

Annex 7: Action Fiche for ENPI South – Regional Transport Cooperation

1. IDENTIFICATION

Title/Number	EuroMed Road, Rail and Urban Transport regional programme 2009/021-942		
Total cost	5 M€ (5.4% of IP)		
Aid method / Method of implementation	Direct centralised management + joint management		
DAC-code	21020 (Road Transport), 21030 (Rail transport), 43030 (Urban Development)	Sector	Terrestrial transport

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Sector context

All of the Mediterranean partner governments subscribed to the Regional Transport Action Plan (RTAP) which sets out a number of actions on road and rail to be implemented in the medium and long term. The implementation of these actions is overseen by the 'Sub-group on road & rail regulatory issues' which is placed under the Infrastructure Working Group of the EuroMed Transport Forum. A last meeting of this sub-group took place on 21 November 2008 during which all present partner countries presented the current status of their road & rail sector as well as an overview of recent reforms in these sectors. It became clear that partner governments are working on reforms in these sectors, but are still far from implementation of the actions identified in the RTAP and in need of additional assistance.

Road transport

A study conducted in the framework of the EuroMed Transport programme provided a full picture of the situation of the road & rail sector in the partner countries, as well as their needs and recommendations on how to implement technical assistance. The study showed that as regards the different UNECE conventions applicable to road transport only a limited number of countries have ratified these. With certain exceptions (TIR, CMR) the partner countries did not accede to any agreement. The reason is that the intention, the history and the contents of the agreements are not well known in the countries. As regards liberalization of road haulage it can be noted that the reform process is at different stages in the partner countries. Bilateral agreements on international road transport characterize the situation. Open and hidden restrictions and open and hidden protection limit the effective and efficient international transport in the Mediterranean. As for safety and sustainability, most partner countries reached rules and regulations close to EU regulation. However, the implementation and enforcement is rather weak and in need of further assistance.

Rail transport

As for the railway sector it can be noted that especially in the Eastern Mediterranean part (except for Egypt and Israel) very limited railway links are operational today. Nevertheless large development plans are being developed (especially in Jordan and Syria as well as Turkey) which should come along with large investments. Once these systems are developed, interoperability should be envisaged. For the Maghreb this is of much larger importance especially when keeping in mind the efforts to establish a Trans Maghreb railway connection. An overall reform process is needed because of the low competitiveness of the railway sector due to its inefficient organisation and management. The reform process in the partner countries is at different stages. There are advanced countries, where the reform process has been launched and in some cases already completed. Other countries are still in an analysis phase. Regional benefits of these reform processes occur mainly if all countries in a region move at a similar speed of reforms, and allow their railways to offer international services.

Urban transport

As for urban transport, which obviously has a more local impact, the objective is mainly to enhance the exchange of best practices on efficiently managing urban transport systems. Again, this need was expressed during several regional meetings where partner countries who received large loans (from the EIB and NIF) for improving urban transport systems (e.g. Cairo metro, Tunis urban train, Rabat tram way) stated that technical assistance regarding the management of these urban transport systems is desirable. One of the main objectives of this programme is therefore to enable the inclusion of the Mediterranean partner countries in the EU CIVITAS programme which supports the exchange of good practices to improve the management of transport systems and facilitate integrated policy making, institution building and regulatory reform.

2.2. Lessons learnt

Already in 2008 the Mediterranean partner countries were asked to present their road and rail sectors during the meeting of the EuroMed Transport Forum Infrastructure Working Group's Task Force on Road & Rail of 21 November 2008. As mentioned above there is no experience yet with these land transport sectors under the EuroMed regional transport cooperation. However, this and previous meetings showed a willingness of the partner countries to work on these items.

In addition, the experience to date with the other sectoral EuroMed transport programmes (aviation, maritime safety and security, port operations and shipping) have provided lessons about managing the EuroMed regional transport programmes. Transport is the way to enhance further integration of the region by supporting the efficient and safe movement of passengers and freight. Regional programmes are necessary as especially issues such as border crossings and interoperability between the transport systems of neighbouring countries require a (sub)regional approach which can be lacking under the bilateral assistance of the EU. Also the adoption on a regional level of common and acquis related rules as embodied in the UN conventions promotes the establishment of a level playing field that is a prerequisite for future liberalisation. While in some partner countries bilateral assistance in the field of land transport may exist, for other countries it may be provide some sort of

assistance ensuring the pursuit of a closer integration with the Trans Mediterranean Transport network.

