

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**BETWEEN**  
**THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL**  
**COOPERATION,**  
**THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR**  
**AND THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL POLICIES**  
**OF THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC, OF THE ONE PART,**  
**AND**  
**THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND**  
**THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**  
**OF THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA, OF THE OTHER**  
**PART,**  
**ON MIGRATION AND MOBILITY**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies of the Italian Republic, on the one part, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Labour and Skills Development of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, on the other part, hereinafter jointly referred to as the “Participants” and individually, respectively, as the “Italian Participant” and the “Ethiopian Participant”,

RECOGNISING the long-standing and excellent bilateral relationship between Italy and Ethiopia;

CONVINCED that a coordinated management of regular migration contributes to the economic, social and cultural development of the two countries;

ACKNOWLEDGING the need of initiatives that facilitate channels of regular migration, by fostering the matching of labour supply and demand in Italy, as well as providing information on the opportunities for regular employment and on the risks of irregular migration;

COMMITTED to preserving the fundamental rights of the migrant workers;

DESIRING to encourage the exchange and return of skills to the home country;

DETERMINED to jointly define the necessary steps to prevent irregular migration and to stem criminal organisations involved in the trafficking of human beings, as well as in the matter of readmission of irregular migrants, in accordance with the respective national legislations and applicable international law;

Have entered into the following Memorandum of Understanding, hereinafter referred to as the “Memorandum”.

## **Article 1**

### **Objectives and principles**

1. The Participants aim at establishing and developing bilateral cooperation in the following areas:
  - a. facilitating the regular mobility of employed and self-employed, seasonal and non-seasonal workers and for vocational students and trainees;
  - b. prevention of irregular migrations, via initiatives aimed at informing Ethiopian citizens about channels of legal mobility and on the risks of irregular migration;
  - c. cooperation in tackling irregular migration, the exploitation and trafficking in human beings, including the voluntary and forced return of persons in irregular situations, in accordance with the respective national legislations.
2. Personal data, which will be transmitted between Participants will be collected, processed and transmitted only when necessary for the purposes of this Memorandum under conditions set by Article 11.
3. The activities set forth in this Memorandum may involve, by mutual consent of the Participants, the participation of International Organisations or of other European partners, including the respective relevant agencies or in-house companies.

## **Article 2**

### **Applicable law**

1. This Memorandum does not constitute an international agreement, which may lead to rights and obligations under international law. No provision of this Memorandum will be interpreted and implemented as a legally binding obligation or commitment of the Participants.
2. This Memorandum will be implemented in accordance with the Italian and Ethiopian legislations, as well as applicable international law and, as for the Italian Participant, the obligations arising from Italy's membership of the European Union.
3. The Participants will timely provide each other with information in case the introduction of changes to the national or European legislations makes one or more provisions of this Memorandum inapplicable.

## **Article 3**

### **Definitions**

For the purposes of this Memorandum, the expressions below have the following meanings:

- a) "Flows Decree": the Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic, which regulates the maximum number of admissions of non-EU citizens into the Italian territory for work reasons within the identified production sectors.
- b) "Professional Training and Internship Decree": the three-year inter-ministerial Decree of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies of the Italian Republic, adopted in agreement

with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Interior, which regulates the maximum number of admissions of non-EU citizens for professional training and internship within an Italian company.

- c) “Employee/employed worker”: someone hired by another person or company to perform a job, who has a specified salary and a written employment contract with their employer.
- d) “Self-employed worker”: someone who works in his/her own business or professional practice for the purpose of earning a profit. A self-employed worker may also be defined as an independent worker/freelance.
- e) “Seasonal worker”: a worker who legally and temporarily stays on the Italian territory (up to nine months) to carry out an activity dependent on the passing of the seasons, in agriculture and tourism sectors, under one or more fixed-term work contracts according to the Italian legislation.
- f) “Non-seasonal worker”: a worker who enters Italy with a fixed-term contract or long-term contract to carry out an activity as employed worker.
- g) “Internship”: a study-work alternation training course aimed at providing guidance, vocational training and at improving the matching of labour supply and demand. If aimed at obtaining a formally recognized Certification, Diploma or Degree, it is defined as curricular. Extra-curricular internships, on the other hand, are generally aimed at job seekers in order to gain work experience in the private sector or public institutions. They do not correspond to a labour contract.

#### **Article 4**

##### **Regular migration for work reasons**

The Participants will consult each other in order to coordinate and assess initiatives in order to facilitate legal migration for work reasons, including the organisation of vocational and civic linguistic training courses in Ethiopia.

