



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs

International Affairs

Implementation of the 2014 – 2016 work programme

State of play – 21 December 2015

This report summarises the actions taken since the Ministerial Meeting on [19 February 2014](#) and those planned in the near future. It is divided into chapters based on the structure of the [2014-2016 work programme](#) on Euro-Mediterranean industrial cooperation approved by Industry Ministers in February 2014.

Improving the business climate, promote entrepreneurship, innovation and SMEs based on the Small Business Act for Europe (SBA)

1. [Publication of the report of the assessment of the implementation of the Charter/SBA](#)

The report was published in [English](#) in autumn 2014 and sent in electronic format to the participants in the Working Party on Euro-Mediterranean industrial cooperation on 12 November 2014. The [French version of the report](#) was circulated on 10 December 2014.

2. [Reporting and training in the Mediterranean neighbour countries \(MED countries\)](#)

Between June and October 2014, the European Commission, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the European Training Foundation (ETF) presented the results of the assessment in MED countries in collaboration with the national Charter/SBA Coordinators and the EU Delegations in MED countries. These half-day presentations were followed by 2-day trainings organised within the framework of a project entitled "[Enhancement of the business environment in the Southern Mediterranean](#)" (EBESM). The project is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit ([GIZ](#)) with the support of the Commission. .

Below you can find details about trainings organised in 2014 which focused on issues selected for each country based on the needs identified by the assessment

Country	Topic	Date
Algeria	Improving skills; Promoting innovation	17-18 June 2014
Morocco	Information on enterprises; Green economy	24-25 June 2014
Tunisia	Innovation Second chance	11-12 September 2014
Israel	e-Government (2 days)	17-18 September 2014

Lebanon	Internationalisation of SMEs (2days)	09-10 October 2014
Palestine	Innovation (2 days).	29-30 October 2014
Jordan	Supporting SMEs to benefit from the Euro-Mediterranean network and partnerships; Improving skills	26-27 November 2014
Egypt	Green economy (2 days).	17-18 December 2014

During 2015 the below in-country workshops were organised.

Country	Topic	Date
Algeria	Public-Private dialogue and local governance	16 January 2015
Egypt	Public-Private dialogue and inter-governmental coordination	28 January 2015
	Institutionalised Public-Private Dialogue mechanism on sustainable green cities	30 November 2015
Lebanon	Public-Private Dialogue to develop industrial exports of SMEs	29 January 2015
	Institutionalised Public-Private dialogue mechanism to boost industrial exports	29 October 2015
Tunisia	Public-Private dialogue and inter-governmental coordination	2 February 2015
Palestine	Improving industrial competitiveness of SMEs	4 February 2015
Jordan	SME test	17 February 2015
Morocco	SMEs test	17 February 2015
	EU SME tools and SME test tool	17 September 2015
Israel	SME test	18 February 2015
	Better Regulations, RIA, SME test tool	14 July 2015

3. Regional training seminars

On 17-19 March 2015 the SBA governance training seminar took place in Barcelona. It was based on a new, learning by doing approach whereby Mediterranean neighbour countries defined action plans meeting their needs in the following areas:

- Institutional framework for SME policy elaboration with a focus on inter-governmental coordination;
- SME friendly public administration;
- Public private dialogue.

Individual country action plans were presented, debated and fine-tuned with the help of experts at a regional seminar in Barcelona. Four participants per MED country (including the Charter/SBA coordinator and private sector representatives) took part in this event. Follow up has been further assisted at national level.

In 2016 the regional training seminar on **Access to finance** will be held in Brussels on 24 February, back-to-back with the working party on Euro-Mediterranean industrial cooperation.

4. The annual SME Assembly, Luxembourg, 18-20 November 2015

The SME Assembly is the most significant event for SMEs in Europe. The conference takes place once a year during the European SME Week. Together with the network of SME Envoys, the assembly creates the governance structure of the SBA.

In 2015, like every year, the Commission facilitated the participation of MED countries in this [event](#).

Encouraging SMEs to innovate, export and become international

1. [Enterprise Europe Network \(EEN\)](#)

Egypt, Israel, Tunisia and Jordan have joined Enterprise Europe Network in 2015.

2. [EXPO Milano 2015](#)

Within the framework of EXPO Milano 2015, the Commission organised business days with its major partners around the world. MED partners kicked off the process on 6 and 7 May 2015.

In the morning of 6 May 2015, a senior-level meeting focused on the political dimension of Euro-Mediterranean industrial cooperation and a technical session followed to discuss business opportunities in the region. 840 business-to-business meetings were organised on 6 May afternoon and on 7 May.

More than 500 participants responded positively to this invitation and a vast majority of participants were entrepreneurs eager to find business partners around the Mediterranean.

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A technical meeting, with Charter/SBA coordinators took place on 6 May afternoon to plan the next steps of the [EBESM](#) project.

3. EU Support to Business and Investment Partnerships in South Mediterranean, EUROMED Invest

This project coordinated by ANIMA, with the support of the Commission, was launched on 26 May 2014 in Marseilles. [EUROMED Invest](http://www.euromedinvest.eu/en/business-roadshow-europe) aims at boosting private investments and business partnerships within the Euro-Med area to contribute to an inclusive economic development of the region. The specific objective of the project is to empower Euro-Med business and investment networks to implement targeted strategies supporting the creation and the international development of Micro Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in the most promising sectors for job creation and economic spillovers. Such sectors are: agri-food, transport & logistics, cultural & creative industries, water & green energies and tourism.

