



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط



REGIONAL TRANSPORT ACTION PLAN (RTAP 2021-2027)

Mid-Term review



Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. Context | 3 |
| 2. Implementation of RTAP Horizontal Actions | 4 |
| 3. Implementation of RTAP Actions on Logistics and Intermodal Transport | 6 |
| 4. Implementation of RTAP Actions on Maritime Transport | 7 |
| 5. Implementation of RTAP Actions on Land Transport | 10 |
| 6. Implementation of RTAP Actions on Air Transport and GNSS | 13 |
| 7. Implementation of RTAP Actions on the Trans-Mediterranean Transport Network (TMN-T) | 15 |
| 8. Conclusions & Recommendations | 16 |

1. Context

At the **UfM Ministerial Conference on Transport** held online on February 9, 2023, UfM Member States reiterated their commitment to ongoing cooperation in the field of transport within the Mediterranean region. During the conference, a Ministerial Declaration and the newly established [Regional Transport Action Plan \(RTAP 2021-2027\)](#) were endorsed. The RTAP outlines priority actions across all transport modes and addresses horizontal policy issues in the transport area.

Action 28 of the RTAP on “Implementation of the RTAP, monitoring and evaluation” establishes that the UfM Regional Platform on Transport Connectivity, as the main platform for discussion, monitoring and update of the RTAP, will deliver a **mid-term review of the RTAP by the end of 2024**. Consequently, discussions on the progress in the RTAP were held during the UfM Regional Platform and its Thematic Working Groups on 27-28 November 2024 in Barcelona. In addition, UfM Member States were invited to share input in writing on their progress in the implementation of the RTAP.

This document summarises the progress achieved as reported by the countries as part of this mid-term review and the challenges encountered. Next to summarizing the progress already achieved, the document also particularly sets the scene for the final years of implementation of the RTAP until 2027. It does so by providing **recommendations for priority areas** of work and cooperation in the years to come. These recommendations are based on the stated priorities by the UfM Member States and the progress already achieved.

This report concerns the **EU Southern Neighbourhood countries¹ and Mauritania**. It is to be noted that valuable contributions were also received by EU Member States and other non-EU Mediterranean countries. While this report does not refer specifically to those, these have been invaluable in serving as a benchmark to assess progress against.

¹ Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia.

2. Implementation of RTAP Horizontal Actions

The strengthening and integration of regional and international cooperation into national transport strategies and policies (Action 1)

Countries demonstrated some progress in aligning their national transport strategies with regional and international cooperation frameworks. This shows itself most notably in the national strategies of several countries aiming to **position themselves as hubs within the regional and international transport network** by implementing reforms and enhancing transport infrastructure. For example, Egypt and Morocco are implementing ambitious strategies to position themselves as strategic hubs when it comes to aviation and maritime transport, which also includes connections between ports and airports and urban areas through railways and roads. Furthermore, Jordan's National Transport Strategy 2024-2028 emphasizes the regional dimension of their transport network as key to the country's economic development. At the same time, almost all countries in the southern neighbourhood have seen an **increase in air traffic** – both to the EU and towards the rest of the world. Nevertheless, connections between the countries in the region continue to be lacking.

Regarding the ambition towards **convergence with EU and international standards** (including ICAO, IMO, and others), while many countries have expressed this goal, there is clear room for greater progress. Although institutional capacity constraints and the need for technical assistance are commonly cited as barriers to further alignment, it is important to note that not all countries have fully utilized the support opportunities available through the regional projects.

The improvement of national transport strategies and policies to enhance sustainable transport and achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Action 2)

There is significant **potential to advance sustainable transport in the region**, particularly by leveraging its abundant renewable energy resources to power electric vehicles and produce sustainable fuels for aviation and maritime transport. However, at present, the region remains heavily dependent on road transport, which continues to account for the majority of transport-related emissions (which is amplified by the use of relatively old fleets of trucks in operation). Several countries are however implementing reforms in line with the SDGs and have adopted national strategies which acknowledge the need for a green transition in the transport sector. These include significant investments in (high-speed) railways and public transport (metro and BRT lines), investments in sustainable urban mobility, and the adoption of policies to promote zero-emission vehicles. This is however distributed unevenly within the region.

On 1 May 2025 the **Sulphur Emission Control Area in the Mediterranean (SECA-MED)** entered into force. To facilitate the implementation and enforcement of MARPOL Annex VI, countries who have not yet done so need to ratify the Annex. Others should focus on transposing its articles into national legislation and focus on implementation – this is supported by the SAFEMED V project.

