



External Relations

Important legal notice

en

Europa > European Commission > European Union in the World > External Relations

Contact | :

News

Countries ▾

Regions ▾

Organisations ▾

Policies ▾

External Service ▾

Information ▾

The Euro - Mediterranean Partnership

Overview

What's new ?

Regional Strategy Paper

Ministerial Conferences

Org. & management

Bilateral relations

Publications

Association Agreements

Multilateral relations

MEDA

Euro-Med Economic Transition Electronic Network

Free Trade Area

Key Documents

Calendar

Historic

Gulf Region

Middle East Peace Process

The EU's Mediterranean & Middle East Policy

Site Map

EC Delegations

Euromed Foundation

Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements: the Partnership is moving forward

MEMO/04/275 –Brussels 26 November 2004

An essential feature of the implementation of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership has been the negotiation of Association Agreements between the European Union and nine of its Mediterranean Partners to replace the 1970s Co-operation Agreements. With the conclusion of negotiations with Syria (October 2004), the grid of Association Agreements with Mediterranean Partners has been completed. Association Agreements are in force between the EU and Tunisia (since 1998), Israel (2000), Morocco (2000), Jordan (2002), Egypt (2004) and on an interim basis with the Palestinian Authority (1997). Agreements were signed with Algeria in December 2001, and with Lebanon in January 2002.

The provisions of the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements, governing bilateral relations, vary from one Mediterranean Partner to the other; as time has gone on more areas of co-operation have been included. However they have certain aspects in common:

Political dialogue. Respect for human rights and democratic principles are an essential element of the Agreements and the architecture of each Agreement is such as to enable it to be suspended in the event of major human rights violations; a political dialogue is provided for at various levels and at regular intervals.

Trade. Free trade is to be established in accordance with WTO rules over a transitional period which may last up to 12 years as regards tariff dismantling by the Partners; trade in agricultural products is to be "gradually liberalised"; gradual liberalisation of trade in services is provided for starting from the GATS (General Agreement on Tariffs in Services).

Other economic provisions. These provisions are aimed at the greatest possible harmonisation between the EU and the Partners. They include maintenance of a high level of protection of intellectual property rights, gradual liberalisation of public procurement, adjustment of provisions relating to competition, state aid and monopolies; provisions on the liberalisation of capital movements; economic co-operation in a wide range of sectors (e.g. industry, environment, energy, transport, customs, etc.).

Financial co-operation. The Agreements provide for EU financial assistance for the Partners (except Cyprus, Israel and Malta), the main areas for such co-operation and for an economic dialogue, but no amounts of financial assistance are specified.

Social and cultural co-operation. The Agreements contain provisions on workers' rights and other social matters; as well as for the re-admission of nationals and non-nationals illegally arriving on the territory of one party from the other.

For the implementation of Association Agreements two common institutions are created: the Association Council (Ministerial) and the Association Committee (Senior Official level).

As the Agreements are of a "mixed" type (drawing on both European Community and Member States' competences - the latter concerning the second and third EU

pillar), after signature they have to undergo a lengthy ratification process by the national parliaments of the EU Member States.

With the other Mediterranean partner, Turkey, the European Community concluded a first generation association agreement in the 1960s. As a result of this, a customs union with the EU entered into force on 1 January 1996.

A crucial step towards the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area is the Agadir Agreement, a Free Trade Agreement signed between Jordan, Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco on 25 February 2004. The Commission has been one of the main political supporters of this initiative since the Agadir Declaration was signed in May 2001 and it is also supporting it with a €4 million programme funded under MEDA, that will provide technical assistance to Agadir member countries and to its soon-to-be-established Secretariat. This South-South agreement will create an integrated market of more than 100 million people in the four countries involved, thus providing new attractive opportunities for European investors in the region.

	TITLE OF THE AGREEMENT	STATUS
ALGERIA	Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement	Signed on 22.04.02 In process of ratification
EGYPT	Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement	Signed on 25.06.01 In force since 1.06.04
ISRAEL	Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement	Signed on 20.11.95 In force since 1.06.00
JORDAN	Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement	Signed on 24.11.97 In force since 01.05.02
LEBANON	Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement Interim Agreement for early implementation of trade measures	Signed on 17.06.02 In process of ratification In force since 01.03.03
MOROCCO	Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement	Signed on 26.02.96 In force since 1.03.00
PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY	Interim Association Agreement, awaiting a Euro-Mediterranean association agreement	Signed on 24.02.97 In force since 1.07.97
SYRIA	Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement	Signed on 19.10.04 In process of ratification
TUNISIA	Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement	Signed on 17.07.95 In force since 1.03.98
TURKEY	Agreement establishing the definite phase of the customs union	Signed on 6.03.95 In force since 31.12.95

The Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements can be found at:

- [The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership - Association Agreements](#)