



EUROPEAN UNION

~FACTSHEET~

THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERSHIP (EMP) - THE BARCELONA PROCESS

Together for democracy, human rights and prosperity in the Mediterranean

After more than 20 years of intense bilateral and trade cooperation, EU Member States, and the 12 Mediterranean Partners (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey as well as EU members since 2004, Cyprus and Malta) launched the ambitious **Euro-Mediterranean Partnership** in Barcelona in 1995. Often referred to as “**the Barcelona Process**”, this initiative seeks to create strong and durable bonds between the shores of the Mediterranean. It aims to:

- create a common area of peace and stability through political dialogue;
- construct a zone of shared prosperity through an economic and financial partnership and the gradual establishment of a free trade zone;
- promote the rapprochement between peoples by encouraging social, cultural and human exchanges between cultures and civil societies;

The partnership has two complementary dimensions:

- The **bilateral dimension**: the EU carries out substantial co-operation activities bilaterally with each country, the most important being the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements.
- The **regional dimension**: one of the most innovative aspects of the Partnership, covering the political, economic and cultural areas of regional co-operation.

The EU is **the largest donor of non-military aid** to the Mediterranean and Middle East, giving roughly €1 billion in grants and another €2 billion in soft loans in 2003. This is in addition to the assistance given by the EU Member States through their national programmes. The MEDA Programme is the principal financial instrument for the implementation of EMP. For 1995-2004 MEDA accounted for €6.2 billion of the total €8.8 billion of budgetary resources allocated for financial co-operation between the European Union and its Mediterranean Partners. MEDA is now in its second programming period (2000-2006) with a budget of €5.3 billion.

MEDA grants from the EU budget are accompanied by substantial lending from the European Investment Bank (EIB). EIB loans in the Mediterranean region are designated for specific investment projects, particularly for the support of small and medium-sized enterprises. For 2000-2007, the EIB's Euromed lending mandate is €6.4 billion. The EIB will contribute a further €1 billion from its own resources over the same period for trans-national projects.

In 2003, the EIB launched the facility for Euro-Mediterranean investment and partnership (FEMIP), to support modernization of the economies of the Mediterranean partners, while also promoting social cohesion, environmental protection and communications infrastructure. FEMIP is based on a closer involvement of the Mediterranean partners themselves through the creation of a forum for dialogue (the policy dialogue and co-ordination committee). FEMIP lends approximately €2 billion per year to the region.

Achievements

Regional dialogue: Over the last ten years the EU and its Mediterranean Partners have together established a mature mutual relationship and a real culture of dialogue where no issue is too sensitive to be brought to the table. Discussion, and often, practical co-operation extends to almost all fields of human activity from culture to counter-terrorism, from film to financial assistance and from archaeology to the advancement of women. Meanwhile the Partnership remains the only multilateral context outside the United Nations where all the parties affected by the Middle East conflict sit together. Israel and the Palestinian Authority are recognized as equal Mediterranean Partners within the EMP.

Regional integration: the EU promotes economic integration and free trade in the region. Bilateral Association Agreements have been concluded with all Euromed Partners, including most recently, with Syria who's Agreement awaits formal signature. These agreements enhance north-south regional integration and trade. As a result of Turkey's Association Agreement, a customs union with the EU entered into force on 1 January 1996. The EU has long supported South-South economic integration and successfully assisted Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia to conclude the Agadir Regional Free Trade Agreement that was signed on 25 February 2004. **Regional assistance programmes** promote intra-regional co-operation among the partners in areas such as political issues, trade, infrastructural integration, sustainable development, justice and home affairs and cultural and social matters.

Promoting Human Rights and Democracy: the EU is working with partners in the region to promote democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. An additional €50 million will be available as from 2006 for those countries in the Mediterranean who commit themselves and effectively make progress on reform in these areas. MEDA countries also profit from the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) that funds a number of projects in the areas of electoral assistance and observation missions, gender equality, women rights, media, etc.

Trade: The EU is the major trading partner of every country in the region. It accounts for almost 50% of their visible imports and exports (€91.5 billion in 2003), compared to 14% (€26.4 billion) for the US. Trade in services with the EU amounted to €32 billion in 2001. In 2001 Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows from the EU into the region accounted for €2 billion and FDI assets reached €100 billion in 2003.

The EU's Neighbourhood Policy

For those countries that do not currently have the prospect of EU membership but which share borders with the Union – the southern Mediterranean countries plus Ukraine (see separate fact sheet on Ukraine), Moldova, Belarus – the EU has recently developed the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). Through the ENP the EU is offering a more intensive political dialogue, greater access to EU programmes and policies, including the Single Market, and

reinforced co-operation on Justice and Home Affairs, based on a joint commitment to common values and common principles principally within the fields of the rule of law, good governance, the respect for human rights, including minority rights, the promotion of good neighbourly relations, and the principles of market economy and sustainable development. The ENP has recently been extended to the Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia)

The Neighbourhood Policy reinforces the Barcelona Process and represents an essential plank in the implementation of the EU Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean countries. Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian Authority have been the first of the EU's Mediterranean neighbours to agree Action Plans that will make concrete the European Union's new offer under the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).

For more information go to:

The EU's Euro-Mediterranean Partnership website:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euromed/index.htm

The EU's Neighbourhood Policy website: http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/index_en.htm

February 2005