There remains insufficient attention in the region to **climate resilience of transport infrastructure**. According to the First Mediterranean Assessment report², drafted by MedECC and supported by the

² MedECC (2020), Climate and Environmental Change in the Mediterranean Basin: Current Situation and Risks for the Future. [First Mediterranean Assessment Report](#)

UfM, the Mediterranean region is warming 20% faster than the global average, and coastal zones face heightened disaster risks, including flooding and erosion and extreme weather events (such as wind storms, storm surges, floods, heat extremes, and droughts). Countries are invited to consider the Commission's Technical guidance on the climate proofing of infrastructure in the period 2021-2027³. Furthermore, countries are invited to further include the promotion of women's empowerment in the transport sectors in their national strategies and policies.

³ [Commission Notice](#) Technical guidance on the climate proofing of infrastructure in the period 2021-2027 - C(2021) 5430 final

3. Implementation of RTAP Actions on Logistics and Intermodal Transport

The development of logistics through the strengthening of national strategies that take into account the regional dimension of the sector (Action 5)

Several countries show progress on logistics development with an international perspective. For example, Algeria reports the implementation of a strategy to reduce transport and storage costs, improve market access, and promote green urban logistics. Egypt is implementing a comprehensive plan to develop and modernise its transportation system, including linking seaports with roads, railways, and logistics areas, with the stated aim to become a global trade and logistics hub. Lebanon endorsed an Integrated Maritime Strategy in May 2024, addressing logistics. Morocco has defined a national priority programme for the development of logistics zones by 2028. Mauritania reports actively incorporating the regional dimension in its national logistics strategy. Tunisia finalised in May 2024 a study on a logistics vision 2040. Lastly, Palestine reported the development of a Road Transport Master Plan outlining district and national level logistics facilities.

The indicator for this action – the **World Bank’s Logistics Performance Index**⁴ – reflects these efforts. Although the index is not available for all countries, those for which it is calculated — namely Algeria, Egypt, Türkiye, and Israel — demonstrate improvement. For these countries, the average score increased from 2,93 in 2018 to 3,15 in 2023.

Despite this progress and the strategies that aim to enhance connectivity between the countries and the EU and the rest of the world, the **regional dimension is often lacking** in the implementation of national policies. The challenging political context, for example in the Red Sea, has also severely impacted logistics performance in the region in recent years. For the upcoming years, countries are invited to develop and implement logistics strategies that further consider the regional dimension. Furthermore, it is recommended to consider green and urban logistics as an essential element, which also take into account the role of cities as urban nodes in the logistics network, while also promoting the digitalisation of information exchange along the logistics chain.

The strengthening of multimodal transport development strategies with the aim of optimising transport operations and costs and enhancing sustainability and competitiveness. (Action 6)

Efforts are underway in several countries to **strengthen multimodal transport**. For example, Egypt reports the implementation of a plan to establish numerous dry ports and logistics centres across the country, with the first dry port operational and connected to the railway network. Lebanon reports on their plans to reactivate coastal and interior transport axes, and studies have been conducted to reactivate segments of the old rail network. These efforts should notably also enhance the interconnections between the different modes of transport. Morocco reports on their efforts to strengthen multimodal transport through infrastructure development (ports, rail extensions, motorway connections), digitalisation (e.g. PortNet), sustainability initiatives (green modes, alternative fuels), international cooperation, a national logistics strategy, and training/reforms. To make further progress on this action in the upcoming years, countries are invited to further develop and implement integrated multimodal transport strategies that optimise the use of different transport modes. Investing in

⁴ [Logistics Performance Index – World Bank](#)

infrastructure that supports intermodal connectivity, such as linking ports and logistics centres with rail and road networks, and promoting the use of sustainable transport modes are essential.

4. Implementation of RTAP Actions on Maritime Transport

The ratification and implementation of international conventions and agreements in the maritime field (Action 8)

Several countries have made progress in ratifying and implementing relevant maritime conventions. **Most countries have now ratified MARPOL Annex VI** – the most recent developments in this regard are Israel (Date of deposit 5 December 2024 – Entry into Force 5 March 2025) and Egypt (has ensured presidential approval to ratify the Annex). Algeria and Lebanon are invited to continue to work with EMSA towards ratification of the Annex. Most countries have also ensured the ratification of the SAR, SOLAS and STCW conventions. However, more progress is needed on notably the Athens and the WRC conventions. In addition, Egypt and Israel are invited to ratify the SAR convention. Focus should also notably turn to the transposition of the conventions into national legislation and its **implementation and enforcement**, which is still lacking in many countries.

Notable challenges reported by the countries in this regard include a lack of resources that hinders timely ratification, transposition, and implementation. To make further progress, countries are invited to make full use of the **technical assistance opportunities**. Through the SAFEMED V project, EMSA has already provided support to the drafting of national laws to transpose the MARPOL convention to Lebanon, Algeria, and Morocco. SAFEMED V beneficiaries should continue seeking for technical support to advance with the ratification and transposition of international conventions into the national legislation, notably by ensuring coordination between national authorities and by providing EMSA and its contractor with necessary cooperation.

