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Development of transport networks and links

Transport in the Mediterranean Region

Follow-up report on CETMO activities

January 2023 - December 2023

Submitted by the Mediterranean Transport Study Centre



CETMO (Centre d'Études des Transports pour la Méditerranée Occidentale)

FOLLOW-UP REPORT ON CETMO ACTIVITIES

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Since its creation in 1985 under the umbrella of the United Nations, CETMO has become an internationally recognised instrument of Mediterranean cooperation. Since 1997, it has acted as the technical secretariat of the Group of Transport Ministers of the Western Mediterranean (GTMO 5+5), composed of biennially five European and five Maghreb countries, whose aim is to promote cooperation in the transport sector in the Western Mediterranean and help strengthen the Euro-Mediterranean association. The conclusions of the biennial ministerial conferences lead to proposals for the development of transport in the region, which are presented to international bodies with decision-making powers.

Over the years, CETMO has extended its activities to the whole of the Mediterranean region, working with the European Commission (EC), the European Investment Bank (EIB), the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), among others.

The **availability of data** on socio-economic aspects, flows, existing infrastructure and infrastructure projects in the region is essential for infrastructure planning and trade facilitation. This is why, based on regular updates of available data, CETMO encourages the study and identification of priorities for international transport in the Western Mediterranean.

CETMO aims to become a **benchmark in the generation and transmission of knowledge** in the Euro-Mediterranean region for professionals and authorities responsible for regional transport, a reference for the availability of coherent information on transport field and socio-economic indicators in this regional area and, at the same time, to consolidate itself as a promoter and expert in the **multimodal transport network of GTMO 5+5** at all levels of the logistics chain and its intermodality and territorial integration.

An important part of CETMO's work will therefore consist of continuously updating its databases, an essential condition for having coherent information on the transport sector and on the socio-economic aspects of the region, with the aim of consolidating a '**Euro-Mediterranean network of specialised knowledge on transport and logistics**'.

At the same time, CETMO seeks to involve various entities and administrations with concomitant interests **in order to promote Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in transport and logistics**, in the broadest sense, with the aim of generating knowledge and obtaining added value.

Finally, CETMO wishes to **promote and/or participate in practical application initiatives** in the field of sustainable transport and logistics.

The activities carried out by CETMO during January 2024 - December 2024 concern the following four main axes:

- 1) Technical secretariat of the GTMO 5+5
- 2) Follow-up of the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation on transport
- 3) International activities of a functional nature
- 4) Statistics and databases on international transport

1. Technical secretariat of the Group of Transport Ministers of the Western Mediterranean – GTMO 5+5

The activities of the Technical Secretariat in 2023 focused on the development of the work programme of the Maltese Presidency of GTMO 5+5.

Taking into account the Statement of Conclusions of the 10th Conference of GTMO 5+5 Transport Ministers (6 October 2021), the work plan of the Maltese Presidency focuses on four priority areas of action: internal coordination of GTMO 5+5, infrastructures, transport system, exchange of best practices.

- Internal coordination of GTMO +5
 - **33rd meeting of the group of experts**, which took place virtually on 27 April 2023. This meeting provided an opportunity to follow up actions already launched in the GTMO 5+5 work programme and to launch new actions.
- Infrastructures
 - **Phase 2 of the Trans-Maghreb Multimodal Corridor Action Plan is underway**. This phase aims to define and represent regional planning and to analyse the situation of the corridor in terms of multimodality, capillarity towards the territory and connection with neighbouring regions in order to identify potential projects.
- Transport system.
 - **Policy Study “Infrastructures, Energy and Digitalisation: Pillars for the Sustainable Development of Transport in the Western Mediterranean”**. Compilation and dissemination of articles commissioned from experts and professionals in the sector in order to broaden collective knowledge of trends and performance of the Western Mediterranean transport system. Policy Study published in English and articles available in English, French, Spanish and Catalan on the CETMO website. Policy Study carried out in collaboration with the European Institute for the Mediterranean (IEMed) as part of the Medthink5+5 think tank network.
 - **Mediterranean Intermodality Observatory**. Development of a geo-referenced database with statistical data on ports, inland terminals, maritime services and railway services. It also provides information on intermodal transport in the Mediterranean region. The information can be consulted on the websites of the MEDports Association, the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and CETMO, the promoters of the initiative.
- Exchange of best practices.
 - **Conference for the Mediterranean countries on raising awareness on adaptation of transport infrastructure to climate change and on setting up an effective intervention programme**. Conference organised by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Group of Experts on Assessment of Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation for Inland Transport (the WP5-GE3), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western

Asia (ESCWA), the French Ministry of Ecological Transition and Territorial Cohesion and CETMO. It was held in Marseille, on 15-16 May 2023.