Business roadshows that will be held in 2016 are listed on the web site of the project:

<http://www.euromedinvest.eu/en/business-roadshow-europe>

<http://www.euromedinvest.eu/en/business-roadshow-mediterranee>

In addition, a [Euro-Mediterranean match-making platform](#) can be used to organise B2B meetings and other business events. More than 2000 enterprises have already published their profiles on the platform and participated in events so far. Once they have registered, they are automatically informed of business events in their sectors.

This platform is available to all Euromed business community to organize events and B2B match making: a space can be dedicated to their event that they can dress graphically as they please, and use for making appointments between participants (for a fee less than 1000 €).

4. EuroMed Innovative Entrepreneurs for change

Results obtained under this Preparatory Action have been summed up for each of its component parts a) Cluster Excellence Management ([Euromed Cluster Excellence](#)); b) Innovation Management Support Services ([Euromed IMP³rove](#)); and c) Support to Cluster Cooperation, Start-ups, Investors and Management of Intellectual Property ([Euromed@Change](#)).

5. Euro-Mediterranean Innovation Convention

On 23 November 2015, in Brussels, the European Commission (Directorate-General for Research and Innovation) organised the 20th Euro-Mediterranean Group of Senior Officials in Research and Innovation (EU-Med GSO) together with the Euro-Mediterranean Industrial Cooperation Working Party Coordinators.

Establishing of a large pan-Euro-Mediterranean market for industrial products

1. Agreements on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of industrial products (ACAAs)

With a view to preparing ACAAs with Mediterranean neighbour countries, the European Commission organised two multi-country workshops on:

- Metrology, on 6 and 7th May 2014 in Braunschweig, Germany;

- Market surveillance, on 26 and 27th May 2014 in Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

2. TRADE issues

The European Commission has recently revamped its public database on the World Trade Organisation Technical Barriers to Trade (WTO-TBT) notifications. The [website](#) contains a comprehensive search function, a user-friendly explanation of the TBT notification procedure and a mailing list function.

3. Pan-Euro-Med (PEM) convention and rules of origin

The regional PEM agreement on the pan-Euro-Mediterranean rules of preferential origin will replace the rules of origin protocols of all the existing free trade agreements of the pan-Euro-Mediterranean region with one single instrument. This agreement will create one big origin-cumulation area, by merging the current cumulation areas between the EU, Turkey, the EFTA countries, the Faroe Islands and the countries participating in the Barcelona Process (Mediterranean partner countries), on the one hand, and the EU, Turkey and the countries participating in the EU association and stabilisation process (Western Balkans), on the other hand.

The current agreement was opened for signing on 15 June 2011. In November 2015, 18 contracting parties out of a total of 22 signed and ratified the agreement (the EU, the EFTA States, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Serbia, Jordan, the Faroe Islands, Turkey Tunisia, Palestine, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Moldova, Egypt and Israel). Three contracting parties have signed but have not yet ratified the agreement (Morocco, Algeria and Lebanon). The Republic of Moldova has been accepted to accede to the Convention.

Developing sector-specific activities

1. Euro-Mediterranean dialogue on textiles and clothing

On 24-25 March 2014 the 10th anniversary of the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue on textile and clothing was celebrated in Florence with a conference on [creativity, design, innovation and intellectual property rights \(IPR\)](#). About 140 participants from 35 countries (European Union, Mediterranean and Western Balkans) representing national administrations, industrial associations, companies, fashion and design schools, education and research centres specializing in textiles and clothing discussed how to stimulate and support the creativity and innovation of textile and clothing companies across the Area, while protecting these intangible assets.

Participants highlighted that contacts established during the events in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue on textile industry resulted in several EU funded projects involving various stakeholders across the Euro-Mediterranean region.

Participants reminded that Europe and in particular the Mediterranean region detain an important heritage in the textile/clothing sector. Therefore, together with the business and all concerned stakeholders, special attention must be addressed to this sector.

On 27-28 April 2015, a conference on "Digital integration and efficiency: opportunities in textile and clothing value chains across the Euro-Mediterranean Area" took place in Krakow (Poland). This event gave participants the opportunity to exchange experience concerning successful business practices, programmes and policies in the EU, Mediterranean neighbours and Western Balkan countries.

2. Creative industries

This [project](#) is coordinated by UNIDO with the support of the European Commission and was launched on 17 October 2014 in Tunis.

Steering, monitoring and adaptation of the work programme, dissemination of results

The last meeting of the Working Party on the Euro-Mediterranean industrial cooperation took place in Brussels on 24-25 February 2015. All documents relating to the meeting are available on the web site:

<http://ec.europa.eu/DocsRoom/documents?locale=en&tags=euromed%20working%20party%202015>

One of the main results was the update of the [Work programme on Euro-Mediterranean industrial cooperation](#) and its extension until 2016. The next meeting of the Working Party will take place on 23 February 2016 in Brussels.

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