In addition, a recent study conducted by the EuroMed Transport Programme in 2010 provided a full overview of the current status of the land transport sector in the partner countries. It also gave a number of recommendations about how the EU can support further development in this sector, which are obviously largely integrated in the objectives of this project.

2.3. Complementary actions

The project is contributing to the achievement of the broader objectives of the in 2007 adopted Regional Transport Action Plan (RTAP) for the Mediterranean for 2007-2013. Moreover, the project should also provide complementary actions with a view on achieving a well-functioning transport system. Within the EuroMed Transport Forum discussions are ongoing about the development of the Trans-Mediterranean Transport Network connecting all the partner countries among themselves and with the Trans European Transport Network (TEN-T). This Trans-Mediterranean Transport Network should be adopted at the next Euro Mediterranean Transport Ministerial Conference. To further promote the interoperability on this network, the proposed programme would deliver assistance in this field for the road and rail sectors. Moreover, the programme should also ensure that the numerous investments in the region on enlarging and upgrading the road & rail network is accompanied by some assistance which also aims at liberalizing the sectors using this infrastructure and making them safer for the users. Where possible the actions of the regional programme should be complementary to bilateral programmes (and the ENP action plans).

2.4. Donor coordination

The project should be based on a sound business case guaranteeing its self-sustainability in the longer term without a further need for technical assistance from the donors. The project should take into account the fact that the countries in the region are at different stages of regulatory harmonisation with the EU in the area of road & rail transport, and that their land transport industries pursue the modernisation efforts at different paces. In this sense the project is compatible with the objectives of the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness.

Where possible this project will develop potential synergies with other donors (e.g. EIB, World Bank, KfW, AfW, African & Islamic Development banks). Specific cooperation should go out to other regional initiatives which are aiming at the same goals. Therefore a close cooperation with UMA (Union Magrhebienne Arabe), GTMO 5+5, ECSWA.

3. DESCRIPTION

3.1. Objectives

General objective

The overall objective of the regional transport cooperation in the Mediterranean is focused on improving transport efficiency and effectiveness which would lead to economic and financial benefits for everybody. At the same time transport should become more sustainable. This does not only mean that the environmental impact needs to be reduced, it also means that transport operations in all sectors need to be safer which would concretely lead to less and less severe transport accidents and casualties.

While the in 2007 adopted Regional Transport Action Plan (RTAP) focuses on all transport modes, this project targets only the terrestrial transport modes: road, rail and urban transport. The coordination with the overall implementation of the RTAP is assured by the EuroMed Transport Forum and more specifically by its sub-group on Road and Rail Regulatory Issues which will overview the implementation of this project. In addition, the link with the other transport modes and their regional dimension is assured by the development of the so-called Trans Mediterranean Transport Network (TMT). This project has as objective the further creating of a level-playing-field as regards market and technical operational conditions as to facilitate cross-border road and rail haulage on this TMT-network and at the same time to make this transport more sustainable.

(1) Road transport objectives

Activity 1A: Support for the implementation of a level-playing field for road freight transport operations and competition (Action 10 RTAP)

In the Mediterranean partner countries road freight transport is responsible for the largest share of the overall freight transport movements. Cross-border road freight transport remains nevertheless rather limited. However, it can be expected that with the further development of the TMT network and increased efficiency of the national road transport sector also interregional road transport shall grow in the future. In this respect, the RTAP already identified in Action 10 the need of working towards gradual liberalization and harmonization of international road haulage. To do so, the RTAP identifies the adherence to and implementation of the key UNECE agreements with the objective of creating equal market and operational conditions which would result in a more balanced level-playing-field for operators throughout the region. It should be noted here that in the case of most of the Mediterranean partner countries, ECSWA is the relevant UN reference body. The transport division of the ECSWA operates in a similar way to that of the UNECE, however, insofar as conventions and agreements on road safety are concerned those of the UNECE are taken as reference. The EU approach to road safety in its turn is also based on the principles of the UNECE and ECSWA and can therefore be used by the partner countries as benchmark.