The improvement of port efficiency (regulatory reforms, upgrading of infrastructure, construction of other ports or terminals, storage areas, hinterland connections and rail connections) (Action 9)

Efforts are underway in several countries to upgrade port infrastructure and implement regulatory reforms. Examples of this include Egypt and Morocco who have developed comprehensive national strategies to enhance port capacity and efficiency and ensure connectivity within the overall transport network of the country. As a consequence of this, several countries have seen **significant improvements in the Liner Shipping Connectivity Index**⁵, including notably Türkiye, Egypt, Morocco, and Jordan. This indicates that the integration of these countries in the global liner shipping networks has improved since the start of the implementation of the current RTAP. A notably challenge in this regard is the political situation in the Eastern Mediterranean, which has impacted shipping in several countries. To further enhance port efficiency in the upcoming years, focus should notably turn to **leveraging digitalisation in the sector** such as the implementation of national Maritime Single Windows.

The development of maritime transport through the opening of new shipping lines, including its connection with other modes of transport and the establishment of infrastructure and conditions

⁵ <https://unctadstat.unctad.org/datacentre/dataviewer/US.LSCI>

for producing and storing renewable and low-carbon fuels in key ports along international shipping routes (Action 10)

Maritime transport remains the backbone of trade and integration between the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean. To further promote this, **expanding short-sea shipping** lines between both shores, including for passenger and RORO-services, is essential. Key lines have been in place for a long time between key ports in southern Europe (notably in Spain, France Italy, and Portugal) and ports in the Southern Neighbourhood, including Tanger Med (Morocco), Tunis (Tunisia), Alexandria (Egypt), and Istanbul (Türkiye). Infrastructure investments in these ports have already added capacity in this regard, thereby enabling new and upgraded routes.

Several countries have set steps in **enhancing the sustainability of maritime transport**. Initiatives include projects for the production and storage of alternative fuels for shipping and expanding onshore power supply in key ports. To further enhance the sustainability of shipping in the Mediterranean and build upon the favourable conditions in the region for developing alternative fuels, these initiatives should be expanded upon. To unlock private sector engagement, these initiatives should be backed by long-term national strategies, as already seen for example in Egypt and Morocco.

The enhancement of maritime safety (Action 11)

Countries have made some progress in ensuring maritime safety, although much work remains to be done. Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia cover their coastline with an AIS network and have signed a Service Level Agreement with EMSA and the MARES managers to share AIS information via the SafeSeaNet regional server for the Mediterranean and Black Sea. Nevertheless, AIS networks need to be maintained and there is a clear need for better regional AIS data sharing. Israel has recently showed a potential interest to join AIS sharing while Lebanon, where possible, could be supported by SAFEMED V to establish their AIS national network.

To further strengthen Port State Control, efforts should focus on further developing and implementing inspection criteria and guidelines aligned with the Med MoU and Paris MoU, with support from THETIS-Med. Countries should also make further efforts to accede to the SAR convention and improve on search and rescue operations and assistance for ships in distress. Capacity building in maritime safety, including training for personnel on AIS maintenance and data management, and potentially re-establishing or upgrading VTS capabilities, should be prioritised.

A Dynamic Overview of the National (maritime) Administrations (DONA) is under development by EMSA and will be made available to the SAFEMED V beneficiaries during the second half of 2025. The tool which replicates the one in use for the EU Members States, will support the countries to identify and share the contact of the national authorities responsible for the implementation of the international conventions and to extract statistics supporting the evaluation and review of the performance as Flag, Coastal and Port State. A lack of sufficient evaluation and review is one of the most typical findings of the IMO Member State Audit Scheme (IMSAS).

The assurance of maritime security (Action 12)

In the area of maritime security, the key focus remains on the implementation of the **SOLAS maritime security requirements in accordance with the ISPS Code** to ensure robust protection measures for vessels and port facilities. While several countries report ongoing work on the implementation of these

standards, it is clear that there remains significant work to be done. Through the SAFEMED project, EMSA provides training curricula and courses on the ISPS Code and maritime cybersecurity. As regards the RTAP indicator for this action, the Med MoU on Port State Control recorded in 2023 among all its members 262 deficiencies related to ISPS, which is down from 299 in 2022⁶.