#### **Article 5**

##### **Mobility of workers**

1. The Participants will cooperate in the management of legal migration flows for work reasons between the two countries, encouraging the mobility of skilled workers and facilitating contacts and exchange of knowledge between employers’ organisations in different economic sectors.
2. The Participants will regularly inform each other about the conditions for entry, residence and work in the respective countries.
3. Ethiopian workers in possession of a residence permit for work reasons in Italy will benefit of equal treatment and full equality of labour rights as accorded to Italian nationals and foreign workers legally residing in Italy; they are subject to Italian laws and regulations, in particular with regard to working standards, including wages, working conditions, social protection, health, hygiene and work place safety.

4. Italy will reserve a quota for employed non-seasonal workers and for employed seasonal workers coming from Ethiopia, for each year, within the specific quota of the Flows Decree reserved to citizens of third countries with which Italy has signed a cooperation agreement or arrangement on migration. The maximum number of citizens who can benefit from this provision may be revised according to the needs of the Italian labour market and the conditions set by the Italian legislation and the Flows Decree.
5. The Participants will cooperate to facilitate the matching of job supply and demand of non-seasonal and seasonal employed workers, in accordance with the procedures established by the Italian legislation, with the support of public and private bodies and Italian employers' associations authorized by the relevant authorities according to current regulations to carry out employment services.
6. The Participants may explore possible cooperation also in specific economic sectors outside the quota system, such as professional sport players. The quota of entries for sporting professionals will be established annually in conformity with the Italian legislation.
7. Modalities and procedures regarding the entry into the Italian territory and residence permit for work reasons of Ethiopian workers are set by the Italian authorities and based upon the Italian legislation.

## **Article 6**

### **Vocational and civic-linguistic training**

1. In accordance with their national legislations, the Participants, will encourage vocational and civic-linguistic training for selected Ethiopian workers, in order to foster their career development, to address the needs of skilled professionals requested by the Italian labour market, as well as to develop productive and/or entrepreneurial activities in both countries.
2. The Participants will discuss initiatives on vocational, civic and linguistic training courses for selected Ethiopian workers, according to the current legislations and the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies of the Italian Republic on professional training pathways abroad, including basic linguistic skills, professional training, civic education and living in Italy, legislation on labour rights and safety on the workplace.

## **Article 7**

### **Extracurricular internships**

1. Italy will facilitate the issuance of study visas for Ethiopian citizens who intend to enter Italy for an internship aimed at completing a training course started in the country of origin, at the conditions established by Italian law and relevant Italian Regions' regulations, within the quota set by the "Professional Training and Internship Decree".
2. Upon completion of the internship, the trainees may convert their residence permit into a residence permit for work reasons, if they meet the conditions set by the Italian national legislation. The conversion is not subject to the quotas set out in the "Flows Decree".

## **Article 8**

### **Cooperation against irregular migration**

1. The Participants will strengthen the bilateral cooperation in the field of prevention and countering of irregular immigration, in a spirit of partnership and solidarity, in accordance with their national legislations and applicable international law on the protection of human rights.
2. The Participants will cooperate for the implementation of information campaigns aimed at raising awareness among Ethiopian citizens on the risks of irregular migration for personal safety, which will be discussed upon in the Joint Working Group under article 12 of this Memorandum.
3. The Italian Participant will consider the possibility to reserve additional quotas of working permits for employed workers of Ethiopian citizenship in the “Flows Decree”.

## **Article 9**

### **Technical and operational security cooperation to prevent irregular migration**

1. The Participants will develop technical and operational security cooperation within the framework of the relevant laws and regulations, with the aim of preventing irregular migration and countering smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings, through the exchange of best practices and experience on:
  - a) investigation of analysis production and any relevant information for the identification of criminal organizations;
  - b) document fraud detection and training of specialists in this field;
  - c) identity and travel document production, in order to increase the level of security respective national identity documents and travel documents, and to design new documents in accordance with international standards. The Participants may provide for a non-exhaustive list of documents (in original or in copy) to be considered relevant for identification.
2. The Participants will designate the relevant national Authorities in charge of implementing technical cooperation in the above-mentioned specific areas.
3. Following the conclusion of an agreement between the Italian Republic and the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, each Participant may deploy its own experts to the other Participant in order to improve bilateral technical cooperation in tackling irregular migration, including readmissions.

## **Article 10**

### **Return of persons in an irregular situation**

1. The Ethiopian Participant will accept the return of Ethiopian nationals who do not meet or no longer meet the conditions for legal entry or legal residence in Italy, in compliance with the Italian legislation. Return of persons in such irregular situation will be carried out only

after their nationality is conclusively determined by the Ethiopian Participant.

