EURO-MED PARTNERSHIP

TUNISIA

National Indicative programme
2005-2006
I. SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION

The central thread of the 2005-2006 programming exercise is the Commission's Country Strategy Paper (CSP) for Tunisia for 2002-2006, and the recent political framework, such as the New Neighbourhood Policy. These priorities take into account the Tunisian authorities' own agenda, the needs arising from implementation of the Association Agreement, and the experience gained from past cooperation. Since the mid-term review of the CSP coincides with the 2005-2006 programming exercise, it was decided to make any adjustments to the CSP directly through the National Indicative Programme (NIP) 2005-2006 and the NIP 2002-2004. The balance between the political guidance elements of the Partnership/Neighbourhood policy and the programmed operations are reflected in a coherent way throughout the period 2002-2006. The recent elements were to a large extent anticipated by the CSP and consequently the current strategy paper covers all the planned operations. Furthermore, the Support Programme for the Association Agreement (P3A) will take any steps needed to start implementation of the Action Plans under the European Neighbourhood Policy.

2. GUIDELINES OF THE COUNTRY STRATEGY PAPER AND THE NIP 2002-2004

Tunisia is one of the MEDA partners with the highest rates of payment in relation to commitments (57% from 1995 to the end of 2003). The essential features of the CSP 2002-2006 are determined by the need to support attainment of the objectives of the Association Agreement, inter alia, the implementation of free trade and the introduction of internal market mechanisms.

The cooperation objectives of the CSP are follows: 1) consolidating the rule of law and good governance, 2) liberalising foreign trade and south-south integration, 3) economic reforms and strengthening market economy institutions, 4) modernising services and developing infrastructure and 5) enhancing human resources and social protection.

To increase the impact of cooperation, the MEDA II financial resources are concentrated on a small number of priority sectors. In practice, a good balance between political and economic/social actions is sought. Some projects that are under way are considered to be problematic. Implementation of the MEDA so-called third-generation projects covering good governance, the rule of law and civil society is tricky. It was not possible to realise the "civil society" project, the "support for the media" project has just been signed and appraisal of the project "modernisation of justice" will be starting soon.

For the period 2002-2004, Tunisia is a target country of the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). Civil society is the prime beneficiary, which is a factor of complementarity with MEDA (assistance generally goes through government departments). The EIDHR also helps to foster contacts with the Tunisian authorities in this specific area.

On the basis of an indicative overall budget of almost €250 million, the National Indicative Programme (NIP) 2002-2004 provides for the following priority activities, in line with the CSP:
• Improving the quality of governance, in particular by strengthening institutions with a view to encouraging the rule of law: programmes for development of the media and modernisation of justice (almost €30 million).

• Continuing economic liberalisation so that the economy benefits from the Euro-Med free trade area with the European Union; economic transition programme, support programme for the association agreement (P3A), programmes to modernise ports and industry (€168 million).

• Improving the employability of young people: programmes to modernise higher education and access to the Community TEMPUS programme (€52 million).

JHA questions (legal sector, migratory flows, new forms of criminality) are to a large extent taken into account in the modernisation of justice programme and the P3A, which will also cover the period 2005/06. The latter programme also provides for specific interventions which meet the needs of the Doha agenda and will take any steps needed to start implementation of the Action Plans under the "Wider Europe" policy.

3. MID-TERM REVIEW

3.1 Preamble

Country Strategy Papers (CSPs) are intended as an instrument for guiding, managing and reviewing EU assistance programmes. They are essential management tools to ensure that external assistance reflects the EU's policy objectives and priorities. The completion of the "first generation" of CSPs for the MED region took place in December 2001.

With a view to constantly improving the quality of CSPs, in March 2003 the Council adopted conclusions on the use of the Common Framework for CSPs. In these conclusions, the Council invited the Commission to undertake a mid-term review (MTR) of each CSP in accordance with existing rules and laid down key guidelines for the CSP review. Four parameters were identified as basic reference points for the review process: (i) new developments in the country, (ii) new EU policy objectives and commitments, (iii) results and performance, and (iv) lessons learnt and potential improvement.

As far as the MED region is concerned, the general conclusion is that there is no need for an extended review, given the rather general content of the CSPs 2002-2006 and their recent adoption. Minor revisions in the CSPs relate to already identified sectors corresponding to new EU policy objectives and commitments (see below). Since the MTR coincides with the 2005-2006 programming exercise, it was decided to make adjustments to the CSPs via the NIP 2005-2006 and the NIP 2002-2004.

3.2 Country's overall context since 2001

The government's policy is laid down by the Xth Plan which covers the period 2002-06, the same as the CSP. It is summarised in the strategy paper. The political situation has not changed substantially in a context of a heightened campaign against international terrorism. Developments in the economic and social situation do not call for any major changes in direction.

Like other countries in the region, Tunisia is going through a difficult phase in economic terms because of the prolonged effects of international terrorism (11 September 2001 and Djerba attack on 11 April 2002) and the Iraq war, which have been particularly harmful for
tourism. However, effective economic management and good rainfall in 2002/2003 will help the country get through this difficult situation. The Tunisian government is expressing quite serious concerns at the pressures generated by progress in the implementation of tariff dismantling under the Association Agreement with the EU and the increase in competition as a result of the EU's enlargement and the end of the multifibre agreements.

