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## PALIM - European pilot project linking Moroccan ICT development and labour shortages in Flanders

**Brussels, 15 November 2019** | The European Union, the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and the Belgian development agency Enabel test an innovative labour migration model linking Morocco's growing ICT sector with Flanders' qualified ICT workers shortages. This Global Skills Partnership model is based on the assumption that labour mobility can only benefit the parties when potential employees are able to find a qualified job both in their country of origin and in the country of destination.

The 'Pilot Project Addressing Labour Shortages Through Innovative Labour Migration Models' (PALIM) runs from 1 March 2019 to 31 August 2020. It is implemented by the Belgian development agency Enabel, in partnership with the Flemish employment and vocational training service (VDAB), the Moroccan National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Competences (ANAPEC), the Flemish employers federations (VOKA), the General Confederation of Enterprises of Morocco (CGEM), the Belgian Federation for the Technology Industry (AGORIA) and the Moroccan Federation of Information Technology, Telecommunications and Offshoring (APEBI).

*The world is changing and cross-border solutions help to match workforce demand with resources. This new project will contribute to our reflection on the relations between development and migrations, whilst both Morocco and Belgium benefit from the initiative, declares Jean Van Wetter, Managing director of Enabel.*

9,677 applicants responded to a call launched by ANAPEC. On 12 November, following selection, 120 of them, originating from all parts of Morocco and with 18% women among them, started a five-month course in Morocco which is to boost their employability thanks to ICT, soft skills and English classes as well as information on life in Belgium. Ninety applicants are coached to subsequently find employment in Morocco, whereas thirty applicants will be given an opportunity to work in Flanders. The first Moroccan IT workers are scheduled to start in Flanders in the second quarter of 2020. In October, the project organised information sessions for Flemish companies, which, so far, offer 20 jobs.

ANAPEC will also be accompanied to develop its services in Morocco, where an estimated 30,000 IT professionals are needed by 2020 and training is not sufficiently aligned with job market needs.

Furthermore, an academic research component is incorporated into the project through a partnership with the University of Ghent and UCLouvain.

The project's budget amounts to 1.5 million euros. It is implemented by Enabel with European Union funding. This innovative initiative is one of the regular migration pilot projects financed via the Mobility Partnership Facility, which is managed by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD). This model, which brings together a broad range of actors, can later be duplicated in other labour market segments and in other countries.

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