigrants with sufficient ability to operate in their surroundings, so that they can have access to goods and services, exercise their rights and fulfil their obligations under the same conditions as locals. Given the heterogeneity of the non-national population in Spain, these programmes are becoming increasingly important.

In 2017, basic Spanish programmes, co-official language programmes and programmes on history, culture, basic institutions and the framework for coexistence in Spanish society continued. These programmes are implemented by non-profit organisations through subsidies, including those administered by the General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration and co-financed by the Asylum, Migration and Immigration Fund (AMIF).

c) Access to Social Security, healthcare and housing.

There were no new developments in Spain in 2017 in regard to Social Security, healthcare and housing. It should simply be remembered that in Spain foreign residents have equal access to these services, like Spanish citizens.

d) Integration into the labour market.

Access to employment is probably the most important factor in social and economic integration. In the case of Spain, the economic crisis that occurred at the beginning of this decade had a very negative effect on employment and the areas in which most jobs were lost were the socio-economic sectors in which there had traditionally been a large proportion of immigrant workers.

However, in the last two years, a positive trend and a slight recovery in employment have been observed, including among the immigrant population. In spite of this, the new skills required by the labour market in a knowledge society emphasise the need for improving the qualifications of national and non-national workers. This need is greater among non-nationals (especially the second generation) since, otherwise, they could be at a disadvantage when entering the labour market,
which could have a negative effect on their social integration. Improving employability is therefore one of the priorities of Spain's integration policy.

In 2017 the Operational Programme for Social Inclusion and Social Economy in Spain, co-financed by the European Social Fund for the funding period 2014-2020, continued to be implemented. The amount invested in Spain is €1.1 billion, of which the European Social Fund provides €800 million. The aim of the programme is to boost the employment of those farthest from the labour market and to promote the social economy. Non-nationals are one of the groups receiving these measures; the activities to promote social inclusion, diversity, equal treatment and combat any type of discrimination are directed toward them.

These measures in the operational programme share the goals of the active employment policies, in which work has continued on (i) hiring support programmes, (ii) labour market intermediation, (iii) information, guidance and job searches, (iv) guidance on self-employment and (b) vocational training for employment, for both vacancies and applications.

There are also other programmes, such as PREPARA, designed to provide vocational training and training for employment through certificates of professionalism and the National Youth Guarantee System, in which non-nationals with a residence permit can participate (the system does not differentiate between nationals and non-nationals when they are taking part in these actions).

As a supplement for active employment policies, the employment programmes provided by non-profit organisations should be noted. These organisations benefit from a national call for applications for subsidies from the Ministry of Employment and Social Security's General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration. These programmes focus on socially excluded immigrants. The main activities consist of paths to individual entry into the labour market, both when employed by others and when self-employed. Among these measures, special attention has been paid to the victims of people trafficking, the revitalisation of rural areas with a low population density, the promotion of equal treatment and non-discrimination in the workplace, in addition to other actions.

**4.1.2. Integration through civic participation.**

**a) Mechanisms for institutional participation.**

The *Forum for the Social Integration of Immigrants* and the *Council for the Promotion of Equal Treatment and Non-Discrimination of People for Ethnic Reasons or Origin* are two of the most important bodies promoting the participation of immigrants in public actions. On 29 July 2015, the Forum set up its new mandate for the period 2015-2018. The Forum consists of a chairperson, two deputy chairpersons and 30 representatives from the public authorities, immigrant and refugee associations and public support organisations with an interest and presence in the area of immigration (NGOs, trade unions and employers’ organisations). It may also include up to 3 observers (social organisations with an activity that, although not directly related with immigration, has a positive effect on immigrant integration).

In the process of renewing the Forum's mandate, mentioned in the 2014 and 2015 studies, two vacant positions remained for representatives of immigrant and refugee associations and one for employers’ organisations. To fill these vacancies, in 2015 a selection process was launched that ended in 2016 in Order ESS/1665/2016 of 15 September, appointing the Mujeres entre Mundos Association, the Sociocultural Association and Cooperation for Development for Colombia and Latin America and the Spanish Federation of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises as the new organisations.

As an example of the activities of this group, on 30 November 2015 an ad hoc working group was formed within the Forum entitled "Associative movement of immigrants in Spain". Its aim is to

b) Integration through democratic participation.

The right to public participation enshrined in article 6 of the LOEX is one of the main opportunities for non-nationals to take part in the decisions of the country in which they live.

In regard to the right to suffrage, pursuant to article 13.2 of the Spanish Constitution, only Spaniards (and, where appropriate, Community citizens) have the right to vote, unless this is established for municipal elections by a reciprocal treaty or law.

In addition to compliance with European Union treaties, Spain has signed reciprocal agreements on the right to vote in municipal elections with a number of countries: Bolivia, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Iceland, Korea, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago.

In 2017 no new agreements were signed between Spain and other countries on participation in municipal elections by nationals of one country resident in another.

4.2. Promoting the integration of specific categories of third-country nationals

In 2017, no new developments were introduced in this area, except for the possible inclusion of these foreigners either among vulnerable groups or among groups affected by non-discriminatory public policies due to nationality (see section 4.3).

4.3. Promoting the integration of vulnerable groups of third country nationals (UFCs, LGBT, the elderly, pregnant women, disabled migrants, etc.)

The Spanish government pays special attention to specific groups, such as children, unaccompanied or not, victims of abuse, rape or people trafficking for different purposes, as they require actions that better fit their circumstances.

In this context, the Spanish government implemented the following measures:

a) Childhood.

The 3rd National Strategic Plan for Childhood and Adolescence (3NSPCA) 2018-2021 was drawn up. It aims to integrate Spain's policies on childhood and adolescence. The objectives in this document include improving social assistance and intervention for children and adolescents who are at risk, unprotected and/or socially excluded. It therefore includes measures intended to intensify the action for children from foreign families, such as promoting and reinforcing temporary stay programmes for non-national children in Spain. Unaccompanied foreign children receive special attention under the plan, when they arrive and during the initial and post-reception stages with transfers and support that fit their situation.

b) Women.