The protection of the marine environment, in particular through the ratification and implementation of the MARPOL Convention and its environment-related instruments, including MARPOL Annex VI (Action 13)

Several countries are working on marine environment protection and have made progress in the **adoption and implementation of the MARPOL Convention**. During the period of the RTAP, Israel had ratified MARPOL Annex VI and Egypt has ensured presidential approval to do so. Mauritania reports being in the process of ratification. Lebanon ratified MARPOL Annex VI in March 2019 and reports currently being in internal discussion to ensure the completion of the depositing process at IMO. Several other partners have set steps in the transposition of the MARPOL standards into national legislation, notably supported by EMSA. Nevertheless, countries note that a lack of resources as well as challenges of raising awareness among stakeholders has made it difficult to fully implement the stipulations of the MARPOL conventions into national law. In this regard, in the upcoming period, further focus should be put on the implementation and enforcement of the MARPOL convention, with specific attention to awareness raising and training for stakeholders on MARPOL requirements to ensure effective implementation.

With the entry into force of the **Sulphur Emission Control Area in the Mediterranean (SECA-MED)** on 1 May 2025, to facilitate the implementation and enforcement of MARPOL Annex VI, the donation of portable devices to measure sulphur content in marine fuels is being considered within the SAFEMED V project. Furthermore, countries are invited to develop national strategies and action plans for ballast water management and biofouling, with technical support from organisations like REMPEC. For example, in 2021, Morocco developed a national ballast water management strategy with technical support from REMPEC. Furthermore, REMPEC provided support to Morocco in October 2023 on biofouling, specifically for the preparation of a national assessment report and for the provision of national training on the management of biofouling. Within the context of the SAFEMED V project, a questionnaire was circulated by EMSA to get information on oil pollution response means available to the beneficiaries with the aim to address the identified gaps with donation of appropriate equipment.

The training and certification of seafarers. (Action 14)

Several countries are working on seafarer training and certification and to comply with the STCW Convention and other relevant agreements. Most countries have ratified the **STCW and Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) of 2006**, with notably Egypt recently ensuring ratification of the MLC in 2024. The remaining countries are invited to do so. As regards the other aspects of this action, progress can be seen in several countries, including Algeria, Lebanon, and Morocco, in ensuring the issuance of seafarer certificates in compliance with STCW requirements. Through the SAFEMED V project, EMSA provides curricula and courses on STCW conventions to SAFEMED V beneficiaries, and assessments of STCW systems were conducted in Algeria and Lebanon and are ongoing in Tunisia.

⁶ [Med MoU Annual Reports](#)

To advance further on this action in the coming years, countries should ensure that their training and certification systems for seafarers are fully aligned with the STCW Convention and the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC). Strengthening and investing in maritime training institutions, as well as establishing Memoranda of Understanding for the mutual recognition of certificates, can significantly enhance the quality and mobility of seafarers. In addition, promoting continuous professional development and training on new standards and emerging technologies will be essential.

5. Implementation of RTAP Actions on Land Transport

The accession to key international road transport agreements focusing on reforms and regulatory convergence (for the 10 priority conventions refer to the RTAP) (Action 15)

Ensuring alignment with international agreements in the road sector and promoting regulatory harmonisation remains key to ensuring regional integration. This action has seen some progress in this regard. For example, Egypt acceded to the TIR convention in December 2020 and to the 1968 Vienna Convention on Road Traffic in 2023. In 2023, also Türkiye ratified this convention. Following a twinning project with Spain which ended in 2021, Morocco notes it is in the process of drafting legislation for the implementation of the ADR agreement. Morocco also notes it is initiating the constitutional procedure for its accession to the AETR agreement and is examining existing regulations for the possible accession to the 1958 and 1997 UN agreements. Nevertheless, there are still several countries in the Southern Neighbourhood who have not yet acceded to the **main agreements in the road sector**, including the 1958 UN agreement, the Vienna Conventions on road traffic and road signs, and the ADR and ATP agreements. While countries mention a certain degree of alignment in the absence of accession to these agreements, they are invited to make further progress in this regard.

In the reporting period, the **EuroMed Transport Support Project (ETSP)** has raised awareness in the region on the importance of the UN Agreements and EU legislation. Including through the support of ETSP, some regulatory reforms have been introduced. Examples of this include Palestine and Egypt, where reforms were elaborated on access to the profession of road transport operator, driving & resting times, and transport of dangerous goods. This notwithstanding, there is still clear room for progress in this area to align the region with international standards.

The establishment, through regulatory reforms, of an efficient and competitive land transport systems that promotes and facilitates international road transport, including through the implementation of Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) (Action 16)

Despite efforts to enhance regulatory alignment, **cross-border transport** in the region remains at a low level between most countries. At the same time, on a national level, several countries have made progress in ensuring regulatory reforms in the road transport sector to enhance its efficiency and competitiveness. Notably, including through the support of ETSP, the **implementation of Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS)** has seen progress, with several countries adopting national policies, including Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, and Algeria. Nevertheless, also in this regard resource issues and a lack of institutional capacity prevent swift and full deployment, and in many cases the application of ITS within the countries remains fragmented without a comprehensive national strategy in place. To make further progress on this action, countries should ensure national ITS strategies are in place. Furthermore, to make progress on sustainable road transport, countries should make plans to

modernise their fleets and ensure incentives are in place for the adoption of electric vehicles, while at the same time planning for the roll-out of charging infrastructure in line with EU best practice. Jordan is providing a good example in the region in this regard⁷. Furthermore, Morocco reports on its efforts to improve the environmental performance of vehicles by adopting new emission standards in 2023, shifting from Euro IV to Euro VI standards.