2. Follow-up of the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation on transport

- In 2023, CETMO monitored the activities of the **UfM Regional Platform on Transport Connectivity** and its thematic working groups (land transport, maritime transport, air transport and logistics) as the technical secretariat of GTMO 5+5. CETMO participated in the following events:
 - 2nd UfM Ministerial Conference on Transport, held virtually on 9 February 2023.
 - Virtual meeting of the UfM Regional Platform on Transport Connectivity and its thematic working groups, held on 3 and 4 October 2023.
- Follow-up of **WestMed initiative**, which aims to exploit the full potential of the blue economy and ensure a safer and better governed maritime space, based on greater cooperation between all stakeholders.
 - Virtual meeting of the Technical Group on Sustainable Maritime Transport and Alternative Fuels (Green Shipping) held on 5 April 2023.
 - Virtual meeting of the Technical Group on Sustainable Maritime Transport and Alternative Fuels (Green Shipping) held on 13 November 2023

3. International activities of a functional nature

- By virtue of its status, CETMO maintains **regular relations with the UNECE Inland Transport Committee**, as well as with the transport ministries and national organisations of the ten countries of the Western Mediterranean.

CETMO participated in the following events:

- “Green, Sustainable and Resilient Infrastructure” held in the framework of the 2023 UNECE Regional Forum “Ensuring the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the ECE region at times of multiple crises” on 30 March 2023.
 - 36th session of the Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics (WP5) within the UNECE Inland Transport Committee. At this meeting, CETMO presented a report on the activities carried out during 2022. The session was held in hybrid format from 4 to 6 September 2023.
- Participation in **other international meetings, forums and conferences** on transport for the benefit of the Western Mediterranean:
 - General Assembly of the MEDPORTS association to present the Mediterranean Multimodality Observatory, held on 7 June 2023.
 - Sessions on ‘Ports and connectivity in the age of disruption’ and ‘Mediterranean logistics in a new global economic context’ as part of MedaLogistics Week, held on 8 and 9 June 2023 in Barcelona.

- Workshop “Global Gateway, a New Paradigm for Relations between the European and its Partners in the Mediterranean and Beyond” in the framework of the EuroMeSCo Business Platform, held on 9 October 2023 à Madrid.
- Workshop “Transport and logistics in the Western Mediterranean. Strengthening connectivity for a more developed region” held in Roma on 19 October 2023.

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4. Statistics and databases on international transport

- Since its creation, CETMO has regularly updated its **databases on flows, infrastructure, projects and socio-economic indicators** on the Western Mediterranean region. Some of this data can be viewed on a map, through a geographical information system, useful for analysing and understanding the data it contains.
 - **CETMO databases on the Western Mediterranean:** In 2022, CETMO continued its task of managing its databases on freight and passenger flows, infrastructures and socio-economic aspects.
 - **Harmonisation of statistics:** To ensure the quality of CETMO's statistics, the centre has continued its work of reviewing and analysing the inventory of sources for producing information and documentation on transport in the region (critical examination of the statistics obtained, comparative analysis, description of characteristics, homogeneity, compatibility, etc.).
- **Strait of Gibraltar Observatory.** Under the terms of the Collaboration Agreement signed in 2018 with the Sociedad Española de Estudios para la Comunicación Fija a través del Estrecho de Gibraltar, S.A. (SECEGSA), the Société Nationale d'Études du Détroit de Gibraltar (SNED) of Morocco and CETMO for the study of transport flows between Europe and Africa in relation to the project for a fixed link between Spain and Morocco, in 2020, the three institutions have established the content of the collaboration. More specifically, a collaborative structure has been established to collect, process, analyse and disseminate information on socio-economic data, transport flows and aspects related to transport infrastructures that channel relations between Europe and Africa.

This collaboration results in an annual report on the main trends in transport flows, socio-economic conditions and infrastructure development in the Strait of Gibraltar's area of influence.