To tackle the various issues that specifically affect immigrant women, a series of programmes was launched to create social support networks for immigrant women who have been the victims of prostitution or of people trafficking and gender violence. These activities are also designed to provide support for their children.

In addition, health-related prevention and promotion programmes have been implemented, with a special focus on women’s sexual and reproductive health and vaccinations for children. Health-
related programmes were also implemented for this section of the population, with the aim of eliminating phenomena like female genital mutilation.

Lastly, it should be noted that, in general, support is offered to programmes that seek to foster normal access by women to general programmes, by promoting their empowerment, training, leadership skills and their participation in society.

c) **Applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection.**

It should be remembered that to achieve the general aim of promoting the reception and integration of this group, the General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration applies a Comprehensive Assistance Strategy, which includes the following action lines:

- A national reception network that includes Refugee Reception Centres, under the responsibility of the General Directorate for Migration, for those applying for and benefiting from international protection as well as other reception schemes subsidised by the Ministry of Employment and Social Security and administered by partner organisations.

- An integration strategy that promotes gradual autonomy, after the end of the stay in reception centres or reception arrangements, through supplementary programmes and resources that help the beneficiaries to manage their new environment, gain access to jobs and integrate into the host society.

The programmes operate through subsidies granted through a competitive procedure to non-profit organisations so that they can implement a programme designed for applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection, as well as programmes co-financed by AMIF and the European Social Fund (ESF).

In 2016, the Directorate General for Migration of the General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration approved a series of announcements of subsidies financed by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) focusing on international protection and social and healthcare assistance at the Immigrant Temporary Stay Centres in Ceuta and Melilla. The implementation period for the project covered the financial years 2016 and 2017. The beneficiaries were entities, non-governmental organisations and international organisations. Their projects had to be designed for applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection; applicants for and beneficiaries of the status of displaced person; applicants for and beneficiaries of temporary protection in Spain; and vulnerable people. The following priorities were established for financing the projects:

- Projects designed to create and maintain reception schemes and develop paths to integration.

- Projects to provide social assistance and healthcare at the Immigrant Temporary Stay Centres in Ceuta and Melilla.

- Projects designed to promote the knowledge of asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection, and consciousness-raising for the host society.

- Training and continuing training projects for professionals and volunteers.

- The creation and maintenance of special comprehensive care facilities for vulnerable groups (victims of people trafficking and their children, victims of gender violence and their children, single parents with underage children, people with serious illnesses, people with mental disorders, people who have suffered torture, rape and other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence, and young people, etc.).

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- Projects to equip and adapt properties.
- Employment projects to develop personal paths to labour market integration designed for applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection and to promote equal opportunities between men and women, prevent xenophobic behaviour in the workplace and promote diversity in business.

4.4. **Non-discrimination**

A) In regard to discrimination, two key international projects should be noted, namely:

**PROXIMITY Project**

This project is led by the General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration. It is a transnational project approved in 2016 by the Directorate General of Justice of the European Union JUST/2015/RRAC/AG, with the aim of identifying and sharing tools for increasing the ability of local municipal authorities and police forces to predict and identify incidents of racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance.

The project has a duration of two years and in May 2017 there was a launch meeting in Milan.

The activities being undertaken include: identifying good practices at the local level (innovative neighbourhood experiments, awareness programmes for local/municipal police, etc.) that are related with racism and xenophobia and other forms of intolerance; creating racism and xenophobia awareness programmes; preparing recommendations and guidelines for awareness raising and the prevention of racism and xenophobia; and publicising the results of the project.

**The Project “Living together without discrimination: a focus based on human rights and the gender dimension”**.

This programme comes under the EU Trust Fund for Africa and was approved by the 2nd Operating Committee of the North of Africa Window on 16 December 2016. Using a co-delegation model with FIIAPP (International and Latin American Foundation for Public Administration and Policies), the AECID (Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation) is the leading partner before the EU.

The Delegation Agreement was signed on 24 August 2017 by the EU, FIIAPP and AECID, with a total budget of €5.5 million, of which €4.1 million correspond to AECID.

The general objective of the project is to strengthen public policy and instruments designed to prevent racism and xenophobia against the migrant population in Morocco based on protecting the fundamental rights of migrants to promote "coexistence", with a special mention for the gender perspective.

B) The actions of OBERAXE (Spanish Racism and Xenophobia Observatory) in 2017 should also be noted as they can be included in the overall strategy against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other connected forms of intolerance:

1. **Gathering and analysis of information on racism and xenophobia to understand the situation and the prospects for evolution.**

OBERAXE makes an annual diagnosis of the situation and the evolution of racism and xenophobia and other forms of intolerance in Spain using national surveys and the corresponding reports. These are essential instruments for describing the progress of Spanish society, its perceptions of and attitudes towards immigration and for orienting public policy in the area of the integration of immigrants and fighting racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance in general.
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In 2017, the Report on the Evolution of Racism, Xenophobia and Other Forms of Intolerance, based on the 2015 survey, was published and another report drawn up based on the 2016 survey (to be published shortly). The report describes the perception held by Spanish citizens of immigration.

Also in 2017 a survey was conducted of "Attitudes towards Immigration X", which looked at the opinion of Spaniards of immigration. This is an annual nationwide survey conducted by the Centre for Sociological Research (CIS) and directed at Spanish citizens aged 18 and over.

2. Promoting the principle of equal treatment and non-discrimination and combating racism and xenophobia.

Promoting the principle of equal treatment and non-discrimination and combating racism and xenophobia is one of the main focuses of OBERAXE. Many of its activities are therefore designed to implement actions in this area. These actions are implemented in cooperation with organisations with jurisdiction in this area and form part of the objectives of the Comprehensive strategy for combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance. Within this framework there are various programmes in a variety of sectors at the international, national and autonomous region level.

Its actions in the areas of education and healthcare should be noted.