The improvement of road safety in an effort to reduce the number of road fatalities, in particular through the institutional management of road safety, the establishment of a road safety lead agency, the development of national strategies, and the implementation of international conventions on road traffic (Action 17)

Road safety must remain a priority for the regional cooperation in the Mediterranean. Considering the most recent WHO data available⁸, between 2013 and 2021, the aggregate WHO estimate of the number of road fatalities in the southern neighbourhood countries decreased by 8,9%. Countries have made efforts to enhance road safety in the region. Notably, most countries have now established lead road safety agencies and implemented national road safety strategies - although this is not the case for all countries. Furthermore, data collection remains suboptimal, and countries report continued difficulties with driving behaviour and available funding for the lead agencies. To further make progress on road safety towards the objective of a **50% reduction in road traffic deaths and injuries by 2030**, countries are notably invited to ensure that a fully funded lead agency and national road safety strategy is in place, which includes aspirational targets for a reduction in road fatalities. For example, Morocco has a National Road Safety Agency in place since 2018, a public institution with legal personality and financial autonomy, and has adopted a National Road Safety Strategy for the decade 2017-2026, which set a target of reducing road deaths by 50% in 2026, compared to 2015 levels. Furthermore, countries need to ensure safe infrastructure and focus on adopting road safety legislation in line with EU and international best practice.

On 18-20 February 2025, Morocco hosted the **Fourth Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety** in Marrakech. Leaders from 100 countries, including Morocco, Egypt, Türkiye, and Palestine, endorsed the Marrakech Declaration⁹ that calls on governments to make road safety a political priority, ensure sustained funding and to advance actions to achieve the goal of halving road deaths by 2030.

The implementation of national urban mobility policies and sustainable urban mobility plans for the most important cities (Action 18)

Under this action, the **implementation of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP)**s in the region is prioritized, to be supported by national urban mobility policies. Several countries have made progress in this regard, with SUMP>s now reportedly in place in major cities in the region, including in Israel, Morocco, Tunisia, Lebanon, Mauritania, and Egypt, and several large urban public transport infrastructure projects finalised and ongoing. In addition, several countries have adopted national urban mobility policies to support the cities in enhancing sustainable urban mobility.

⁷ In 2023, 19.6% of the cars in Jordan were hybrids or electric vehicles, with new registrations peaking that year at 70.1%.

⁸ [WHO Global status report on road safety 2023](#)

⁹ [Marrakech Declaration](#)

Nevertheless, challenges remain notably in terms of institutional capacity and resources within the cities to further make progress on the topic. Further developing **national urban mobility policies** within the countries to support cities, as well as knowledge sharing within the region (possibly with the support of more advanced countries like Morocco and Tunisia), could ensure further progress. In line with the EU's new TEN-T regulation, countries are invited to further recognize the critical importance of cities as urban nodes in the larger transport network. In this regard, countries should also focus on enhancing urban connectivity to facilitate first and last mile connections, thereby driving economic growth and competitiveness.

The pursuit of structural reforms in the rail sector through the implementation of regulatory reforms, the ratification of international agreements and conventions (including COTIF) as well as the convergence with European agreements and regulations (Action 19)

In the rail sector, several countries including notably Egypt and Morocco are implementing (high-speed) rail projects which have the capacity to significantly **expand the railway capacity**, while plans are also being made in Jordan to expand its railway network. Despite these efforts, the modal share of railways in the region remains low, ensuring a continued over-reliance on road transport. Despite the implementation of studies on a possible railway network, the situation in Lebanon and Palestine has not allowed for the development of a railway network. Mauritania currently operates only a freight railway serving mining activities, and Algeria has reported that its western mining line is scheduled for completion by the end of 2026, with two additional lines under study.

To enhance the situation, in terms of regulatory reforms there is still significant room to improve on the **competitiveness and efficiency of the rail sectors**. Countries are invited to further consider the role of the private sector by separating infrastructure management functions from operating tasks and enhancing access to the market of rail transport services. Furthermore, countries are invited to exploit the potential for digitalisation and automation to reduce rail's costs, increase its capacity and enhance its flexibility and reliability.

