

Dear Colleagues,

The EuroMed Transport project has gone through a period of intense activity in the past few weeks and has witnessed a series of important changes. The realignment of our priorities on the production of the Blue Paper on Euro-Mediterranean transport policy and infrastructure has imposed an extra workload on our team and has meant we have had to adapt our working methods and adjust the format initially foreseen for the next National Counterpart Team Meeting.

Our energy has therefore mainly been concentrated on the preparation of the Blue Paper, to enable it to be endorsed by all the MEDA Partner Countries in order to have the document officialised for the Euro-Mediterranean transport ministerial meeting which will take place in December. The project team has also been very busy with the organisation of the Third National Counterpart Team Meeting (NCT3) which will now take place in Brussels on 1 and 2 June and will include a wide range of topics. In addition, we have also been involved in defining the framework for a new project on intermodal transport which is expected to be tendered shortly and will run in parallel to the two existing contracts.

Although a lot of our attention has been focused on these tasks we have managed to make progress in a number of other activities. For instance, the Documentation Centre is now online and provides access to a database of over 900 documents via a multi-criteria search engine. In relation to our training activities we foresee to organise two more training seminars before the end of the year. These will examine the issues of port reform and road haulage. Finally, in order to improve our communication effort we intend to launch a redesigned version of the web site in the coming months. The new site will be more user-friendly and will offer new functionalities.

Ralf-Michael Kaltheier
Project Director

Project News

Significant Progress in Preparation of the Blue Paper on Euro-Mediterranean Transport Policy



Notable progress has been made with regard to the preparation of the Blue Paper on Euro-Mediterranean transport policy. The Blue Paper aims to identify the main priorities which should guide the definition of transport policies and strategic investment for the 12 MEDA countries.

It contains two parts (Part One - Analysis of Transport Systems in the MEDA Region; Part Two - Recommendations for a Regional Transport Strategy). The draft version of the Blue Paper has already been sent to the EC for comments and will soon be sent to the National Coordinators.

The final version of the document will be presented to the Ministers for Transport during the ministerial conference. The Blue Paper is supplemented by a Regional Transport Action Plan.

The preparation of the Blue Paper is coordinated by the project's Transport Policy Adviser, Ali Anouti, with the support of the task force of experts set up for this purpose (see previous bulletin). The task force met on two occasions in February and March 2005 to define the orientation and contents of this document. Reports presenting the results of these task force meetings have been prepared and sent to the EC for revision.

Preparation of a Concept Paper for the New EuroMed Intermodal Project

The Main Contract has produced a concept paper outlining the objectives and activities for a new project on intermodal transport. This project will run alongside the other two project contracts and will aim to promote north-south intermodal freight transport by identifying and directly supporting initiatives in the maritime, rail and land transport sectors.

The intermodal project is expected to have a budget of EUR 4.5 million and will be funded by the European Commission using the reserve originally allocated for the benchmarking contract. The concept paper, which is currently being reviewed by the Commission, will be presented and discussed during the NCT3 meeting in Brussels.

Launch of the Online Documentation Centre

The Documentation Centre provides online access to over 900 reference documents relating to transport systems and policies in the Euro-Mediterranean area. The database of the Documentation Centre includes reports and studies, articles/papers, legal texts, conference proceedings, presentations/slides, maps, photos, etc.



A search engine enables users to explore the database according to several criteria (geographical location, mode or theme). See: http://www.EuroMedtransport.org/html/searchdocument_en.php

Finalisation of the Diagnostic Study Postponed

The production of the final public version of the Diagnostic Study has been postponed in order to allow for the preparation of the Blue Paper. This delay has been used to finalise in detail the validation of Part II of the Diagnostic Study. Assessment questionnaires have been sent to the NCTs and feedback has already been received from some countries.

Visit to Jordan by the Project Director

The Project Director of the Main Contract, Ralf-Michael Kalthier, carried out a visit to Jordan on 2 May 2005 during which he met with the Jordanian Minister for Transport, Saud Nseirat. This visit marks the beginning of a series of visits which aim to reinforce the partnership between the project and the beneficiary countries in view of involving them more closely in the implementation of the project.

Participation of the Project Director in a Seminar on Intermodal Transport and Logistics

Mr Kalthier also took part in a seminar on logistics organised by the IHEC business school on 6 May 2005 in Tunis, Tunisia. He gave a presentation on the project during which he also analysed the main aspects of intermodal transport and logistics in the MEDA region and outlined the main EU policies in this field.

Events

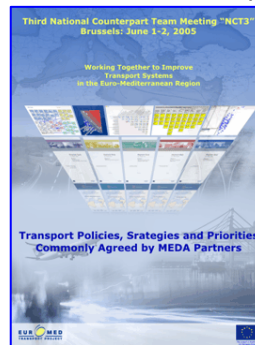
Third National Counterpart Team Meeting

1-2 June 2005, Brussels, Belgium

The Third Meeting of the National Counterpart Teams (NCT3), which has been reduced to two days, will now take place in Brussels on 1 and 2 June 2005, directly after the meeting of the High Level Group on the extension of the Euro-Mediterranean transport network (30 and 31 May).