Activity 1B: Support for reforms in the road transport industry (Action 11 RTAP)

In addition, more attention should go out to reforms in the road transport industry itself, both for passengers as for freight (as also identified in Action 11 of the RTAP). Such reforms are especially needed to increase the efficiency of the sector by further enhancing the professionalism of the drivers, operators and their fleet also with a view on improving the overall logistics sector. In this way the road transport sector will be better prepared to operate in a gradual liberalized market and further benefit

of cross-border operations. This activity should also address the passenger transport from one urban area to another. EU efforts in this matter can be used as benchmark for introducing such gradual reforms.

Activity 1C: Support for creating safer road transport

The third objective for the road transport sector is already more or less integrated in the above mentioned objectives as further adherence to and implementation of UNECE conventions and increased professionalism in the sector will lead to enhanced road safety. However, in addition to that and in line with Action 26 of the RTAP, further attention should go out to increasing road safety of all road users. According to the World report on road traffic injury prevention, the Eastern Mediterranean region has the highest road traffic fatality rate per 100.000 people. Road crashes in the Middle East are estimated to cost \$ 7,4 billion annually (around 1.5% of GNP) and road traffic fatalities are expected to rise by up to 68 percent by 2020⁸. Also because the majority of the persons killed are under 25 of age and therefore essential for the national economies this number of fatalities needs to be reduced. Especially with a view on the establishment of the Trans Mediterranean Transport network and the planning of many new roads or upgrades, road safety aspects should already be integrated in the construction phase. However, besides the construction also behavioural aspects need to be addressed as these largely influence road safety. Eco-driving campaigns could be supported, which can simultaneously improve safety and environmental performance of road transport. This could be done by further strengthening regulatory bodies promoting common agreements on enforcement of social rules.

All the three above mentioned elements were also addressed in the 2010 EuroMed Transport road transport study. Therefore the conclusions and recommendations of this study largely serve as input to this project.

(2) Urban transport objectives

Activity 2A: Participation in the CIVITAS network and the EU Action Plan on Urban Mobility

Cooperation in the field of urban transport has not been part of the EuroMed Transport cooperation until now. It is, however, becoming a more and more integral part of the overall transport policy making especially with a view on the continuously level of urbanisation in the Mediterranean partner countries. This proposed project is in line with Action 28 of the RTAP which foresees a continuation and expansion of training, twinning and exchange programmes aimed at improving institutional capacity and upgrading knowledge. Such a pro-active exchange of knowledge, in this case specifically related to urban transport, is similar to the EU programme on urban transport named “CIVITAS” (recently also a specific Twinning project on urban transport was signed between the EU and Israel). It can be foreseen that the Mediterranean partner countries also participate in this initiative.

In addition, the in 2009 adopted action plan on urban mobility highlights a number of actions in the field of promoting integrated policies, greening and optimizing urban

⁸ Global Road Safety Partnership, annual report 2008

transport, focus on citizens and stimulating an increased sharing of experience and knowledge. All of these elements are also relevant in the partner countries and should therefore be supported.

Activity 2B: Support for managing urban transport systems and regulatory reforms

With the increased financing for the extension of urban transport systems such as metro and tramways (to which the EU also largely contributes by for instance the NIF) there is also an increased need for assistance about the management of these systems. In addition, support for institution building and regulatory reform, in line with EU legislation, can be foreseen. This could cover the establishment of competent authorities, transparent relationships between authorities and operators and minimum levels of public service obligations. While an exchange of best practices in this field will also be foreseen within the CIVITAS framework, more specific exchange of good practices among the Mediterranean partners and dedicated training and technical support in this field can be foreseen.

Activity 2C: Training on fleet management of urban transport

In addition, specific attention should go out to fleet management in urban environments with a special emphasis on safety and environmental aspects. Bus companies, taxi companies should be stimulated to implement innovative systems which could enhance the behaviour of managers, supervisors, subcontractors and drivers in order to minimize risk. Especially in urban areas alternative ways of transport could have a huge impact on emission reduction and saving fuel. In cooperation with the GNSS II programme also the application of Intelligent Transport Systems in fleets can be addressed in relation to an efficient and effective fleet management of urban transport systems.

(3) Rail transport objectives

Activity 3A: Support for structural railway sector reforms

As set out in Action 12 of the RTAP the railway sector needs to be made more attractive as to enhance its competitive position in relation to road transport and as such further stimulating the development of an intermodal transport system. Also from an environmental point of view an increased development of rail freight transport needs to be supported.

While many partner countries have already embarked upon such reforms, progress does not seem to be fully equal. Most partner countries have already developed an action plan for reforms of the national railway company and its division into more operational sub-units.