3.3 New EU policies/initiatives

In the course of 2002-2003, the Commission adopted a number of policy guidelines that will have a major impact on our relations with the Mediterranean partners in the near future. Most significantly, the communication on wider Europe and the new neighbourhood policy establishes a new framework of relations with the Southern Mediterranean. The communication notes the growing interdependence between the EU and its partners in terms of stability, security and sustainable development. The communication proposes that over the next decade the EU should aim to work in partnership to develop a zone of prosperity and good neighbourliness - a 'circle of friends' - with whom the EU enjoys close, peaceful and cooperative relations. In return for concrete progress reflecting the shared values and effective implementation of political, economic and institutional reforms, the EU should offer its neighbours the prospect of a stake in the EU's internal market and further integration and liberalisation to promote the free movement of persons, goods, services and capital (four freedoms). For the period up to 2006, Southern Mediterranean countries will be invited to participate actively in MEDA neighbourhood programmes, currently being developed, with the aim of strengthening the impact of cross-border cooperation with the Mediterranean countries of the Union.

The NIP 2005-2006 was formulated to interface with this new policy. The support Programme for the Association Agreements (P3A), resulting from the NIP 2002-2004, whose implementation should be extend over 2004-2006, will take any steps needed to start implementation of the Action Plans under the European Neighbourhood Policy and to support good governance.

The other policy guidelines concern: the Doha summit and trade, JHA issues, better governance, human rights and democratisation in the MED region, and environmental initiatives agreed at the Johannesburg Summit on sustainable development.

The launch of the new WTO Round - the Doha Development Agenda - involves both new market openings and additional rule making, underpinned by commitment to strengthen assistance to build capacity in developing countries. The main objective of the new round is to support the developing countries' integration into the world trade system in a way that will help them to combat poverty. Trade promotion was very much taken into account in the 2002-2004 programming exercise for the P3A currently under way.

The conclusions of the Tampere (1999), Santa Maria da Feira (2000) and Seville (2002) Councils defined a common policy on incorporating justice and home affairs issues in EU external policy. The action plan adopted in Valencia (2002), in addition to the Barcelona declaration, gave further guidelines for enhanced cooperation in the MED region and in three principal sectors: migration, reform of the judiciary and the fight against criminality. In Tunisia, JHA issues were already largely taken into account in the 2002-2004 programming (programme to modernise the justice system, P3A).
Better governance, promotion of democracy and respect for human rights constitute core objectives of the EU's external policies. In line with the conclusions drawn up in the 2002 UNDP Arab Human Development Report, the Commission recently adopted a Communication on "Reinvigorating European Actions on Human Rights and Democratisation with Mediterranean Partners" which aims at maximising the effectiveness of the instruments at the disposal of the EU and its Mediterranean partners in the field of human rights and democracy. The communication sets out working guidelines to promote Human Rights and fundamental freedoms in cooperation with the Mediterranean partners. It proposes 10 concrete recommendations to improve the political dialogue between the EU and its Mediterranean partners, as well as EU financial cooperation on human rights issues. Their implementation will be enhanced by three levels of complementarity: between political dialogue and financial assistance, between the MEDA programme and assistance under the EIDHR, and finally between the national and regional dimensions. The 2003 World Bank report on governance in the MENA region also constitutes an important reference. The third-generation programmes were well represented in the context of 2002-2004 programming. Key questions of good governance are addressed in the SAF V planned for 2006.

A global commitment to the cause of sustainable development was restated at the Johannesburg Summit, through an ambitious action-oriented programme with clear and measurable objectives, demonstrating the increasing importance of environmental issues in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The key areas for EU action are water and energy. In Johannesburg, the EU launched two partnerships, one on water and one on energy. The EU Water initiative ("Water for Life") will help coordinate existing financing mechanisms with a focus on three parameters: supply, sanitation and integrated resources management. At the moment, concrete follow-up is expected for the Mediterranean countries in the framework of the existing financing instrument (MEDA) but other developments, including aid for cross-border basins in Africa, should be followed closely in the near future. 2005-2006 programming envisions interest rate-subsidies in the environment.

It is clear from the above that these new initiatives have been included in the programming of the CSP under way and that all the areas mentioned are covered by the strategic response in the CSP 2002-2006. Less importance should accordingly be attached to them in relation to the MTR.

3.4 Results

The implementation of cooperation improved noticeably in 2002. In general, the implementation and appraisal of the operations programmed for the period 2002-2004 are progressing satisfactorily and the priorities identified remain valid.

Certain programmes which date from previous programming are experiencing problems (sickness insurance, competitiveness, privatisation, job creation), but these do not warrant modifying current programming.

Cooperation is difficult as regards governance (so-called third generation MEDA projects), as demonstrated by the absence of an agreement on the civil society programme of €1.5 million (which led to its cancellation); the long gestation of the €2.15 million project to support the media (which has just been signed); the long gestation of the justice programme of €25 million (appraisal of which will start soon and which has now reached the stage of discussing its real scope).
In addition, the SAF III has problems with the floating tranche on telecommunications (€12.6 million).