- As already mentioned, education is a vital tool for preventing racism, xenophobia and intolerance. This is why OBERAXE promoted the FRIDA project “Training to prevent and detect racism, xenophobia and linked forms of intolerance in the classroom” (2014-2017), with the aim of training and raising the awareness of teachers, school managers and the education community in the prevention and detection of racism and xenophobia and other forms of intolerance and human rights. The project had the cooperation of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport's National Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CNIIE), all the Autonomous Regions, the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla and civil society. The following activities took place in 2017:
  

- Healthcare is also an essential factor in combating racism and xenophobia, as stated in the Comprehensive strategy for combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance. For this reason, OBERAXE launched the PANDORA project, to provide training in and awareness of hate crimes/incidents against healthcare professionals. This project proposes to incorporate the fight against incidents of discrimination and hate in a sector that is in a privileged position to identify them: healthcare professionals. When the victims of assault due to a hate crime/incident go to a healthcare service, it is these professionals who are the first to attend them and therefore they are the first to be able to identify the existence of hatred behind the assault.

During 2017, 102 awareness-raising seminars were held on detecting incidents of racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance in the area of healthcare. They were delivered by the Movement against Intolerance at 78 healthcare centres, 10 hospitals and 70 partner healthcare centres in the provinces of Madrid, Toledo, Valladolid, Valencia, Malaga, Seville and Saragossa. 1,500 medical professionals, nurses, social workers and other healthcare professionals attended. This action line was co-financed by the General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration and the Asylum, Migration and Immigration Fund (AMIF).
3. Cooperation and coordination with public and private, national and international stakeholders involved in preventing and combating racism and xenophobia.

The Comprehensive strategy to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance states as one of its main focuses that combating racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia, and any other form of intolerance requires a constant review of the efforts for institutional and intergovernmental coordination and cooperation to strengthen the cooperation networks between entities and institutions that fight against this social scourge and to bring civil society into the fight.

In this context, in September 2015, the General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration promoted the signing of a Framework Agreement for inter-institutional cooperation to combat racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance with the General Council of the Judiciary, the Prosecutor General’s Office, the Centre for Legal Studies, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Employment and Social Security.

The aim of this inter-institutional agreement is to coordinate cooperation on the design and application of active policies and measures for preventing and detecting racism, xenophobia and intolerance and fighting their causes and preventing their effects.

The activities planned by the Monitoring Committee of the Interinstitutional Agreement continued in 2017. This committee has a rotating chair and a permanent technical secretariat held by the General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration through OBERAXE.

Meetings of the following workgroups were held:

(i) **Collection of statistical data on hate crimes**, designed to improve the statistical data on hate crimes and incidents using legal channels and the training of professional groups (legal practitioners, the police and other administrative bodies). This workgroup produced a report entitled "Analysis of cases and monitoring of sentences for racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance".

(ii) **Online hate speech**, to combat hate speech on the Internet. This workgroup produced two reports: “Conceptual delimitation of hate crimes” and “Criteria in Spanish law for removing hate speech from Internet platforms”.

In addition, since 2016 the group has been cooperating with the European Commission on monitoring the Code of Conduct signed by the EU with the Internet platforms Twitter, Facebook and Google/YouTube) to remove content containing hate speech within 24 hours. In 2017 OBERAXE took part in two monitoring exercises.

In the same area of combating hate speech on the Internet, in 2017, the ministerial departments that are part of the Inter-Institutional Framework Agreement collaborated with Google on the campaign "We are More, against hatred and radicalisation" (http://www.somos-mas.es/). The aim of this initiative was to raise awareness and prevent violent radicalisation and hate speech among students aged between 14 and 20 in 9 Autonomous Regions (28,000 students) by training them in respect, tolerance, diversity and counter narrative.

4. Reports, studies and publications.

In addition to those mentioned above, a study was published in 2017 entitled “Hate Crime Data Collection and Monitoring Mechanisms (A Practical Guide)”, which completed the translation into Spanish of three guides on hate crime from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). The two previously
translated are "Hate Crime Laws - A Practical Guide" and "Prosecuting Hate Crimes - A Practical Guide".

The guide describes the way in which governments can use data to design coordinated actions and strategies to respond to hate crimes. It also recognises the valuable role played by civil society in gathering data on hate crimes and monitoring them.

*General Recommendation no.15. On Combating Hate Speech*” was also published by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI).

5. **Seminars organised by OBERAXE.**

In March 2017, the General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration, through the Spanish Racism and Xenophobia Observatory, in collaboration with the University of Saragossa, organised a seminar “Analysis of Recommendation no.15. On Combating Hate Speech” of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI).

6. **Seminars/workshops in which OBERAXE took part.**

A meeting/workshop on "Hate crimes: Data collection and Monitoring" was held at the General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration. This activity was part of the European project "Facting all the Facts" funded by the European Commission and organised by the Movement against Intolerance and the Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe (CEJI). The aim of the project was to bring together people specialising in hate crimes with responsibility in public institutions and civil society for following up on, collecting data and monitoring them in order to analyse possible areas for improvement in the response given to the phenomenon.

The European Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) presented its "2017 Report on Fundamental Rights" at an event organised by the Ministry of Employment and Social Security's General Secretariat for Immigration and Emigration and the Universidad Pontificia de Comillas.

As part of the ADPOLIS project, the manual “Toolkit for Equality” was presented. It is designed to offer support to cities when implementing local policies to successfully combat racism and discrimination for racial motives. The manual provides detailed instructions on how to implement specific policies, from conceptualisation to impact assessment.

7. **Meetings organised by or in which OBERAXE took part.**

In November 2017, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the murder of Dominican citizen Lucrecia Perez, a meeting was held sponsored by the General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration, the Council of Victims of Hate Crimes, the Movement against Intolerance, the current chair of the Inter-Institutional Monitoring Committee for Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Other Forms of Intolerance and the Deputy Coordinating Prosecutor against Hate Crimes and Discrimination.

