

EU and ITC launch EuroMed Trade Helpdesk to boost trade in Mediterranean region

The European Commission and the International Trade Centre (ITC) today launched the EuroMed Trade Helpdesk. By providing businesses with essential information about markets, tariffs and import requirements, the Helpdesk aims to strengthen economic ties between the European Union and nine Mediterranean partners, as well as between Mediterranean countries themselves.

Funded by the EU and implemented by the ITC, the online portal will provide exporters with free information about potential markets, such as customs duties and product requirements. Its searchable database covers the EU as well as Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestineⁱ, Tunisia and Turkey. The project aims to foster economic integration and trade in the region by helping companies save costs on information gathering.

'The EuroMed Helpdesk is good news for businesses and consumers around the Mediterranean,' said EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström. 'And by making it easier to trade it'll help the region's economy and integration.'

ITC Executive Director Arancha González said: *'Using the same free-of-cost online portal, EU-Mediterranean companies now have a much easier way to access the most comprehensive intra-regional market information that exists today.'*

The EuroMed Trade Helpdesk provides an online one-stop-shop for country and product-specific information on tariffs and duties, import and export procedures, and market requirements. In addition, a network of national focal points in each participating Mediterranean country will respond to enquiries on intra-regional trade issues and ensure information is kept up to date. The EuroMed Helpdesk is available in English, French, Arabic, and Turkish. It will complement the EU Export Helpdesk – on which it is modelled – that provides free information on EU market requirements. It differs, however, by also giving company-specific information.

EuroMed countries form one of the least economically integrated regions in the world, with intra-regional trade representing only about 5% of total trade flows. This is partly due to a lack of availability and transparency of trade-related information. The cost of finding information about trade rules, procedures, and duties mean many small and medium-sized firms are in effect excluded from export markets or from importing. The EuroMed Trade Helpdesk seeks to boost economic integration in the region by providing businesses with the information they need in a user-friendly manner and free-of-charge.

The EuroMed Trade Helpdesk is part of the EuroMed [Trade and Investment Facilitation Mechanism](#) (TIFM), an initiative funded by the EU and implemented by the ITC. The Mechanism aims at facilitating closer economic ties between the European Union and Mediterranean countries as well as improving integration in the Mediterranean region.

EuroMed Trade Helpdesk: euromed.macmap.org

ⁱ This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of EU Member States on this issue