3.5 Lessons learnt

The difficulties mentioned here do not justify altering current programming. More generally, useful lessons for future programming can be learnt from current problems:

- It is important to avoid over-sizing programmes (examples: privatisation, competitiveness) in relation to the level of the recipient's political commitment to the reform in question and to the take-up capacity of the beneficiary institutions (especially since the entry into force of the N+3 Rule).
- In addition, it is unwise to envisage additional 3rd generation operations in 2005-2006, when those resulting from 2002-2004 are not yet operational. Extremely important aspects relating to governance will be included in the SAF V programmed for 2006.
- Programming must take account of the need to ensure that implementation takes place at the right time in relation to the actions supported (e.g. privatisation).
- The programming of SAF IV and V must take account of the reservations expressed by the Tunisian authorities concerning the floating tranche mechanism (and their small unit amount) for budget support operations and the difficulty of setting several conditionalities whose realisation depends on market conditions.

4. PROGRESS OF THE ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT

The agreement signed with Tunisia in July 1995 entered into force on 1 March 1998. By unilateral decision, Tunisia brought forward the process of tariff dismantling as of 1996. Since 2001, dismantling applies to a series of imported goods which are also manufactured locally. This means that Tunisian industry is directly exposed to international competition on its local market.

The Association Council of 30 September 2003 took the decision to set up six sub-committees on the following subjects: 1) internal market; 2) industry, trade and services; 3) transport, environment and energy; 4) research and innovation; 5) agriculture and fisheries and 6) justice and security.

These sub-committees are in addition to the forums created directly by the Association Agreement: the Working Party on Social Affairs, the Customs Cooperation Committee and the Economic Dialogue. Other sub-committees, for example "Human rights, democratisation and governance" could be created if the two sides so decide.

The sub-committees aim to contribute to the implementation of the Association Agreement and to foster the Neighbourhood Policy, for which Tunisia will be one of the pilot countries. Note also the forthcoming launch of negotiations on service liberalisation.

In the area of South-South trade, on the 25th February, 2004 Tunisia signed a free trade agreement, under the Agadir initiative, with Morocco, Egypt and Jordan.
5. PRIORITIES OF THE NIP FOR 2005-2006

The total amount for this programming exercise is €144 million. The NIP 2005-2006 supplements the previous NIP. The thread running through programming was the CSP 2002-2006, and the recent policy framework elements: communication on the New Neighbourhood Policy, 2002 UNDP human development report in the Arab world, 2003 World Bank report on governance in MENA, the communication on human rights and democracy in the MEDA countries, migratory flows and other JHA questions, conflict prevention (UNSCR 1373) and 9/11 repercussions (dialogue of cultures and civilisations), Doha and Johannesburg agendas and, of course, support for reforms in sectors concerned by implementation of the Association Agreements, including good governance. These subjects were largely anticipated in the CSP and consequently the current strategy paper covers all the operations envisaged.

The communication "Reinvigorating European Actions on Human Rights and Democratisation with Mediterranean Partners" puts forward practical measures to facilitate fuller and more operational integration of human rights and democracy issues at all levels in the political dialogue with the MEDA partners. The proposed measures include the development of national and regional action plans on human rights and democracy with the MEDA partners willing to engage in this exercise. Under the communication (recommendation 7), an allocation will be set for those partners who adopt National Action Plans in 2004. It will enable partners who are making headway on this work to benefit from additional funds, not necessarily directly related to human rights and democratisation projects. This additional allocation will be made available in 2005, as part of the review of the 2006 programming exercise.

The 2005-2006 programming exercise also takes account of the priorities identified when the framework and methods for the mid-term review of the CSPs were defined. For the record, when the CSPs were presented, it emerged that the revisions to consider were fairly minor because of the relatively recent character of the CSP 2002-2006 adopted in December 2001 and the general content of the guidelines laid down. Since the mid-term review coincides with the 2005-2006 programming exercise, it was decided to make any adjustments to the CSP directly through the NIP for 2005-2006 and the NIP 2002-2004. The priorities identified when the CSP mid-term review exercise was defined are therefore reflected in the NIPs.

The 2005-2006 programming exercise overlapped with the priorities of the CSP 2002-2006, and the recent policy framework elements with Tunisia's agenda and the experiences of past cooperation. In accordance with the recent guidelines, priority was inevitably given to budget support for reforms in the sectors affected by implementation of the Association Agreement.

With a view to total free trade and association with the EU after 2007, priority should be given to supporting economic liberalisation and good governance reforms. A structural adjustment operation is therefore included under the NIP 2005-2006, in accordance with the priorities laid down in the 2002-2006 strategy paper under the economic reforms and strengthening market economy institutions component.

The 2002 UNDP report on human development in the Arab countries notes that the region suffers from three fundamental shortcomings, including human resources development and know-how. Tunisia is investing in improving the quality of its human resources. This effort is furthermore clearly set out in the Xth Plan (2002-2006), because the current level of education and manpower training is not sufficient to face up to the challenges of international
competition. These subjects also form part of the priorities adopted by the strategy paper under the human resources development component.