In December 2017, a group of representatives from the Ukrainian Public Defender's Office and the Council of Europe were received at the headquarters of SGIE. The visit came at the request of the Spanish Public Defender's Office. Its purpose was to introduce the delegation to OBERAXE’s aims, functions and projects in the area of combating discrimination, racism and xenophobia.

Also in December 2017, in response to a request from MIEUX migration expertise, OBERAXE received a delegation from Costa Rica at the SGIE headquarters to inform them of OBERAXE’s actions against racism and xenophobia.

Following the recommendations of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, discussions began in 2017 with associations of people of African descent at the
headquarters of the General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration, through the Spanish Racism and Xenophobia Observatory. The purpose of these discussions is to bring the administration and associations of people of African descent together so that they can understand the problems of these communities and identify possible ways to cooperate on specific projects, seminars and other events. With these objectives, two meetings were held (on 6 July 2017 and 21 December 2017) in which various associations representing this group took part.

8. Training actions

In 2017 OBERAXE organised a course entitled "Racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance" as part of the Ministry of Employment and Social Security’s continuing training programme for its employees.

9. Actions planned for 2018 by OBERAXE.

The following actions are planned:

1. Gathering and analysis of information on racism and xenophobia in order to understand the situation and prospects for evolution, by setting up an information network.
   - Conducting a CIS survey “Attitudes of the Spanish Population to Immigration 2018”.
   - Drafting of the report “Evolution of Racism, Xenophobia and Other Forms of Intolerance in Spain” (2017 Survey Report).

2. Promoting the principle of equal treatment and non-discrimination and combating racism and xenophobia.
   - Continuation of the FRIDA Project “Training and Awareness-Raising for the Prevention and Detection of Racism, Xenophobia and Other Forms of Tolerance in the Classroom”, with two seminars in the Autonomous Regions.
   - Continuing to hold awareness-raising seminars on detecting incidents of racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance in the area of healthcare.

3. Cooperation and coordination with various public and private, national and international stakeholders involved in preventing and combating racism and xenophobia.
   - Continuation of the activities of the Framework Agreement on Inter-Institutional Cooperation and Collaboration against racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance workgroups.
   - Incorporation of the Framework Agreement on Inter-Institutional Cooperation into the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport.
   - Continuation of the Proximity Project.
   - Participation in the project “Living together without discrimination: a focus based on human rights and the gender dimension”, in Morocco.
   - Continuation of the project “We are more, against hatred and radicalisation”.
   - Cooperation with the digital platforms Google/YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram on removing content containing hate speech as part of cooperation with the European
Commission and the Framework Agreement on Inter-Institutional Cooperation and Collaboration against Racism, Xenophobia and Other Forms of Intolerance.

- Participation in the European Union High-Level Group Meetings on racism and xenophobia.
- Participation as the Spanish contact point at working meetings of the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

4.5. **Promoting Local-Level Integration and Cooperation, Consultation and Coordination with Local Stakeholders**

There were no new developments in 2017 and the action lines of previous years continued to be followed.

4.6. **Awareness of Migration in the Host Member State**

- The annual report "Evolution of Racism, Xenophobia and Other Forms of Intolerance" provides an analysis of the current situation and the evolution of racism and xenophobia and other forms of intolerance in Spain based on national surveys. It is an essential instrument for describing the progress of Spanish society, its perceptions of and attitudes to immigration and for orienting public policy in the area of the integration of immigrants and fighting racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance in general.

- OBERAXE redesigned and reorganised the contents of its website to provide up-to-date information on projects, surveys, resources, reports and studies sponsored by the General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration and other ministerial departments, bodies and institutions so that it can operate as a platform for knowledge, analysis and promotion of work to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance and crimes motivated by prejudice. This was made possible through cooperation with the public authorities and civil society in Spain, the European Union and abroad.

4.7. **Integration measures that involve the countries of origin and/or communities in the diaspora**

4.7.1. **Integration measures prior to leaving the country of origin.**

There were no new developments in 2017 and the action lines of previous years continued to be followed.

4.7.2. **Integration measures involving diaspora communities in the Member States.**

There were no new developments in 2017 and the action lines of previous years continued to be followed.
5. **ILLEGAL MIGRATION**

5.1. **Improving the management of external borders**

5.1.1. **Border control measures/management.**

The following measures should be cited:

- Communication channels were established with public authorities and shipping lines.

- An agreement between the Civil Guard and the National Tax Agency is being drawn up to exchange information and provide data obtained from automatic number plate recognition systems installed at border crossings.

- The National Police created a local-level risk analysis tool (Risky Tool v.2), which has been implemented at a number of border posts.

- The National Police implemented a national audit mechanism to check the Schengen frontier management acquis.

- The National Police set up a new Vulnerability Assessment Group at Borders headquarters to handle the Frontex vulnerability assessment mechanisms.

- The National Police set up a reinforced Intelligence Unit dedicated to border affairs, among others, and created and implemented a Joint Investigation Team with Niger.

5.1.2. **Activities to improve the efficiency of external border controls.**

The following projects should be cited:

The *ESPIAS Project* is being developed by the Civil Guard and GNR (Portugal) to purchase new tools for reinforcing air, sea and land resources for maritime surveillance and the exchange of efficient information, as part of EUROSUR. The project will contribute to the creation of a common status report by incorporating the information available from the Madrid and Lisbon National Coordination Centres (CNC) and the resources deployed in the common area of interest.

The purpose of *Project ALFA* is to design a target detection system for short, slow flights based on the use of drones, easily removable mobile sensors and the analysis of different sources of information. The system should provide information on the position, characteristics and possible destination or landing place of the targets.

The purpose of *Project EUCISE 2020* is to create a maritime surveillance information exchange platform using a common information sharing environment (CISE). In 2018, the Civil Guard will lead the work plan for validating the system.

- Planning and development of extra border control personnel depending on the needs identified in national audits.