In addition, also investment plans should be developed for both financing of infrastructure as financing of rolling stock, electrification and signalling systems.

An important part of the assistance should focus on the separation of the infrastructure maintenance part and the operational part. Reforms in this matter are especially difficult (experiences in the EU have shown this), and may therefore require specific input from lessons learned in the EU. Where necessary the assistance can focus also on concession policy.

Keeping in mind the disparities as regards the progress in this matter, a differentiated (sub)regional approach for technical assistance actions supporting such reforms may be necessary. This should be done by training seminars, workshops and study tours leading to enhanced acquaintance with the relevant international and EU regulations. Exchange of best practices between the partner countries themselves could also be further stimulated.

Activity 3B: Enhancing interoperability and regional freight

Especially with a view on the development of the Trans Mediterranean Transport Network special attention needs to go out to interoperability of the systems between neighbouring countries as to further enhance freight flow (existing initiatives in this field such as the UMA Comité des Transports Ferroviaires Maghrébins (CTFM) can be assisted).

Specific cooperation with the European Railway Agency as to identify in more detail the technical specifications used in the EU seems crucial in this matter.

To further concretize these actions cross-border pilot projects could be set up which focus on the actual cross-border freight movements and identifies the existing bottlenecks in this matter. Some initiatives in this field have already been taken (e.g. in the Maghreb) and could therefore be further promoted and supported by the EC (as also identified in the 2009 EuroMed study on Rail and Road).

Activity 3C: Enhancing railway safety

Of high relevance in this matter is increasing the overall railway safety as unfortunately railway accidents still occur. Also in this matter cooperation with the EU Railway Agency should be sought. Also the installation of an independent railway safety supervisory agency which would deal with accident investigation and multi-annual safety programmes can be further promoted (addressing the following elements (closure of level crossings, building of grade separation interchanges, implementing devices for obstacle detection (radar, cameras), adding traffic lights and active warning signs)).

3.2. Expected results and main activities

Activity 1: Road transport (approx. 2 Million €)

Activity 1A: Support for the implementation of Action 10 RTAP: creating a level-playing field for road freight operations and competition (Approx. 0.5€)

With a view on the development of the TMT network and the expected further increase of cross-border road freight transport the need to apply a more harmonised approach to the enforcement of rules governing market, safety, labour and technical equipment conditions seems essential as to create a regional level-playing field which would facilitate the gradual liberalization of road transport throughout the region. Especially in relation to cross-border trade it is important that neighbouring countries adapt to such conditions at an equal pace as to also benefit equally from the advantages. The RTAP identified further adherence to and implementation of the UNECE conventions as an important step towards the adoption of regional harmonised rules.

This activity should therefore result in further application of the principles laid down in the UNECE conventions, and where possible further adherence to these conventions.

More concretely this would lead to the following activities:

- Cooperation activities with UMA and ESCWA on determining the compatibility with the principles of the UNECE conventions by further promoting knowledge about their contents;
- Technical assistance (both national and sub-regional) about the principles of the UNECE conventions, evaluation of advantages and disadvantages for the economies;
- If applicable, development of accession plans and support for the adherence and implementation thereof as well as road map on liberalization of the sector;
- Defining the possibility of agreeing on other road haulage conventions (e.g. TIR);
- Application of digital tachographes in the road freight transport sector;
- Implementation of a cross-border pilot project focused on enhancing cross-border trade situated on the TMT network by involving the road freight operators and commonly defining existing bottlenecks followed by an assistance plan on how to reduce these bottlenecks. Other trade promoting initiatives in the region (e.g. Agadir Free Trade Agreement) should be referred to in this exercise.

Activity 1B: Support for reforms in the road transport industry (Action 11 RTAP) (approx. 0.5 M €)

This priority focuses mainly the road transport, both for freight as for passengers, itself. This sector is largely dominated by many small-size enterprises, often with only one truck, not always meeting technical safety standards, professional and financial capacity criteria. This weakens the overall competitiveness of the sector. A more professional road passenger transport system, should also take into account the right of its passengers. This may therefore also be something to take into account. Changing this is not easy, as experience within the EU has also shown. The objective is nevertheless included in Action 11 of the RTAP. In addition, more specific attention may have to go out to public service obligations (PSO) in transport planning (as also identified in Action 25 of the RTAP) especially with a view on developing new infrastructure on the links situated on the TMT-network.