5.1 NIP operations 2005-2006

The 2005-06 NIP operations can be summed up as follows:

a) Component: Economic reforms

*Governance, market economy institutions, Doha Agenda*

SAF V (€70 million):

- Objective: continue the cycle of reforms with a view to total free trade and association with the EU after 2007, e.g. in the fields of governance, services and budget reform.
- Results: macroeconomic consolidation; reform of the budget organic law (budgetary integration of the whole public sector, programme-based budget management and primacy of results); continuation of financial sector reforms; withdrawal of the state and opening up infrastructure and public services to the private sector; business environment and private sector development; service liberalisation; extension of the social safety net. Reform in the transport and energy sectors.

b) Component: Human resources development

*UNDP report on human development 2002: Education and know-how*

Vocational training (€30 million):

- The objective is to support the continuation of the current sectoral reform, and to consolidate the achievements of the MANFORM project (MEDA I) in coordination with other external support. This involves providing the Tunisian economy with a skilled labour force that meets employability criteria, based on economic operators' requirements and to cope with increased competition in a free trade area with the EU.
- Results: they will be defined by a SWAP-based identification (Sector Wide Approach). They will be guided by the evaluation and needs of economic operators, linkage with the education system and the labour market, extension of the skills-based approach and innovative training methods, widespread introduction of a quality component, the autonomy of teaching establishments and opening-up to the private sector.

Secondary education (€30 million):

- The objective is to support the continuation of the current sectoral reform to avoid the human, social and economic costs connected with the high drop-out rate among secondary school pupils (i.e. to improve internal and external efficiency) and to develop secondary education systems more in line with the needs of the labour market and of modernised higher education.
- Results: they will be defined by a SWAP-based identification. They will focus on developing school work plans, improving guidance and evaluation mechanisms, making wider use of the skills-based approach, introducing the quality component, adapting the supply and modernisation of teaching methods (for example use of teaching aids and the new information and communication technologies - NICT).
c) **Component: Economic infrastructure**

*Johannesburg agenda – Environment*

Liquid waste disposal - ONAS IV (€10 million interest-rate subsidy):

- This is the continuation of the national programme of urban sanitation for small and average-sized Tunisian towns. The project is designed to finance improvements to waste water collection systems and the construction of sewage treatment plants in the towns concerned. The project is line with Tunisia's policy on environmental protection and improving people's living conditions, particularly necessary because of the constant increase in the urban population and the extension of the drinking water supply network. The project will help to protect the underground water resources of the regions in question. It will decrease the organic pollution load dumped in the Mediterranean and will contribute to improving and protecting the marine environment.

### 5.2 FEMIP (EIB)

As part of the Barcelona process, the EIB has strengthened its financial partnership with the Mediterranean countries by means of a specialised instrument: the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP - October 2002). At the end of 2003, it was decided to reinforce the FEMIP by adding step up increase activities in favour of the private sector and cooperation with the partner countries.

Under FEMIP the annual volume of EIB loans is planned to increase gradually from €1.4 to €2 billion. These resources are to support a much wider range of activities, with the emphasis on private sector development. Of particular importance are those projects in the areas of environment, human capital and projects of mutual interest to the EU and the Mediterranean partners, or those that strengthen "south-south" cooperation. Own resources funding will be supplemented by Community budget resources for technical assistance, both upstream and downstream. These will contribute to the preparation and implementation of investment projects. The EIB will also continue to make considerable use of venture capital resources for private sector development.

Among the priorities selected, the EIB and the Commission together set the following objectives:

- Reducing the adverse impact of human activity on the environment.
- Aligning environmental standards with international agreements and treaties (European directives, Kyoto, etc).

In those areas, EIB own resources loans will be supported by interest-rate subsidies (financed through budgetary funds).
II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECTS

1. SAF V

1.1 Context and grounds
SAF V must complete the cycle of reforms undertaken by SAF I with a view to total free trade and association with the EU after 2007. Its objective should be to generate a powerful and competitive private sector, fuelling real growth of more than 6% a year. The Tunisian authorities have shown great interest in this operation, which covers the key issues of good governance (performance-based budget management) and service liberalisation (principal source of additional growth).

1.2 Objective
Complete the cycle of reforms with a view to free trade and association with the EU after 2007.

1.3 Expected results
The range of expected results may cover the following areas:

- Continued consolidation of the macroeconomic framework.
- Reform of the organic budget law (objective-based management)\(^1\).
- Improved business environment and private sector development.
- Continued opening-up of infrastructure and public-sector companies to the private sector (e.g. solid waste, etc).
- Reforms of the financial sector.
- Service liberalisation (sources of private investment).
- Extension and targeting of the social safety net.
- The programme can also contribute to the acceleration of reforms, particularly in the transport and energy sectors. For the energy sector, the reform of the electricity sector is of particular importance, similarly, the promotion of a more efficient management of energy demand and harmonisation of rules and standards with those of the European Union. For the transport sector, reforms should cover all means of transport as well as the harmonisation of standards and measures regarding security and safety.