- Technical resources (document readers, magnifying glasses, etc.) were deployed and new infrastructure built at a number of border posts.
5.1.3. Preventing and combating illegal migration by guaranteeing greater cooperation with third countries in the area of border management.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Agreement</th>
<th>Third country(ies) with which there is cooperation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| El Ksar Project       | Mauritania                                        | - Training airport security units of the Mauritanian Gendarmerie at the new Nouakchott airport and Nouadhibou airport, including training canine units to detect drugs and explosives at both airports.  
- Deployment of a Civil Guard liaison officer, an expert in airport security, to Nouakchott during the project.  
- Training course in land border surveillance.  
- Training courses on illegal migration. |
| Blue Sahel Project    | Mauritania, Mali, Senegal, Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau and Guinea Conakry | - Creation of cross-border patrols in Mali, Mauritania, Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, Republic of Guinea and Gambia. These patrols will receive training and minimum equipment for border surveillance.  
- River border surveillance courses for the Senegalese Gendarmerie on the River Senegal.  
- Maritime training courses, including risk analysis, and the creation of maritime intelligence units in Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Gambia, Senegal and Mauritania. Technical support will begin for the Guinea-Bissau Coastguard with the donation of two ships from the Civil Guard Maritime Service.  
- Training courses on illegal migration for all the countries associated, with the aim of strengthening migrant rights, with special attention to asylum seekers, victims of human trafficking, unaccompanied children, prisoners and vulnerable migrants. |
| Seahorse Mediterranean Project | Libya | - Creation of an information exchange network on illegal migration by sea.  
- Maritime training and human rights training for the Libyan Coastguard. |

5.2. Preventing and tackling the misuse of legal migration channels

5.2.1. Illegal migration as a result of visa liberalisation.

No special measures have been adopted to control the effect of the visa liberalisation systems. A slight increase was observed in the number of Colombian and Peruvian nationals who were rejected at air borders.

No measures were required to encourage their return to these and other Latin American countries; readmission worked satisfactorily.
5.2.1.1. **Effects of the free visa schemes.**

The repercussions of the liberalisation of visas will be seen in the statistical analyses that are being made.

5.2.1.2. **Key monitoring activities.**


5.2.2. **Irregular migration as a result of the misuse of legal migration channels.**

5.2.2.1. **Misuse of legal migration channels by workers from third states**

The Ministry of Employment and Social Security’s General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration cooperates with the Labour and Social Security Inspectorate and the police to control the undue use of legal immigration methods by workers from third countries. It should be noted that the cooperation agreement between the Ministry of Employment and Social Security and the Ministry of the Interior on coordination between the Labour and Social Security Inspectorate and the State Security Forces is continuing to be implemented to combat illegal employment and Social Security fraud. Its scope includes fictitious employment relationships with companies with real business activities, designed to obtain or renew residence and work permits for foreign citizens.

5.2.2.2. **Misuse of legal migration channels by students or researchers from third states.**

No changes were observed; the controls and actions continue along the lines of previous years (see 5.2.2.1).

5.2.2.3. **Misuse of family reunification migration channels.**

No changes were observed; the controls and actions continue along the lines of previous years.

5.2.3. **False travel documents.**

No changes were observed; the controls and actions continue along the lines of previous years.

5.2.4. **Illegal migration caused by the undue use of the right to free circulation by nationals of third countries and the prevention of the fraudulent procurement and use of the rights of free circulation by nationals of third countries**

No changes were observed; the controls and actions continue along the lines of previous years.

5.3. **Combating smuggling and preventing illegal stay**

5.3.1. **Combating facilitation of the smuggling of migrants.**

In regard to those who have already entered, cooperation continues with third countries, European Union agencies and international organisations (Europol, Interpol, OSCE, etc.). Also in this area, greater cooperation with the services of the Labour and Social Security Inspectorate permits control of the employment of third country nationals who have entered illegally and labour exploitation.

The Joint Investigation Team in Niger, which was launched in 2017 with the participation of the Spanish, French and Niger police forces, and the Joint Investigation Team in Mauritania are obtaining results in dismantling organisations dedicated to people trafficking and smuggling. The EU wishes to extend this joint investigation team model to other African countries.

In addition, the Frontex Indalo operation, whose host country is Spain, has become permanent.
5.3.2. *Preventing illegal migration.*

No changes occurred; the work to increasingly strengthen cooperation with the countries of origin and transit continues as in previous years.

5.3.3. *Preventing irregular stay.*

No changes occurred; the work continues as in previous years.

5.3.4. *Cooperation with third states to prevent illegal migration.*

Spain has close bilateral ties with Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania, Senegal, Nigeria and other African countries and has participated in cooperation with Nigeria, Senegal, Niger, Mali and Ethiopia.

The most significant migration route to Spain is the south-western Mediterranean and the Atlantic coast of North Africa.

In 2017 police cooperation activities continued with Mauritania and Morocco.

The formation of a joint investigation team with Niger was of particular importance. Its aims are to investigate and combat people trafficking. Spain is heading the project and France is also taking part. It is financed by the European Fund for North Africa. It is planned to last three years but Spain expects that its duration will be extended and participation in it opened up to other Member States.

At the same time, training has continued for officials in third countries. These courses have focused on document fraud and people trafficking.

Spanish border guards were deployed on the border with Bulgaria, the border between Greece and Turkey and with FRONTEX flexible operations.

a) *Southern Mediterranean countries.*

Under the Seahorse Mediterranean Project, various training activities were organised for the Libyan Coastguard, Libyan crews of deep sea patrol boats, marine mechanics and coordination centre liaison officers.

b) *Countries in the western Mediterranean and Atlantic coast of Africa.*

In Mauritania, joint air and sea patrols are conducted in the Nouadhibou area.

In Senegal, Spain also takes part in joint air and sea patrols. There are monthly patrols with a deep sea patrol boat.

5.3.5. *Monitoring and identifying illegal migration routes.*

After the crisis of 2015, the migratory pressure on Europe appeared to stabilise.

However, in 2017 illegal immigration into Spain was again at much higher levels than expected. According to provisional data from the Ministry of the Interior for December 2017, illegal immigration increased by 101.4% from the previous year.