2. The Participants will promote voluntary return of nationals who are unlawfully staying in the territory of either country and are subject to a return decision. In the absence of a legal requirement for voluntary return, forced return on a case-by-case basis will be resorted to by the Participant in whose territory the migrants reside, in accordance with its applicable laws and regulations, after the verification of the nationality of such persons by the other Participant.

3. With regard to a person in an irregular situation whose nationality has been validly stated by its country, the Participant who requests the return will demand a nationality verification, in view of possible issuance of a Consular Laissez-Passer/Travel Document. If necessary for the identification of said person, at the request of either Participant, the migrant may be interviewed without delay by officials of the diplomatic mission of the country of origin.

4. Persons in the aforementioned irregular situation who are conclusively stated by the country of origin to be its own nationals will be immediately returned on behalf of the other Participant in accordance with the procedures set out by its national legislation and a Consular Laissez-Passer/Travel Document will be issued immediately.

5. The Participants recognise the need to respect short deadlines to define the legal situation of a migrant who is subject to a return decision both for the reply to the return application and for the issuance of the Consular Laissez-Passer/Travel Document. To this end, in accordance with their wish for effective cooperation, the Participants will use e-mail or any other means of communication allowing the fastest possible data transmission. Biometric identification means will be used, wherever possible, by mutual consent of the Participants.

6. The Participant who returns the person in an irregular situation will cover the return costs.

## **Article 11**

### **Personal data protection**

1. In the implementation of this Memorandum, the Participants will exchange, process and collect personal data only if it is necessary and proportionate to achieve the purposes defined in this Memorandum.

2. The receiving Participant will not transfer personal data to third parties or process them in a manner that is incompatible with the purposes of this Memorandum without the prior written consent of the transferring Participant.

3. The Participants will take the necessary technical and organizational measures to ensure a level of security and confidentiality that is appropriate to the risk of data breach.

4. The transferring Participant will guarantee the accuracy and timely updating of the transmitted data, as well as the prompt correction of any errors.

5. Personal data exchanged under this Memorandum will be deleted as soon as they are no longer required for the purposes for which they were transferred.

6. The exchange of personal data aimed at returning persons in irregular situation or at preventing irregular immigration will be carried out only in the following cases:

- a) to protect a key interest of the data subject or of another natural person;
- b) to safeguard the legitimate interests of the data subject as provided for by the law of the transferring Participant;
- c) to prevent an immediate and serious threat to the public security of the Participants or of a third party;
- d) in specific cases, with a view to preventing, investigating, establishing and prosecuting crimes and enforcing criminal sanctions in the country of the transferring Participant or with a view to establishing, exercising or defending a right before the competent judicial authorities in relation to the above-mentioned aims.

## **Article 12**

### **Joint Working Group**

1. In order to monitor the implementation of this Memorandum, the Participants will create a Joint Working Group composed of representatives of the Participants. The Joint Working Group will develop a plan to facilitate the implementation of this Memorandum.
2. The Joint Working Group will meet at least once a year in either country alternately or, as deemed necessary at the request of either Participant, also through video conference. It will evaluate the implementation of the provisions of this Memorandum and discuss all appropriate proposals to improve it. The agenda and the composition of the Joint Working Group will be determined for each meeting through mutual consultation between the Participants.
3. Representatives of the Participants in the Joint Working Group referred to in paragraph 1 will not be entitled to any fees, emoluments, attendance tokens, reimbursement of expenses or any other emoluments whatever denominated.

## **Article 13**

### **Budgetary neutrality**

The expenses arising from the implementation of this Memorandum will be covered by the Participants within the limits of their ordinary budget availability without any additional cost for the State budgets of the Italian Republic and the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

## **Article 14**

### **Differences**

Any difference in the interpretation and/or implementation of this Memorandum will be settled within the Joint Working Group or, otherwise, will be solved amicably through direct consultations and negotiations between the Participants.

## Article 15

### Final provisions

1. This Memorandum takes effect on the date of signature. It will remain valid for three (3) years and will be automatically renewed for further periods of three (3) years, unless either Participant notifies the other of its intention to terminate it at least six (6) months prior to the date of renewal.
2. Either Participant may terminate this MoU at any time by notifying the other Participant of its intention with at least six (6) months' prior notice.
3. This Memorandum may be amended in writing by mutual consent of the Participants.

Signed in ROME, on 27 OCTOBER 2025, in two originals, each in the English language, both texts being equally authentic.

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THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN  
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