The identification and appraisal of SAF V will take account of the results and evaluations of SAF III and SAF IV and the requirement to achieve the necessary sectoral concentration to guarantee the programme's effectiveness.

1.4 Performance indicators
The benchmarks relating to the reform measures supported by SAF V will be established according to the contents of the programme during the identification and appraisal phase. SAF V could use and develop the following performance indicators:

- Number of jobs created and employment rates for first-time jobseekers.

\(^1\) Budgetary integration of the whole public sector, programme-based budget management and primacy of results.
• Proportion of the economy (GDP) in state hands by sector.
• Domestic and foreign private investment (offshore and onshore) and investment by sector (manufacturing industries/agro-industry/services, etc.).
• Public investment and investment of state-owned enterprises by sector.
• Exports and diversification of their composition.
• Structure of imports by category (capital/consumer/intermediate goods etc.).
• Development of stock and financial markets.
• Rate of export growth.
• Growth in GDP.
• Inflation.
• Current account deficit.
• Budget deficit.
• Level of debt (external debt).
• Level of reserves (months of imports of goods and services).

As a certain number of reforms do not have an immediate effect, they cannot be measured in terms of impact, but through the setting in place of mechanisms, regulations and institutional improvements. For example, implementation of a framework law type legislation, stipulating the general conditions of concessions and specific sectoral features.

1.5 Brief description of the programme

The question of the sustainability of the macroeconomic framework is essential for complying with the timetable imposed by the Association Agreement. The challenge is to prove, in about 2004, that opening-up "pays". Work to prepare the new macroeconomic framework for 2005-2006 must, however, already begin: promoting savings will be a vital component for safeguarding overall balances.

Budget management is a key element in any public services supply system. Directing the system towards performance would encourage internal responsibility.

The state's withdrawal must therefore be accelerated because it is clear that the countries with high and sustained growth are those where the share of private investment in the GFCF is significantly higher than the objective set by the Xth Plan (70%-80% instead of 58%).

The principal source of additional growth is the services sector, which has everything to gain from the planned liberalisation of trade in services. This means that barriers to entry (right of establishment, limitations on portfolio investments) and to trade must be raised on both sides, in order to encourage mutual investments, partnerships and an increase in intra-branch trade in services. Business services is one of main sources of jobs in Tunisia - and the least exploited - and this subsector is also essential for raising productivity and competitiveness, key objectives of the Xth Plan.

An obvious priority is to complete the financial sector reforms. This is already being accompanied by progressive liberalisation of the capital account, which is heading in the direction agreed with the IMF.

The way some indicators have developed since 2002 remains a cause for concern: job creation fell from 74 000 (2001) to 63 000 and the current forecast for 2003 is only 57 000. Not only did investment intentions significantly decline in 2002 but private investment actually made
also fell strongly and is set to continue in 2003. The results of first year of the Xth Plan are therefore lagging far behind the objective pursued: the private sector has not stepped into the place left by the public sector's withdrawal. The structural measures taken must therefore also endeavour to restore confidence.

1.6 **Project supervisor**

Ministry of Cooperation and Economic Development.

1.7 **Beneficiary**

State budget.

1.8 **Specific conditions**

Implementation of the macroeconomic and structural measures according to the terms agreed.

1.9 **Indicative budget**

€70 million.

2. **HUMAN RESOURCES**

Human capital is Tunisia's principal resource and its best asset for balanced and sustainable growth. In the two fields concerned - vocational training and secondary education - Tunisia has developed medium-term strategies. These two sectoral strategies are consistent with those developed for basic education and higher education, which already receive Community support.

This context justifies identifying the two planned support programmes by a sectoral approach (SWAP) as in the case of the higher education modernisation programme (MEDA II).

The financing arrangements will be defined at the identification phase: budget support will be given priority, if the conditions are met.

2.1 **Vocational training**

a) **Context and grounds**

Since 1995 Tunisia has adopted and set up a coherent reform of the vocational training system - MANFORM - in close coordination with a programme of upgrading companies to improve economic competitiveness. The Xth Plan (2002-2006) confirms these main principles. There is a need and a real prospect of consolidating the achievements of the sectoral reform and contributing to extending it to the whole vocational training system. The new vocational training programme will support and consolidate the current reform, taking into account the progress really made so far and based on the achievements of the MANFORM project (MEDA I) and other external support. The Tunisian government will provide ex-ante coordination with any other negotiated sectoral support.
b) Objective

Provide the Tunisian economy with a skilled labour force that meets employability criteria, on the basis of economic operators' requirements and to cope with increased competition in a free trade area with the EU.

c) Expected results

Build on the progress achieved by the MANFORM reform in line with the education and training component of the Xth Plan (2002-2006) to help extend it to the whole Tunisian vocational training system.