The reactivation of migratory pressure in the western Mediterranean is currently causing the greatest concern. Therefore, despite a drop in illegal immigration along the routes through the Canary Islands (-37.8% down on the previous year) and Ceuta (-44%), there was a considerable rise in entries through the Peninsula, Balearic Islands and Melilla, leading to an increase in entries by sea of 170.8%.
Over land, the figures are better, even though they are not positive either, since a 1% reduction in immigration through Ceuta does not compensate for the increase through Melilla (9.6%), leading to an overall increase of 5.6%.

In addition, the appearance of new migratory routes across Europe has made it necessary to demand airport transit visas for third country nationals.
6. RETURN

6.1. Improving the management of return migration, including cooperation between EU Member States on return practices

Spain understands that it is necessary for the countries of origin, transit and destination to come to an agreement on return so as to discourage illegal immigration and stop people trafficking and smuggling networks, by channelling migration into the regular migration channels.

In recent years, the European Union has insisted on the need to apply existing return agreements effectively and efficiently. Spain favours voluntary return agreements; however, agreements that promote readmission in the case of forced return are indispensable.

Spain has signed 16 bilateral readmission agreements for people in the country illegally. In addition, framework cooperation agreements on immigration include commitments by the parties, with the possibilities and resources available, to providing mutual assistance on aspects such as voluntary and assisted return programmes and police and operational assistance in combating illegal immigration, etc.

In 2017 no new agreements on readmission were signed.

6.2. Main developments in Spain in the area of return.

6.2.1. Quick, sustainable, effective return.

6.2.1.1. Evolution of global policies on return.

No changes occurred; the work continues as in previous years.

6.2.1.2. Issuing expulsion decisions.

No changes occurred; the work continues as in previous years.

6.2.1.3. Issuing entry bans.

No changes occurred; the work continues as in previous years.

6.2.1.4. Voluntary return (assisted).

In 2017 ERIN implemented reintegration activities in selected third countries using the different services provided. Within this network, Spain has succeeded in returning more than 200 third-country nationals to Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Honduras. However, this network will come to an end in May 2018. Starting in July 2018, it is hoped that a new network (ERIN) will be launched, co-financed by COM and the Member States, to continue working on assistance, advice and activities prior to leaving focusing on vulnerable groups and also on assistance and advice in the country of origin for third country nationals who decide to return.

6.2.1.5. Use of (alternatives to) detention in removal procedures

No changes occurred; the work continues as in previous years.

6.2.1.6. Logging entry bans in the SIS and information exchange.

No changes occurred; the work continues as in previous years. The new SIS Regulation, which is currently being debated, will decide the procedures.
6.2.1.7. **Functioning of the national forced return monitoring system.**
No changes occurred; the work continues as in previous years.

6.2.1.8. **Other swift, sustainable and effective return actions.**
No changes occurred; the work continues as in previous years.

6.2.2. **Return of rejected asylum seekers.**
No changes occurred; the work continues as in previous years.

6.2.3. **Return of irregular migrants.**
No changes occurred; the work continues as in previous years.

6.2.4. **Evidence of the effectiveness of measures to ensure return.**
No changes occurred; the work continues as in previous years.

6.3. **Strengthening cooperation on managing return and reintegration with third countries of origin and transit**

6.3.1. **Participation of third countries in return measures**
In 2017 no changes occurred, except for the ongoing work on cooperation.

6.3.2. **Guaranteeing the application of all the EU Readmission Agreements.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bilateral Protocol for the implementation of the EU-Serbia Readmission Agreement</th>
<th>National regulation</th>
<th>Date of the Protocol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spain/Serbia</td>
<td>Came into force on 01-12-17</td>
<td>Signed: 09.07.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.3.3. **Reintegration measures implemented in cooperation with third countries, e.g., countries of origin.**
In 2017 no changes occurred, except for the on-going work on cooperation.
7. ACTIONS AGAINST THE TRAFFICKING OF HUMAN BEINGS.

7.1. Implementation of national strategic policies

It should be noted that in December 2017 the "Spanish Security Strategy" was approved, which views organised crime as a threat and a challenge. In the context of organised crime, the Strategy underlines the importance of the trafficking of human beings, as organised crime groups have taken advantage of migration and the refugee crisis to open up new routes into Europe.

On 1 December 2017, a document entitled "Detection and support for children who are the victims of people trafficking", prepared by the Childhood, Social Services and Equality Observatory, was presented at the Observatory’s Plenary Session, and chaired by the Ministry of Health Directorate General of Family and Childhood. It is intended that this document should form part (as an annex) of the Framework Protocol for the Protection of Victims of Trafficking in order to improve communications and the detection and referral of minor victims. The document will therefore be sent to the institutions that are signatories of the Framework Protocol for their consideration and the subsequent signing of an agreement to amend the Framework Protocol to include this annex. The adoption of the agreement is scheduled for 2018.

During the last quarter of 2017, the General Council of the Judiciary opened proceedings to collect specific data directly from all the criminal courts on the judicial response to trafficking. The draft statistical reports intended to compile the data taken directly from the criminal courts have been drawn up and approved by the Council and are now awaiting the approval of the National Judicial Statistics Commission, which is made up of representatives of the General Council of the Judiciary, the Prosecutor General's Office and the Ministry of Justice.

Also in 2017, the 2015-2018 Comprehensive Plan to Combat Trafficking in Women and Girls for the Purpose of Sexual Exploitation continued to be implemented. It views sexual trafficking as a form of violence against women and a violation of human rights and among its top priorities is strengthening the detection of trafficking by promoting training and information actions and setting up mechanisms that involve professionals from different fields in recognising the signs of trafficking, and supporting the exit of the victims from this situation.

As part of this plan, on 24 April 2018 the Inter-Territorial Council of the National Health System approved an Annex on “Actions against People Trafficking for the Purposes of Sexual Exploitation” for the Common Protocol for Public Health Action against Gender Violence in the National Health System, which aims to publicise, in the context of healthcare services, the specific characteristics of trafficking women and girls for sexual exploitation and to set guidelines for homogeneous action leading to the early detection of possible victims of trafficking or sexual exploitation and action against the cases identified.