This activity should therefore result in an increased professionalism of drivers and operators as well as technical state of the vehicle fleet. In this way an overall improvement of the logistics sector can be expected as well.

More concretely this would lead to the following activities:

- Support focused on making the road freight and passenger sector more professional by introducing more stringent and regular driver tests, introducing more efficient operators licensing systems and increasing the number and effectiveness of road worthiness tests and other measures focused on the

upgrading of vehicle fleets and notice of passenger rights. EU legislation in these matters can be used as benchmark;

- Supporting activities focused on reinforcing the road transport sector by for instance regrouping, structuring the size of small companies;
- Further integrating the road haulage sector into the overall logistics sector;
- Support on the effective use of PSO's and passenger transport from one urban area to another.

Activity 1C: Support for creating safer road transport (approx. 1 M€)

Cooperation in this field can be foreseen with the work of the Global Road Safety Partnership (as also supported by the Red Crescent organisations in the region and the regional Middle East and North Africa Road Safety partnership) as well as with other organisations active in the region (e.g. Comité Maghrébin de Sécurité Routière)

- Active cooperation with and capacity building for government organisations, the private sector and civil society which could result in partnerships between them (facilitation of partnerships e.g. between traffic police, research, transport officials);
- National and (sub)regional assistance about the creation of road safety regulators, the development of regional road safety plans, drivers licence and road maintenancel
- Work jointly with the governments to the adoption of reduction targets for casualties and road mortality, systematization of information, exchange of experiences between countries with the implementation of low-cost counter measures (from the EU, but also within the region);
- Support for the implementation of new legislation in the field of road safety (both construction and behaviour – drinking, helmets, seat belts, speed), the set-up of efficient education campaigns. EU legislation in these matters can be used as benchmark;
- Implementation of a number of demonstration projectsl
- Support for enforcement bodies and promoting regional agreement on the enforcement of technical rules as well as adopting enforcement targets;
- Development of a regional road safety action plan in addition to existing national plans and promote the implementation thereof.

Activity 2: Urban Transport (approx. €1M)

Activity 2A: Participation in the CIVITAS network and Action Plan on Urban Mobility (Approx. 0.5 M€)

This activity should result in a further exchange of good practices at regional level and especially with EU cities situated in the Mediterranean.

More concretely this would result in:

- Participation of the Mediterranean partner countries' cities into the CIVITAS network and the organisation of a specific session/roundtable on the international city experiences with a focus on the wider Mediterranean basin;
- Active exchange of best practices especially with a view on integrating environmental friendly solutions into urban transport and further support for the development of urban mobility plans (also between Mediterranean partner countries themselves);
- Support with the implementation of actions as identified in the 2009 Action Plan on Urban Mobility.

Activity 2B: Support for managing urban transport systems (Approx. 0.25 M€)

As a complementary action to EU grants in the field of loans or grants for urban transport action technical assistance for managing these systems should be envisaged.

More concretely this would result in:

- Technical assistance for urban transport systems management at a national or (sub)regional level;
- Development of practical guides in this matter;
- Exchange of knowledge with EU cities in this matter;
- Training activities can be provided on issues related to regulatory reforms in the field of public transport such as the establishment of public transport authorities, formalizing relationships between authorities and operators as well as establishing minimum levels of public service obligations.

Activity 2C: Training on fleet management (Approx 0.25 M€)

Linked to activity 2B but more specifically focused on the fleet itself assistance should be foreseen to increase the number possibilities an efficient fleet management especially for bus and taxi companies can offer especially when it comes to efficiency, environmental impact and safety.

More concretely this would result in:

- Assistance to the integration of safety, environmental and ITS standards in fleet management;
- An exchange of best practices in the field of fleet management.

Activity 3: Rail transport (approx 1.5 M€)

Activity 3A: Support for structural sector reforms (Approx. 0.5M€)

With a view on further promoting the rail sector, certain reforms need to be stimulated. This has already been started in a number of countries but further assistance in this matter may be required.

More concretely this would result in:

- Technical assistance for further developing and implementing the national railway reform plans with a specific focus on separation of infrastructure maintenance and operational parts / passenger and freight and defining responsibilities of the different railway authorities;
- Support for the preparation of investments plans for financing of infrastructure and rolling stock, electrification and signalling systems;
- Regional seminars focused specifically on an exchange of practice and experiences between countries of the region and cooperation with relevant international organisations (e.g. UIC, SELCAT, ELCRF);
- Where needed, preparation for a TWINNING exercise

Activity 3B: Enhancing interoperability and regional freight (Approx. 0.5M€)

This activity is mainly linked to the further development of the Trans Mediterranean Transport network and as such a further need for interoperability between the different railway lines.