Possible expected results could be as follows:

- Greater coherence of the vocational training system with the education system and the labour market.
- Strengthening of the human resources management function and the identification of skills in business (in particular SME).
- Increased capacity to provide private vocational training.
- Closer partnership between the training system, business (in particular SME) and professional federations.
- Consolidated management of the whole system.
- Strengthening of training methods linked to working environment, for example apprenticeship, sandwich training and further training.
- More widespread use of the skills-based approach in the vocational training system.
- Widespread introduction of the quality component (standardisation of training programmes and certification of operators).
- Continuity and updating of training of instructors in "training engineering", teacher training and technical training.
- Setting-up an information and communication campaign.
- Promoting the operational and management autonomy of establishments.

Results will be specified following the identification process.

d) Performance indicators

As this is a sectoral support programme, the indicators will be chosen at the identification phase. Verifiable indicators will be chosen to measure inter alia:

- Vocational training led by economic operators' demand.
- Sound partnership between the vocational training system, businesses and professional organisations.
- Diversification of offer.
- Improvement in the system's internal and external efficiency.
- Introduction of the quality component.
e) Brief description of the programme

The guidelines of the Xth Plan are in keeping with the problems identified and are reflected in the overall programme of operations for vocational training. The key issue of reform of vocational training is to produce a skilled and competent labour force to meet the demand for skills in the productive sector and also the employability needs of the Tunisian working population.

This mainly involves consolidating and ensuring that vocational training remains directed towards the needs of economic operators by extending the skills-based approach and training methods that tie in with the working environment. Consistency will be sought both with the education system and other measures for integration into the labour market, so that job seekers are in a position of being able to seek, find and hold down a job. The parallel modernisation of the secondary education system will help to re-direct vocational training towards the skills that firms need rather than as a stop-gap for pupils who have failed at school.

Besides revamping syllabuses and subject combinations, major headway remains to be made with regard to the internal effectiveness of the system (steering of the system, regionalisation, decentralisation, autonomy of training establishments, quality component) and its external effectiveness (symbiosis with businesses, compatibility between employment and training, between job classifications and training profiles, synergy with other measures for integration into the labour market).

Since there is a real political commitment to the human resources development sector and a strategy to modernise this subsector, the Community intervention will take the form of a sectoral policy support programme.

f) Project supervisor

Ministry of Education and Training.

g) Beneficiaries

Vocational training establishments and businesses via the state budget. Target groups: job seekers, employees and workers.

h) Specific Conditions

Continuation of the policy to reform vocational training and commitment by the Tunisian authorities to produce a medium-term sectoral expenditure framework, based on the experience gained from the programme to modernise higher education.

i) Indicative Budget

€30 million.

2.2 Secondary education
a) Context and grounds

Human capital is Tunisia's main resource and its greatest asset for balanced and sustainable development. With the opening-up of Tunisia to the world market, the development of competition from lower-income countries, the introduction of new technologies and the need to meet the more differentiated demand of European markets, new development strategies must be set in place. These new strategies and new technologies are increasingly complex and will require a more highly skilled and diversified labour force. The quality of manpower will be a determining factor for present and future growth.

In order to be competitive and to consolidate its growth, both within the Euro-Mediterranean area and also further afield, Tunisia has undertaken to improve the quality and adaptability of its labour force. Work is already well under way on basic education and now it is the turn of higher education - both these reforms have received considerable support from the international community, including the EU. The competitiveness and modernisation of the Tunisian economy now calls for a comprehensive reform of the intermediate link, i.e. secondary education, both general and technical.

Strategic interest (in relation to the Association Agreement):

- Improve the employability of young people in the short term and help reduce unemployment among those looking for their first job and thus to limit economic and social migratory pressures.
- Improve the competitiveness of the Tunisian economy and its integration in the Mediterranean area.
- Ensure a better supply of school-leavers to the growth disciplines of university.
- To meet the growing demand for skilled school leavers from technical secondary schools (support and supervisory staff and junior technicians) and thus relieve the pressure on the university sector.

b) Objective

Improve the internal and external performance, efficiency and equity of both general and technical secondary education. It will thus contribute to improving the qualitative level of human resources throughout the country in preparation for socio-economic changes.

c) Expected results

Possible expected results could be as follows:

- Improvement in the level of performance of pupils from existing systems or those to be set up.
- Matching the education supply to basic education guided by a skills-based approach, renewed higher education and the need for immediate employability of those leaving the system.
- Reduction in school drop-out and repetition rates by stepping up the information and guidance systems and introducing linkages between the various secondary education systems.
- Upgrading the content and image of the occupational systems and improved links with vocational training mechanisms.
• Opening-up secondary education to the outside: partnership with businesses and adaptability to the regional socio-economic environment.
• Modernisation of teaching practices and initial/further training of teachers.
• Improvement in the management of the education system and school life. More synergies with private secondary education.