It should be noted that on 20 June 2018 the report of the Council of Europe GRETA group was published highlighting the advances made by Spain in the fight against human trafficking and bringing to the table the challenges that are pending.

7.2. Improving the identification of and the supply of information to victims of people trafficking from third countries

7.2.1. Supplying information on the assistance and support available to victims from third countries.

In the annual courses for staff involved in trafficking cases, information is supplied on the proper management of assistance and support for victims from third countries.
7.2.2. Identifying the victims.

As well as annual courses for staff involved in trafficking cases, the National Police and Civil Guard implemented training courses in 2017 for the new Social Interlocutors who were appointed after Instruction 6/2016 on action by state bodies responsible for applying the law in the fight against human trafficking and cooperating with organisations and bodies with proven experience of helping the victims. The main function of these interlocutors/partners is to strengthen cooperation and information exchange with NGOs so as to improve the detection and identification of and assistance for victims of trafficking, including all those from third countries.

In 2017 the National Reporter initiated a series of contacts with the major trafficking stakeholders in order to focus on this country's major problems.

7.2.3. Cooperation with third countries.

Spain continued to participate in the Europol THB EMPACT project. As part of this priority, two key countries were identified, China and Nigeria. Cooperation with the authorities in these countries and information exchange are two of the essential areas of development.

The Centre for Intelligence against Terrorism and Organised Crime held a training course in 2017 at the Spanish Cooperation Training Centre in Cartagena de Indias (Colombia), which was attended by THB experts from 16 Latin American countries. The course focused on prevention strategies and policies for tackling people trafficking and sexual exploitation.
8. MAXIMISING THE IMPACT OF MIGRATION AND MOBILITY ON DEVELOPMENT.

8.1. Progress towards integrating migration into development policies

Migration and development are two closely linked factors and Spain therefore defends the importance of cooperating on migration with the countries of origin and transit and on integrating migratory policy into development policies.

Accordingly, the 5th Spanish Cooperation Master Plan for the period 2018-2021, which was approved by the Council of Ministers on 27 March 2017 and contains the objectives and priorities that will guide the actions of Spanish cooperation during that period, recognises in its first chapter, in line with Agenda 2030, that the issue of migration is one of the current challenges of the context in which Spanish cooperation actions must be implemented.

The particular issues regarding the phenomenon of migration come under goal 10 “reduce inequality" and, within this goal, target 10.7 “facilitate orderly and well-managed migration”, which is specified in action line 10.7A “support the creation in partner countries of planned and well-managed migration policies”, which is to be implemented as follows: “work will be done on training the institutions so that the migration and mobility of people takes place in an orderly, safe, legal and responsible manner. This includes the strict application of an approach based on human rights and the safety of people, with special attention to the situation of unaccompanied children.”

Other references can also be found throughout the text.

8.1.1. Cooperation on economic migration with partner/third countries.

Spanish migration policy emphasises cooperation with the countries of origin and transit throughout the entire migratory cycle by (i) working with them against the root causes of migration, (ii) working together to build a space for legal migration and (iii) combating illegal channels and people smuggling and trafficking.

The aim of this cooperation is, in general terms, to properly manage migratory flows as a global phenomenon by increasing efforts to develop safe, well-managed and ordered migration, encouraging the regions of origin (at the institutional level, by strengthening, for example, the rule of law and stability, and, at the economic level, by creating real opportunities for employment, by acting on the root causes of migration and therefore lessening the incentives for illegal immigration) and fighting people smuggling and trafficking. The first two goals form part of the relationship between migration and development and the third has an effect on the relationship between safety and development. However, the relationship between migration and development is complex and always requires understanding and mutual trust between states.

The Valletta Summit. The 2015 summit on migration brought together heads of state and government of European and African countries with the goal of strengthening cooperation and tackling together the current challenges of migration, as well as its opportunities. Spain took part in the monitoring groups (including the meeting on legal migration that took place in 2016 promoted by the Commission) and in the Valletta Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) of February 2017. Among other items, the representatives of the European and African countries undertook to work together, among other policy declarations, to strengthen cooperation in the area of legal migration and mobility by promoting policies
that promote regular channels for migration, including a reference to labour migration and the mobility of entrepreneurs, students and researchers. Among the financial mechanisms is the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, which is intended to create stability and tackle the root causes of illegal migration and the movement of people in Africa. Spain contributed €3 million. To improve the coordination of the Spanish participation in the Trust Fund, an inter-ministerial group was set up consisting of the AECID (Spanish International Cooperation Agency for Development), the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Employment and Social Security and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation. In addition, the stakeholders jointly identified the main areas for intervention, in order to implement the most appropriate aid projects. The main objectives of the project are:

1.- Combating the root causes of the phenomenon of migration (by creating opportunities in the countries of origin and transit).

2.- Productive voluntary return (with special mention of triangular cooperation).

3.- Cooperation and institution building.

4.- Combating human trafficking and illegal migration.

5.-Border control and security.

Spain's actions: Projects to promote compliance with the Action Plan: The projects pre-identified (and some already approved) led or participated in by Spain under the Trust Fund focused on key areas for Spain, such as the Sahel and North Africa. There was however a delay in the management of the northern window that led to a delay in the projects submitted by Spain. Some of the projects in which Spain is taking part under mobility associations or partnerships are linked with the Valletta objectives. Therefore, an analysis of the degree of compliance with the Action Plan requires that projects be included that are implemented with these associations. On 7 June 2013 a joint declaration was signed creating the EU-Morocco Migration and Mobility Association. The agreement, which has a flexible and legally non-binding format, has the following member states as participants: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom. It sets a series of policy objectives and initiatives designed to ensure that the movements of people are effectively managed. The agreement includes the following sections: Mobility, legal immigration and integration; illegal immigration, combating illegal people smuggling and human trafficking; migration and development; international protection; horizontal initiatives; and application. As an initiative to sustain the EU-Morocco Mobility Association, in June 2013 the Sharaka Project was launched. The project is to last three years and has the agency France Expertise as the delegate. It has four aims, including strengthening the abilities of the Moroccan authorities in the area of labour migration (Section 3). The cooperation of Morocco with its European partners is embodied in four specific objectives. Within the framework of this project, the General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration (SGIE) is cooperating closely on section 3, subsection 3.2, “Legal support for the professional insertion of legal immigrants to Morocco”. The SGIE is also taking part in a Circular Migration Pilot Action between Spain and Morocco for young Moroccans to contribute to implementing a European-Moroccan international job placement network. This initiative is an absolute priority for the SGIE and all the Spanish policy stakeholders as it highlights Spain's commitment to a lasting solution for managing migration and cooperating and collaborating with Morocco. In line with Spain's commitment to the Project, the General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration considers it to be of the greatest importance to transmit to Spanish companies with offices in Morocco both the existence of the project and its interest in some Spanish
companies taking part in the implementation of a pilot circular migration action between Morocco and Spain.