The development of cross-border transport, railway safety and interoperability, including through the implementation of the interoperability requirements (TSIs/UTPs) and in particular the transition to ERTMS. (Action 20)

While transport integration in the Mediterranean, including in the rail sector, remains a priority, cross-border rail transport is non-existent between most countries and needs to be further developed. To prepare for this, countries need to continue to make progress to ensure **railway safety and interoperability in line with EU and international standards**. Some progress has been achieved in this regard. In terms of alignment with international standards, Israel is clearly a frontrunner and has made significant progress in recent years. With the support of the EUMedRail project, several countries including Algeria, Tunisia, and Egypt have implemented a Safety Management System (SMS) in their countries. Nevertheless, most countries still lack a National Safety Authority (NSA) and a National Investigation Body (NIB). In order to ensure further regulatory alignment in the rail sector, countries are invited to make further progress in the implementation of the Technical Specifications of Interoperability (TSIs) and in the transition towards ERTMS.

6. Implementation of RTAP Actions on Air Transport and GNSS

The ratification and implementation of the conventions on international civil aviation (ICAO) and the promotion of the Euro-Mediterranean Common Aviation Area (EMCAA) through regulatory convergence between national legislation and the EU acquis. (Action 21)

With regards to aviation, countries in the region have seen a **significant increase in air traffic** since the start of the implementation of the current RTAP, with almost all countries now above pre-Covid-19 figures. In order to further promote the EMCAA, ensuring regulatory convergence between national legislation and the EU acquis and international standards remains a priority. With the support of the EuroMed Transport Aviation Project (ETAP), countries are working towards this goal by implementing regulatory reforms and enhancing the capacity of their civil aviation authorities – this has notably been reported by Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Morocco. However, the countries report challenges with regards to the significant administrative capacity needed to ensure regulatory alignment as well as the additional capacity required to accommodate the growing demand for air traffic, notably in countries like Morocco, Algeria, and Egypt.

To make further progress on this action in the upcoming years, countries should prioritise the full ratification and implementation of ICAO conventions and standards. Actively promoting regulatory convergence with the EU acquis in areas like safety, security, and environmental protection is crucial for participating in the EMCAA. To support with administrative capacity, continued engagement with ICAO and EASA for technical assistance and guidance is recommended.

The promotion of air safety, security, and environmental protection by prioritising the implementation and enforcement of international standards (ICAO) and converging national safety and security legislation to the EU acquis. (Action 22)

Countries have shown some progress towards enhancing air safety, security, and environmental protection by prioritising **ICAO standards and EU acquis convergence**. The ETAP project continued to support the countries in recent years, with notably Morocco and Jordan strongly engaging with the project – this has resulted in enhanced results for both countries as regards ICAO standards. Nevertheless, given that the industry and technology are rapidly evolving, and countries report significant constraints in institutional capacity, countries are invited to consider as much as possible the EU standards when developing national legislation and engage with EASA for guidance and support.

With regards to the indicator for this action (“% of Effective Implementation (EI) of ICAO USOAP”), two countries have been subjected to a full **USOAP Safety Audit** during the implementation of this RTAP¹⁰. In 2024, Morocco (overall EI of 87,71%) and Türkiye (overall EI of 50,34%) were audited.

As regards aviation sustainability, efforts should focus on making progress towards ICAO’s long-term global aspirational goal (LTAG) for international aviation of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. In this regard, countries are invited to participate in CORSIA, with only Israel and Mauritania currently doing so. Morocco, Mauritania and Egypt already participate in the **ACT-SAF project**, implemented by ICAO and EASA, with the objective to perform feasibility studies on SAF production. Jordan is currently finalising a feasibility study on SAF production. Other countries report initiatives to enhance aviation sustainability, including Jordan and Lebanon, including by promoting sustainable aviation fuels, fuel-

¹⁰ [USOAP Safety Audit Results](#)

efficient technologies, and noise reduction. Countries are invited to consider the possibilities for SAF initiatives, and to work towards aligning with the EU's ReFuel EU aviation regulation.

The ETAP project has supported Jordan in 2024 with the amendment of the national regulation to integrate changes from the second edition of ICAO SARPs Annex 16, Volume IV on CORSIA. The Egyptian ECAR 40 Regulation was also drafted by the project. ETAP will continue providing support on environmental topics in 2025 and 2026 to Jordan, Egypt and, should they confirm their interest, to Morocco and Algeria.

The improvements in air traffic management, including the convergence towards the regulations of the Single European Sky and the compliance of the Air Navigation Services Providers (ANSP) with the regulations regarding air traffic management, in particular in the framework of the certification of ANSP. (Action 23)

Countries have shown some progress in improving air traffic management, notably by making efforts towards convergence towards **Single European Sky regulations and ensuring ANSP compliance**. Several countries, including Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco report efforts to reform the regulatory framework and align with EU ATM regulations, enhancing technical infrastructure to improve ATM, and highlighting that their ANSP cooperate closely with Eurocontrol. Morocco and Israel have comprehensive partnerships with Eurocontrol.