Results will be specified following the identification process.

d) Performance indicators

As this is basically a support programme for the Tunisian government's sectoral policy, the choice of indicators can only be made after a detailed study of the country's sectoral strategy and the list of indicators used by the Tunisian government. Verifiable indicators will be chosen to measure inter alia:

• Improvement in quality (for example, retraining of teachers).
• Diversification and increased flexibility of supply (for example, creating linkages between different training courses).
• Improvement in the system's internal efficiency (for example, reduction in number of pupils repeating years or dropping out).
• Improvement in the system's external efficiency (for example, proportion of school leavers going into vocational areas of higher education).

e) Brief description of the programme

The essential issue of secondary education reform is to modernise the system in order to bring it more into line with Tunisian socio-economic needs. This reform also complements the introduction of an overall mechanism for training human resources, encompassing an entirely modernised basic education system with a skills-based approach and a revitalised higher education system, capable of responding to economic challenges and more broadly, to the challenges of Tunisian society.

Besides revamping syllabuses and subject combinations, major headway remains to be made with regard to internal effectiveness of the system (regionalisation, decentralisation, teaching practices, development of linkages) autonomy of training establishments, quality component) and its external effectiveness (tailoring to higher education courses upstream and, for shorter courses, matching employment and training). The guidelines of the Xth Plan are in line with the problems identified and priorities include employability, increase and diversification of capacity, the advent of the knowledge economy and regional balance.

Since there is a real political commitment to the human resources development sector and a strategy to modernise this subsector, the Community intervention will take the form of a sectoral policy support programme.

f) Project supervisor

Ministry of Education and Training.
g) Beneficiaries

Secondary education establishments and businesses via the state budget. Target groups: pupils and their families, teaching staff.

h) Specific conditions

Continuation of the policy of secondary education reform and commitment by the Tunisian authorities to produce a framework of medium-term sectoral expenditure, based on the experience gained from the programme to modernise higher education.

i) Indicative Budget

€30 million.

2.3 Tempus

a) Context and grounds

In view of the important role of higher education in the development of human resources and professional skills and that of exchanges in the promotion of intercultural understanding, the EU and Tunisia need to cooperate more closely in the higher education field.

Tunisia was the third country to take part in the Tempus programme with applications judged to be of very high quality by the academic experts' panel. The mid-term evaluation (October 2003) deemed the list of national priorities developed by the Tunisian government to be exemplary - they are priorities that strengthen the fields in which higher education reform comes into play. There is a good synergy between the project to modernise higher education and the activities financed through the Tempus-MEDA programme. Tunisia's participation in several Tempus regional-type projects could, on a small scale, help to disseminate at regional level the progress resulting from reform, acting as an incentive for universities in the region.

b) Specific objective

Contribute to the reform and development of higher education, understanding of cultures.

c) Expected results and performance indicators

Support for higher education reform: development and revision of study programmes in priority disciplines; reform and development of higher education structures and establishments and their management; emphasis on acquiring qualifications needed in the context of economic reform (improvement of the link between industry and the education system).

d) Description of the programme

Participation in the Tempus III programme of Joint European Projects (joint training activities; measures to reform and develop higher education; promotion of cooperation between universities, industry and institutions; development of mobility of university teachers, administrators and students); structural or complementary measures, grants covering
visits by individual teachers, researchers, trainers, university administrators, senior ministry officials, planners and other experts to promote the quality, development and restructuring of higher education. Close attention should be paid to seeking complementarity between these activities and those under the Community support programme for the modernisation of higher education, for example ensuring consistency in the list of priorities provided by the Tunisian authorities.

e) Indicative budget

In view of the interest shown in the programme, the indicative cost of Tunisia's participation in the Tempus III programme is estimated at some €2 million for 2005 and €2 million for 2006.

3. EIB INTEREST REBATE: ONAS IV (WASTE WATER DISPOSAL)

3.1 Context and grounds

One of the objectives of the Euro-Mediterranean policy is to improve the population's living standards. In this context, interest rebates for investment to promote environmental protection have been granted from the Community budget via EIB loans. Continuation of this support for improving the environment remains one of the priorities for the period 2005-2006. The EIB has already intervened to finance subsidised loans with MEDA I and II for financing wastewater disposal and industrial sanitation projects, projects involving household solid waste and the cleaning and upgrading of the South Lake in Tunis. A new operation to clean up the former industrial site of Taparura is being examined.

Environmental and water management problems persist, especially in urban and coastal areas. These places still suffer from serious problems of wastewater disposal: inadequacies in the network, the collection and evacuation of waste water and the virtual absence of any treatment system pose serious threats both for the quality of water resources and public health. These difficulties also hamper tourist investments, a vital sector for the country's continued economic growth.

Strategic interest: the environment in the broad sense is one of the EU's cooperation priorities with third countries and especially in the MEDA Programmes, specifically as regards EIB interest rebates.

3.2 Specific objective

Wastewater disposal for small and medium-sized towns:

- The EIB has already financed wastewater disposal programmes in Tunisia with the Water Authority, ONAS (Office National de l'Assainissement), involving the construction of sewage treatment plants and the related sanitation networks for large and medium-sized towns. Under the Xth Economic and Social Development Plan for 2002-06, ONAS has requested the continuation of support for investments under its new sanitation programmes. This new project should be appraised as soon as possible.
3.3 Expected results

- Contribute to a better environmental balance in urban areas.
- Improve the population's living conditions.
- Reduce pollution of the catchment areas of the towns selected.

3.4 Performance indicators

These will be specified during appraisal of the projects and they will be mainly based on pollution standards or the population concerned.