The EU and Tunisia started talks on migration, mobility and security in October 2011. Negotiations on the mobility association policy declaration ended on 13 November 2013 and a Joint Declaration was signed on 3 March 2014. The mobility association with Tunisia is the second with a Mediterranean country, after the signing of an association with Morocco in June 2013. Taking part in this association are: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom. The Commission has proposed a Project to put into practice some of the priorities of the association with Tunisia: €5 million. The project is divided into three components: 1. Supporting the Tunisian authorities in managing labour-related migration and business-related professional mobility; 2. Improving knowledge of the characteristics of the Diaspora and mobilisation; 3. Strengthening the abilities of the Tunisian administration to support the reinsertion of nationals who return to Tunisia. The project is coordinated by France through EXPERTISE FRANCE and led by Spain through the Ministry of Employment and Social Security and FIIAPP (International and Latin American Foundation for Public Administration and Policies). The first component, Mobility – Labour migration, has €1.5 million available to carry out the actions in this component for a period of 36 months. Spain is also taking part in an activity in component 3. (Exchange of experiences on the reception of foreign migrants in Tunisia). The project started in March 2016 and already has an expert selected by FIIAPP who is acting as the expert for component 1.

EGYPT: Approved through the Trust Fund, the programme "Improving the response to the challenges of migrations" €60 million. SGIE/AECID will execute one of its components: "Building institutions to manage migrations" 3ME. Status of the proposal: After a preliminary identifying mission undertaken by AECID in June 2017, a proposal was pre-identified in which the SGIE would work in the following areas: 1. Inter-ministerial coordination and administrative management. Organisation of a migration management model: emigration and immigration. 2. Sharing Spain’s experiences with the evolution of its migration management. 3. Voluntary return. 4. Assistance to vulnerable groups: women and unaccompanied children and contact with the Diaspora. Design of the basic protocol. 5. Statistics. 6. Awareness-raising campaign to prevent illegal migration, focusing on children. 7. The Egyptian community abroad: Mapping the Egyptian community abroad. On 16 December 2017 a 2nd mission started, with the participation of the SGIE, which resulted in the definitive formulation of the project. (The delays in the formulation and final approval of this project by the Egyptian government were due to a lack of understanding between this government and DUE.)

MOROCCO: "Technical Training for Managing Migration, Integration and Asylum, with a focus on protecting human rights" The SGIE obtained financing (through the AECD) for a bilateral cooperation project with Morocco (SGIE/Ministry for Moroccan residents abroad and immigration affairs) with the aim of supporting the Moroccan authorities in implementing their new migration policy. The project will take place between 2017 and 2018. Some six months after the start of implementation, only one of the activities has taken place: a visit by Moroccan officials to OPI. During their stay a map of their diaspora in Spain was created and the publication will be presented at the next Spanish-Moroccan Forum.

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9 On 30 June, the OECD presented a proposal for conducting this study, given the increasing importance of population groups of Egyptian origin in OECD countries.
SENEGAL: Strengthening the Management and Governance of Migrations, Return, Reintegration and Backing for Investment for Development by the Senegalese Diaspora: a delegated OIM/Spain/France cooperation project.

AECID/SGIE participated in the first component of this project "Strengthening the Management and Government of Migrations" with €9.5 million.

The EU-Spain delegation agreement was signed in November 2017.

The SGIE will shortly hold a project identification mission.

- **Support for Reducing Migration by Creating Rural Jobs in Senegal**: €10 million.
  The project, which began in 2017, includes the requirement that 25% of the beneficiaries must have returned voluntarily.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECTS IN THE PRE-IDENTIFICATION STAGE FOR SUBMISSION TO THE TRUST FUND OR BILATERAL FUNDING:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Triangular cooperation between Senegal and Morocco for the voluntary return of Senegalese from Morocco. The Senegalese government has stated its interest in this proposal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The creation in Morocco of an European International Migration Centre, a proposal that would be presented by France and in which Spain would participate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The MENAS (UFC) Project, support for voluntary return/integration into the country of origin of Moroccan youth over the age of 16.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.1.2. **Efforts to mitigate "brain drain".**

Spain continued to work on return and reintegration projects, like those mentioned for Senegal.

8.2. **Migrant remittances.**

**BALANCE OF PAYMENTS AND INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT POSITION**

| 17.6 a. Current account. Secondary income Worker remittances. Payments. Main Countries |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A) Balance of payments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Updated to March 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORLD TOTAL</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
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<td>Morocco</td>
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<td>Moroccan Republic</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Bank of Spain.

8.3. Working with the diasporas

As noted in a preceding section, Spain is working on various cooperation projects with the aim, among others of working with the diasporas. This is the case of the project with Senegal Strengthening the Management and Governance of Migrations, Return, Reintegration and Backing for Investment for Development by the Senegalese Diaspora: a delegated OIM/Spain/France cooperation project. And the project with Morocco "Technical Training for Managing Migration, Integration and asylum, with a focus on protecting human rights" in which a Moroccan official spent time at OPI. During the stay a map of the Moroccan diaspora in Spain was created and the publication will be presented at the next Spanish-Moroccan Forum.