More concretely this would result in:

- Technical assistance on railway standards with a view on further promoting interoperability. This should be done in specific cooperation with the EU Railway Safety Agency.
- Implementation of a number of pilot projects specifically focused on promoting interoperability (taking into account (improving border crossings; establishment of better information systems feeding into a future traffic control centre; overcoming bottlenecks around urban areas and access to ports; upgrading of technical systems (gauge, voltage, signalling); upgrading infrastructure parameters (train length, axle load, train weight);elaboration of path allocation, reallocation rules and improving terminal capacity.) and international synchronization of development projects.
- Development of strategic plans as to further enhance the development of rail freight business. Private sector companies should be closely involved specifically in this exercise.

Activity 3C: Enhancing railway safety (Approx. 0.5M€)

Similar as for the road transport sector, further improvement of railway safety is a high priority for the region.

More concretely this would result in:

- Technical assistance, where needed, to establish and support the activities of an Independent Railway Safety and Accident Investigation Authority;
- Technical assistance, where needed, to support drafting, and if applicable, the implementation of a multi-annual safety programme addressing the following elements (capacity management, closure of level crossings, building of grade separation interchanges, implementing devices for obstacle detection (radar, cameras), adding traffic lights and active warning signs);
- Determining ways of future cooperation with the European Rail Safety Agency (Valenciennes, France).

Activity 4: Regional supportive activities (Approx. 0.5M€)

The implementation of the project will be followed-up in the framework of the EuroMed Transport Forum and more specifically the sub-group on Road and Rail Regulatory Issues. The project will support the activities of this sub-group.

3.3. Risks and assumptions

Continued strong political commitment to regional cooperation and support from the partner institutions is a necessary condition for the project's effective implementation. Partner governments and authorities should be ready to take the measures required in terms of legal, technical and institutional reforms and adequate resource allocation. Long-term regional stability in the region is a prerequisite for the project's sustainability. In particular, inter-state tensions in the Middle Eastern region, but also in the Maghreb, may create difficulties in terms of regional coordination of transport flows, cross-border cooperation and trade facilitation. It should be noted that especially for the Palestinian Occupied Territories assistance is very limited as cross border operations are basically impossible to achieve.

Participating countries must to a certain extent recognise international conventions and/or Community law and/or relevant international standards in the field of road and rail transport and should be ready to actively work towards the implementation of first of all international standards, and, if relevant, Community standards which is also promoted in the bilateral action plans as established under the European Neighbourhood Policy.

These risks are minimised by the use of already functioning mechanisms for cooperation between the transport key stakeholders of the neighbouring states and with the EU.

3.4. Crosscutting Issues

The priority sector of transport safety and security will include strong components related to good governance and environmental safety. In terms of good governance, the project will promote institutional restructuring, including in particular the separation of the governmental regulatory functions from the operational and commercial activities, strengthening the independence of the rail and road safety authorities and of their administrative capacity. Especially more efficient rail and urban transport as such are aiming at reduced use of cars and in that way environmentally friendly ways of transport. The application of EU rules and

standards will also have a positive side effect on the environment, mainly concerning noise and emissions. Gender policy principles will be applied in the selection procedures for the staff to be trained.

3.5. Stakeholders

The main stakeholders in the project will be Ministry of Transport, Road Agencies, Railway Agencies, where applicable network operators, as well as local municipalities for the part on urban transport. Passengers and freight companies are final beneficiaries. The interest of all of these stakeholders is to enhance their knowledge and capacity to implement and operate under international and EU standards with a view on further structural adaptation at the national level which needs to be complemented at the regional level so as to encourage and facilitate the unimpeded flow of goods and people in the Mediterranean region. As mentioned above liberalization of the sector may not be fully welcomed in all of the partner countries, but accompanying measures which would especially enhance safety, security and professionalism should be a first step. In that way some level playing field can be created by reducing competitive (dis)advantages between countries. Especially for the rail sector a separation between the network managers and the service operators is a difficult process which requires the set up of new and independent administrations. Training of the staff of such administrations seems essential. The same counts for the possible establishment of independent road and rail safety agencies.