3.5 Description of the programme

The planned project is in line with the Xth Plan. The operation will be defined in more detail when it is appraisal by the EIB. It will be prepared during 2004-2005.

This is the continuation of the national programme of urban sanitation for small and average-sized Tunisian towns (including Gafsa/Ksar, el Mida, le Krib, Hammamet Sud, Naassen, Sidi Hassine). The project is designed to finance improvements to waste water collection systems and the construction of sewage treatment plants in the towns concerned. The project is in line with Tunisia's policy on environmental protection and improving people's living conditions, particularly necessary because of the constant increase in the urban population and the extension of the drinking water supply network. The project will help to protect the underground water resources of the regions concerned. It will decrease the organic pollution load dumped in the Mediterranean and will contribute to improving and protecting the marine environment.

3.6 Project supervisor

ONAS.

3.7 Final beneficiary

ONAS.

3.8 Borrower

Republic of Tunisia.

3.9 Indicative budget

€10 million.

4. Horizontal issues

As in the previous programming exercise, the reduction of gender inequalities is an issue that will be closely monitored by Commission services in the identification of cooperation programmes. Particular attention will be given to the question of women's rights.

Good governance, sustainable development and environmental protection are also horizontal issues common to all programmes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRATEGIC PRIORITY/PROGRAMME</th>
<th>INDICATIVE AMOUNT</th>
<th>COMMITMENT 2005</th>
<th>COMMITMENT 2006</th>
<th>% BUDGET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ECONOMIC REFORMS. MARKET ECONOMY INSTITUTIONS. DOHA AGENDA</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- SAF V</td>
<td>€70 million</td>
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<td>€70 million</td>
<td>48.62%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT. UNDP REPORT</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Vocational training</td>
<td>€64 million</td>
<td></td>
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<td>44.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Secondary education</td>
<td>€30 million</td>
<td>€30 million</td>
<td>€30 million</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Tempus</td>
<td>€4 million</td>
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<td>€2 million</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE JOHANNESBURG AGENDA - ENVIRONMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Wastewater disposal (interest rebate)</td>
<td>€10 million</td>
<td></td>
<td>€10 million</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>€144 million</td>
<td>€72 million</td>
<td>€72 million</td>
<td>100%</td>
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</table>
**Indicators related to the Millennium Declaration**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>1995</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Proportion of population on less than $1 per day%</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Na</td>
<td>Na</td>
<td>&lt; 2.0</td>
<td>Na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Prevalence of child malnutrition (% of children under 5)</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>Na</td>
<td>Na</td>
<td>Na</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Under-five mortality rate (per 1,000)</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>Na</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>Na</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Net enrolment ratio in primary education</td>
<td>97.8</td>
<td>98.2</td>
<td>Na</td>
<td>99.0</td>
<td>Na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Percentage of cohort reaching grade 5</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>93.0</td>
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<td>Na</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary education</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>Na</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel%</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>Na</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>Na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Proportion of 1 year old children immunised against measles%</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>Na</td>
<td>92.0</td>
<td>Na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. HIV prevalence among women 15-24 year old%</td>
<td>Na</td>
<td>Na</td>
<td>Na</td>
<td>Na</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Proportion of population with sustainable access to an improved water source %</td>
<td>Na</td>
<td>Na</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Na</td>
<td>Na</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: World Bank/MDG, UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNAIDS.
### Economic situation

**Tunisia - Selected Economic Indicators, 1997-2002**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Real GDP growth (in %)</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>1.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPI inflation (avg; in %)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad money (M2, end of year; % change)</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidated government balance (% of GDP)</td>
<td>-4.6</td>
<td>-3.6</td>
<td>-3.9</td>
<td>-3.8</td>
<td>-3.8</td>
<td>-3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current account balance (% of GDP)</td>
<td>-3.1</td>
<td>-3.4</td>
<td>-2.1</td>
<td>-4.2</td>
<td>-4.3</td>
<td>-3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official net international reserves (end of year)</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In billions of US dollars</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In months of imports</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External debt (% of GDP) (end of year)</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>59.6</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>61.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Debt service (in % of exports of GNFS)</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange rate (dinar/euro) (end of year)</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real effective exchange rate (1995=100) 1/</td>
<td>100.56</td>
<td>100.47</td>
<td>101.5</td>
<td>100.8</td>
<td>98.3</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population (million)</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP per capita, in USD</td>
<td>2155</td>
<td>2052</td>
<td>2130</td>
<td>2210</td>
<td>2045</td>
<td>2074</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Source*: IMF, various national sources.

1/ A negative sign implies a real depreciation and, therefore, a gain in international competitiveness.
Community and Member States cooperation with Tunisia - Planned disbursements for 2003 (€M, grants and loans)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sectors</th>
<th>EC</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>DK</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>IR</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>NL</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>FI</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>27.45</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>16.2</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Health</td>
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<td>Government and civil society</td>
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<td>Transport and storage</td>
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<td>Business/Private sector</td>
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<td>Agriculture, forestry, fishing</td>
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<td>Trade and tourism</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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