

Секція 3. АЛЬЯНСИ ЗНАНЬ: ПОШИРЕННЯ ІННОВАЦІЙ МІЖ ВИЩОЮ ОСВІТОЮ ТА СОЦІАЛЬНО- ЕКОНОМІЧНИМ СЕРЕДОВИЩЕМ

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STATUS AND DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES OF THE UKRAINIAN-MOROCCAN ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL COOPERATION

Morocco is an important partner for Ukraine in North Africa. The Moroccan side is significantly interested in cooperation with Ukrainian business. Relations between Morocco and Ukraine encompass political, economic, cultural, scientific and technical fields of life. Soviet-Moroccan friendly relationships have a long history. Diplomatic relationships between the USSR and Morocco on the Embassies level were established in 1958. Morocco is one of the first countries that recognized the Independence of Ukraine in the beginning of the 1990s of the previous century. Therefore, since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1992, both sides have constantly been working at the development of mutual relations, and strengthening of friendship and cooperation in all the spheres: political, economic, cultural and scientific.

The Kingdom of Morocco recognized Ukraine on December 30, 1991. Diplomatic relationships were established on June 22, 1992. The Embassy of Ukraine in Morocco opened its doors in November 2000. In July of the same year, the Embassy of Morocco in Ukraine started its work. Contemporary political bilateral relations between our countries are developing at the highest level. In addition, Kyiv and Rabat cooperate in international organizations. Our states have signed a large number of interstate treaties in the field of diplomacy, international relations, politics, economy and trade since 2000.

For example, in December 2016 a delegation of the Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce and Industry visited Morocco. Due to the visit, cooperation agreements were signed between the Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Services, and the Chamber of the Marrakesh-Safi region. A number of meetings with the representatives of Moroccan companies, interested in establishing cooperation with Ukraine were held. "*Morocco for Ukraine on the African*

continent is the "Northern Gate" for entering this market," commented the vice president of the Chamber of Commerce of Ukraine. The intensification of economic cooperation with African countries, and in particular with the Kingdom of Morocco, is one of the ways to expand the geography and structure of Ukraine's foreign trade, which opens up broad opportunities for the development of investment, scientific and technical cooperation. The strategic role of the Kingdom of Morocco as an important entry into economic space of the African continent is another advantage that can be further enhanced by the cooperation of Ukraine with this country.

In modern conditions, the main form of bilateral cooperation between the Kingdom of Morocco and Ukraine is international trade. According to Ukrainian statistics, over the past ten years, the commodity turnover between the two countries increased almost 3 times and in 2016, it amounted to more than 350 million USD. Nevertheless, the potential of bilateral trade relations has not been fully disclosed, especially with regard to the supply of Moroccan goods to Ukraine. In the commodity turnover between Ukraine and Morocco, Moroccan goods traditionally account for no more than 10–15%. Business people from both countries are making great efforts for strengthening contacts between Morocco and Ukraine.

Cultural ties have a long history, since they started developing a long time ago. At present time, about 5,000 Moroccan students get higher education in the universities of Ukraine. It is a known fact that the student community of Morocco is one of the largest in Ukraine. Moroccan students take the 4th position in amount. More than 1,000 of them study in the universities of Kharkiv, which is an industrial, scientific, cultural and student center Ukraine. Educational services provided by Ukrainian universities to Moroccan students attract considerable foreign currency earnings to the country's budget, which are comparable with Ukrainian imports from the Kingdom of Morocco and exceed the volume of trade in services between the two countries according to Ukrainian official statistics.

On average, a Moroccan student spends about 7,000 USD a year for training and living in Ukraine. Ukraine receives about 35mln USD in foreign currency earnings per year from 5 thousand Moroccan students studying in Ukraine. Thus, it should be noted that educational services are one of the priority areas of Ukrainian–Moroccan cooperation, and therefore require special attention to the problems in this area.

Speaking about the perspective directions of the Ukrainian-Moroccan economic relations it is necessary to emphasize the priority of investment cooperation, which has not yet been properly developed. At the same time, mutual interests of Ukrainian and Moroccan business, of course, do exist. The most attractive sectors for direct investments are industry (automobile, textile industry), fisheries sector, IT sector, tourism, and others. The

Kingdom of Morocco has an exceptionally favorable investment climate, characterized by such important factors as attractive tax legislation; benefits for starting a new business; absence of corruption pressure on business; an effective system of combating terrorism in the country; society's respect for foreigners and their culture.

Due to the urgency of the issue of energy saving for Ukraine, an alternative energy, in particular the use of solar-and-wind energy, in the development of which Morocco has a lot of experience, may be of particular interest to the investors from Ukraine. With regard to attracting Moroccan investment to the Ukrainian economy, in modern economic and political conditions, the opportunities for direct foreign investments are limited by complex investment climate. Despite some improvement, Ukraine's investment attractiveness is still not very high, and most international experts talk about the necessity of urgent reforming of the country's economy. Successful implementation of the reforms in the long term may significantly increase investment attractiveness of Ukraine for the Moroccan business.

It is necessary to emphasize the opportunities for public organizations in the development of bilateral Ukrainian-Moroccan relations. Created both in the Kingdom of Morocco and in Ukraine, they act as an informal bridge connecting different peoples and cultures, as well as creating prerequisites for further economic cooperation between the two countries.

The current state of the Ukrainian-Moroccan economic cooperation is characterized by dynamic development. Nevertheless, there is a significant undiscovered potential in bilateral relations. The most promising areas for the development of relations between the two countries are trade relations, which can be significantly expanded both at the expense of an increase in supplies, and by expanding the range of goods supplied. First, there was an increase in the share of Moroccan goods in the commodity turnover between Ukraine and the Kingdom of Morocco. Secondly, the structure of commercial operations was transformed: in the Moroccan export to Ukraine, shipments of engineering products were noticeable, while Ukrainian exports to Morocco acquired a pronounced agricultural orientation. One of the priorities for the development of Ukrainian-Moroccan economic cooperation is the sphere of services, in particular, educational, engineering, and consulting.

Investment cooperation is also a priority of bilateral cooperation with a significant potential, the disclosure of which requires improving the investment climate in Ukraine, as well as the creation and practical work of specialized structures able to familiarize Ukrainian and Moroccan businesses with the investment opportunities of the two countries.