Nevertheless, due to issues surrounding institutional capacity and in light of the complexity of the Single European Sky regulations and the compliance of the Air Navigation Services Providers (ANSPs) with these regulations, countries are often still far away from full compliance. Challenges notably concern the complexity of ANSP certification, establishing control/audit mechanisms, and ensuring sufficient staff training. To make further progress on this action in the upcoming years, countries should prioritise the certification of their ANSP in accordance with international and European regulations. Investing in the necessary technical resources and training for both regulatory authorities and ANSP personnel remains crucial for effective certification and oversight. Working towards greater interoperability with the European ATM network and potentially seeking technical support from Eurocontrol can further enhance air traffic management efficiency.

The development of a consolidated national GNSS strategy focusing on the transport industry and its related activities. (Action 24)

Some countries note progress on this action. Algeria reports on plans for EGNOS/Algeria cooperation to install a RIMS station. Morocco concluded agreements with the EU regarding the RIMS station at Agadir airport to ensure EGNOS service continuity. Priorities for Morocco include completing EGNOS coverage and developing a national GNSS strategy. Lebanon is developing a national GNSS strategy. Challenges encountered by the countries include a lack of sufficient resources and security concerns over GNSS jamming.

To make further progress on this action in the upcoming years, countries should develop consolidated national GNSS strategies that support the transport industry. This includes investing in GNSS infrastructure and technology, such as RIMS stations, and ensuring adequate training and expertise in GNSS applications. Strengthening national coordination among relevant stakeholders is essential for effective GNSS strategy implementation. Addressing security concerns related to GNSS interference

and jamming is also important. The ETAP project plans to implement one workshop on “Management of GNSS availability and integrity issues (jamming, spoofing)” in 2025.

7. Implementation of RTAP Actions on the Trans-Mediterranean Transport Network (TMN-T)

The technical identification and political validation of a Trans-Mediterranean Transport network (Action 3) as well as mobilisation of financing for its implementation (Action 4)

The goal of the identification and political validation of the Trans-Mediterranean Transport network as an extension of the TEN-T is to ensure creation of an interoperable and multimodal network between partner countries and to focus the public and private engagement (including financial support) on common objectives. This objective was reconfirmed during the UfM Transport Ministerial of February 2023. Discussions on the identification of the network have been ongoing but have not concluded. The remaining period of the RTAP 2021-2027 should therefore be used to finalise the discussions and ensure the political validation of the network.

8. Conclusions & Recommendations

The Mid-Term Assessment indicates a general positive trajectory in the implementation of the RTAP across the partner countries. While all countries are actively engaging with the outlined actions, significant disparities exist in the pace and extent of progress, often influenced by national circumstances, political situation, and the availability of funding and technical expertise. Addressing the identified challenges will be crucial for the successful completion of the RTAP objectives by 2027.

Based on the mid-term review as presented in this document, this chapter presents recommendations for focal areas for the second half of the implementation period of this RTAP. These recommendations are fully in line with the commitments made at the 2023 UfM Transport Ministerial, while building upon the outcomes of the mid-term review and serving to provide common, focussed objectives for the upcoming years.

Priorities for the final implementation period of the RTAP 2021-2027

Horizontal priorities and guidelines

1. The primary objective of this cooperation should remain on **ensuring enhanced regional cooperation in the Mediterranean**. Countries are encouraged to further integrate regional and international perspectives into their national transport strategies and policies to enhance the efficiency, competitiveness, safety, and security of their transport networks.
2. Countries are encouraged to take full advantage of the **technical assistance opportunities** offered by the EU, the regional cooperation projects, and the UfM Secretariat. Additionally, partners are invited to actively collaborate with EU transport agencies whenever possible.
3. Following up on the UfM Transport Ministerial Declaration of 2023, continued efforts should be made towards the establishment of the future **Trans-Mediterranean Transport Network (TMN-T)**, to be connected with the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T).
4. Focus should remain on enhancing **social aspects in transport** and passenger rights. Promoting women's empowerment in the transport sector is essential in this regard.
5. In order to ensure the targeted and evidence-based implementation of these actions, ensuring high levels of **monitoring and data collection** remains crucial.