The first day will thus enable the representatives of each of the 12 MEDA/EU countries to discuss in detail

the contents of the Blue Paper, whereas the second day will be devoted to the activities of the two project contracts (additional technical studies, concept paper on the intermodal project, organisation of training



seminars, etc.). In order to be able to prepare this meeting as well as possible the National Coordinators will shortly receive preliminary versions of Parts I and II of the Blue Paper for revision (overall analysis of systems transport in the MEDA region; regional transport strategy of MEDA countries).

Sixth EuroMed Transport Forum

13 July 2005, Brussels, Belgium

During the next Forum the Blue Paper on transport will be examined and endorsed by the representatives of the MEDA countries with the view of presenting it during the meeting of Euro-Mediterranean Transport Ministers at the end of the year. Further information will be available in the next issue of the bulletin.

Preparation of Training Seminars on Port Reform and Road Haulage

The project is currently developing two training seminars on issues linked to port reform and road haulage. The programme of these training seminars will be presented during the NCT3. These two seminars will take place during the second semester of 2005 (exact date to be defined). Further information will be available in the next issue of the bulletin.

Meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Transport Ministers

The Euro-Mediterranean transport ministerial meeting, organised with the participation of the EIB, is foreseen to take place on 15 December (date to be confirmed) in Marrakech, Morocco. The meeting will aim to enable the political decision-makers in charge of transport policy in the MEDA region to endorse a regional transport infrastructure network interconnected to the trans-European transport network and to agree on the priorities for Euro-Mediterranean transport cooperation for the next few years. On this occasion the Blue Paper will be presented to the Euro-Med Transport Ministers.

Download the latest project event schedule at: http://www.EuroMedtransport.org/html/agenda_en.htm

MEDA Country News

Algeria ratifies EU Association Agreement

Algeria has completed the ratification procedure for its Association Agreement with the EU. The Agreement was ratified by the Nation's Council (Algerian Senate) on 31 March, and by the People's National Assembly (the Algerian Parliament's lower house) on 14 March. Ratification by the Parliaments of EU Member States has not yet been completed. The Agreement was signed in 2002 in Valencia, Spain.

Source: *EuroMed Synopsis no 310*

Israel and Palestine sign a European MoU on Transport

A memorandum of understanding with the European Commission for Israeli-Palestinian cooperation in the field of transport was signed on 9 March by Palestinian Authority Transport Minister Saad Kharma, and an identical memorandum was signed on 14 March by Israeli Director General of the Transport Ministry Ben Zion Salman. Both texts were signed in the presence of a European Commission representative. The memoranda call for the establishment of a Joint Technical Israeli-Palestinian Transport Office (JTO), which would coordinate cooperation on the planning of infrastructure and related issues such as the transport of people and goods. A detailed work programme for the JTO should now be prepared, which could be endorsed by the Israeli and Palestinian Ministers at the first Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Transport next December. Technical assistance to the JTO and feasibility studies for projects of mutual interest could be funded under MEDA in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

Source: *EuroMed Synopsis no 308*

This section is dedicated to news from the MEDA Partner Countries regarding transport issues. If you have any news or announcements you would like to communicate to other persons involved in the project, please send us a short text (max. 1500 characters) in English, French or Arabic so that we can include it in this column.

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EU News

Work Programme to Reinforce the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (2005-2010)

A work programme to reinforce the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership over the next five years was adopted on 12 April by the European Commission in advance of the 10th anniversary of the Barcelona Process. Proposals concerning transport issues will provide an agenda for discussion at the meeting of Euro-Mediterranean Transport Ministers scheduled for early December in Marrakech, Morocco (see article page 3). These proposals address in particular the interconnection of the Euro-Mediterranean transport network, the promotion of south-south flows and the pursuit of sector-based reforms in the field of transport. The full text of the Communication is available on the web at

http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/EuroMed/publication.htm. (Source: *EuroMed Synopsis no 311*)

Strengthening the EIB Partnership with the EDFI in the Mediterranean

The European Investment Bank (EIB) and twelve bilateral development finance institutions from the EU Member States, which are members of EDFI (Association of European Development Finance Institutions), signed an agreement on 13 May 2005 to strengthen cooperation in financing projects in the Mediterranean region. The agreement covers the sharing of information and cofinancing arrangements for projects in the Mediterranean Partner Countries. Features include the introduction of new financing instruments and new forms of assistance, the opening of offices in the field and the formalisation of an active dialogue between European and Mediterranean partners on domestic policy reforms and lending through the Bank's Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP). For further information: <http://www.eib.org>. (Source: *EIB*)

Economic Assessment of 10 Years of Barcelona Online

The report by the MEDA supported Euro-Mediterranean Forum of Economic Institutes (FEMISE) on '10 Years after Barcelona: Achievements and Prospects' has now been made available online at: <http://www.femise.org/Pub-indic/listpub-ol.html>.

(Source: *EuroMed Synopsis no 312*)

This internal bulletin is published every month in English and French and can be downloaded free of charge from the Internet.

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