A number of the activities proposed in the project should preferably be implemented by the experts from the partner countries themselves. Also exchange of good practices among more advanced countries and less advanced countries should be stimulated.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

4.1. Method of implementation

The major part of the action will be implemented through centralized management.

However, the Commission reserves the right to implement a specific part of this action (*Activity 1C: Support for creating safer road transport*) under joint management through a direct agreement with an international organisation on the basis of Art. 168.1.f of the Financial Regulation's Implementing Rules (Standard Contribution Agreement will be used). The international organisation identified is the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and their Global Road Safety Partnership. This will allow the Commission to further support the activities set up under the Middle East & North Africa Road Safety Partnership (MENA RSP) as to effectively implement the foreseen activities on road safety.

An assessment of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) procedures is currently performed by DG ECHO. In anticipation of the results of the assessment required under Article 53d of the FR, the authorising officer deems that, based on the problem free cooperation with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), joint management can be proposed and a Contribution agreement can be signed in accordance with the

provisions laid down in Article 43 of the Implementing Rules to the Financial Regulation.

4.2. Procurement and grant award procedures [/programme estimates]

The major part of the action will be awarded as a service contract through a call for tender (for approximately 4 million €).

Participation in the award of the contract for the present action shall be open to all natural and legal persons covered by the Financing Regulation ENPI Regulation N° 1638/2006.

However, for the specific part of the action (*Activity 1C: Support for creating safer road transport – and for approximately 1M€*) for which the Commission reserves the right to foresee Joint Management, the contracts implementing the action must be awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standards laid down and published by the International Organisation concerned.

4.3. Budget and calendar

The total budget for the proposed project is 5 million EUR for a duration of 3 years from the signature of the contracts.

The indicative budget breakdown is indicative and could be as follows:

- 2 M € for the activities on road transport,
- 1,5 M € for activities on rail transport and
- 1 M € for activities related to urban transport

which gives a total of 4.5 M €

The remaining 0.5 M € should be used for the organisation of the EuroMed's Transport Forum sub group on Road & Rail as well as for visibility, audit and evaluation related costs.

4.4. Performance monitoring

There are limited relevant "standard indicators" in the domain as the project is mainly focusing on regulatory reforms. Yet, performance can be monitored for instance in terms of increase cross-border trade, less fatal accidents in road and rail transport and on a more general level the amount of new legislative proposals that are proposed. In addition, the project will pay attention to stimulating rail transport over road transport as preferred transport mode from an environmental point of view.

Another performance monitoring indicator could be the level of maturity of the pilot projects proposed. ENPI monitoring teams will ensure an external follow-up. The EC and the project coordinator will pay a particular attention at the recommendations expressed by the external experts. Of course, the the bilateral country progress reports within the scope of the overall European Neighbourhood Policy play an important role as well.

4.5. Evaluation and audit

A mid-term progress/monitoring report of the complete RTAP 2007-2013 is foreseen for 2010. Within this framework also the actions relevant for Road and Rail will be reviewed. The proposed project is supposed to deliver input to this overall progress/monitoring exercise of the RTAP.

For the contracts expenditure incurred will have to be certified, as part of the obligations of the contracted parties in the framework of the implementation of this project. Mid term and final evaluations of the results achieved will be entrusted to independent consultants, as well as external audits (which will be carried out if necessary).

Evaluations and audits will be funded from other sources than the project budget, since no commitment will be possible once the validity of this Decision has expired ("N+1" rule will apply).

4.6. Communication and visibility

The project will work out a specific communication strategy and develop specific activities dedicated to communication and visibility.

Relevant communication tools will be developed for the different components of the project (website, best-practices booklet, training material for the technical assistance elements) in order to keep the stakeholders informed and to ensure visibility of the programme. Visibility and communication actions in the Partner Countries will also be carried out in collaboration with the Delegations, in line with the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External Actions. In addition, the contract will have to cooperate with EuroMed Main Transport contract as to assure coherence with the other EuroMed Transport projects and the overall website.

Visibility should furthermore be guaranteed by means of the close link to the Union for the Mediterranean which may place the project in the centre of further attention.

Among other information means, the EuroMed Info Centre web portal and EuropeAid's ENPI Newsletter will also be used regularly and press releases will be prepared when appropriate. The EU visibility guidelines must be followed for all components of the project.