Maritime transport

6. The mid-term review highlights some progress in **regulatory reforms and accession to international agreements** in the maritime sector. However, the shared objective remains to further advance accession, incorporation into national legislation, and effective implementation of international maritime conventions—particularly those related to maritime security, safety, and environmental protection, such as the MARPOL Convention.
7. Ensuring **maritime safety and security** must remain a top priority, achieved through strengthened regional cooperation, adherence to the IMO framework on maritime safety, and close collaboration with EMSA. As a first priority, countries are invited to develop maritime strategies in accordance with the III code, including defined priorities for the upcoming years. In the area of Port State Control, efforts should focus on further developing and implementing inspection criteria and guidelines aligned with the Med MoU and Paris MoU, with support from THETIS-Med. Regional cooperation should be further enhanced by improving the capacity to receive, share, and analyse vessel traffic

monitoring data, as well as strengthening search and rescue operations and assistance for ships in distress. Finally, regarding maritime security, focus should be on implementing the SOLAS maritime security requirements in accordance with the ISPS Code to ensure robust protection measures for vessels and port facilities.

8. Focus should be placed on increasing the **sustainability of maritime transport**. This should be accomplished through the harmonisation with the relevant EU legislation on maritime decarbonisation and by considering initiatives on the production and export of alternative maritime fuels.
9. Enhancing **maritime connectivity** between the partners should be a top priority to ensure further economic development from maritime transport. This should be ensured through enhanced development of Short-Sea Shipping and the exploitation of digitalisation such as the implementation of maritime single windows. Additionally, improving seafarers' living and working conditions and increasing the attractiveness of the seafaring profession should be prioritized, including through the implementation and enforcement of the STCW and Maritime Labour Conventions.

Land transport

10. The mid-term review shows that further efforts should be made to facilitate international **road transport** through accession to international agreement and regulatory harmonisation. In the upcoming years, countries should notably make progress towards acceding to the ADR and AETR agreements. This should include the adoption and enforcement of social rules for road transport, such as driving and resting times and the adoption of the digital tachograph, as well as rules on access to the occupation of road haulier. To enhance the safety and efficiency of their road network, countries are invited to develop national ITS strategies in line with EU best practice.
11. Ensuring **road safety** remains a top priority to move towards the common target of preventing at least 50% of road traffic deaths and injuries by 2030. In the coming years, countries should ensure the establishment of a lead agency responsible for implementing an effective national road safety strategy that includes clear, aspirational targets. As part of this, countries should make progress on data collection, ensure proper legislation is in place in line with EU and international best practice, ensure safe infrastructure, and protect vulnerable road users.
12. Regarding **rail transport**, further focus should be on ensuring interoperability and promoting cross-border transport, improving railway safety, and enhancing competitiveness and efficiency. In this regard, countries are invited to make further progress in the implementation of the Technical Specifications of Interoperability (TSIs) and in the transition towards ERTMS. Railway safety should be further improved by setting up a separate body for incident investigation, a national safety authority, and the establishment of a safety management system. Finally, to boost the competitiveness of rail transport, countries should leverage digitalisation and automation to reduce costs, increase capacity, and improve flexibility and reliability. This should be complemented by separating infrastructure management from operational functions and improving market access for rail transport services.
13. Given the urbanization trends in the Mediterranean, prioritizing the shift towards safe, smart, and **sustainable urban mobility** is essential for the coming years. Although the mid-term review indicates that some countries have already implemented Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP), further advancement is encouraged to ensure that urban areas are liveable, clean, and

safe. In this regard, adopting national urban mobility policies to support cities is encouraged to bolster these efforts. While recognizing the critical importance of cities as urban nodes in the larger transport network, countries should also focus on enhancing urban connectivity to facilitate first and last mile connections, thereby driving economic growth and competitiveness.

Civil aviation

14. Further efforts should be made to promote the **Euro-Mediterranean Common Aviation Area (EMCAA)**, notably by ensuring further convergence with the EU acquis on aviation safety and security and air traffic management. In this regard, progress should also be made on aviation market aspects by further liberalizing air services and facilitating the allocation of slots to develop intra- and trans-Mediterranean traffic.
15. While the mid-term review shows that some progress was made, countries should take further efforts in the area of **aviation safety**, notably with the aim to comply with ICAO's standards and recommendations. Efforts should notably focus on ensuring adequate administrative capacity. Countries are encouraged to align national legislation as closely as possible with EU standards and to actively engage with EASA for guidance and support.
16. To make progress toward ICAO's Long-Term Aspirational Goal (LTAG) of achieving net-zero carbon emissions from international aviation by 2050, continued emphasis is needed on promoting **sustainable aviation and environmental protection**. While most ICAO member states are voluntarily participating in the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA), participation from Southern Neighbourhood countries remains limited – countries are therefore encouraged to join the scheme. In addition, all countries are invited to explore opportunities for the production and use of Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF) and to work towards alignment with the ReFuelEU Aviation Regulation.



ufmsecretariat.org



Palau de Pedralbes | Pere Duran Farell, 11
Barcelona, Spain - 08034
Phone: 00 34 93 521 4100 | Fax: 00 34 93 521 4102

