



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

EuropeAid Co-operation Office
Geographical Co-ordination Unit
for the Mediterranean Region and the Middle East



EU FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

INFORMATION NOTE



EU FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

The European Union and its Member States have long been financing and co-financing numerous activities in the Mediterranean region. The activities financed through the EU channels are either directly funded from the EU budget or the European Investment Bank's (EIB) own resources allocated by the EU Member States. A large part of the activities financed from the EU budget is managed by the European Commission's EuropeAid Co-operation Office. Other Directorate-Generals of the European Commission also provide some funding opportunities. In this respect, the funding opportunities in this information note are organised as follows:

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I. EU ACTIVITIES FINANCED FROM THE EU BUDGET

The European Union's activities in the Mediterranean region are mostly carried out through a call for proposals or procurement procedure. The following sections provide general information on who can benefit and how to benefit from the EU funds available to different actors in the Mediterranean region. It is important to note that the information provided below is of an indicative nature. The specific criteria for participation in the calls for proposals and tenders are determined by the relevant notice published in conjunction with each call or tender and it is only that information and those criteria included that have legal bearing.

All substantial tendering opportunities and contribution schemes managed by EuropeAid are published in the Official Journal of the European Union and announced on the European Commission's EuropeAid Co-operation Office website.

1.1. EU ACTIVITIES MANAGED BY EUROPEAID

The majority of the EU supported activities in the Mediterranean region, financed or co-financed from the EU budget, is carried out through the MEDA programme for both bilateral and regional co-operation.

The Mediterranean Partners are also eligible to participate in some other programmes or initiatives along thematic lines, which are also financed or co-financed by the EU budget.

For all these EU programmes managed by EuropeAid, additional information, including tender procedures and announcements, can be found at the following websites:

EuropeAid Co-operation Office: http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/index_en.htm

Tender Procedures: www.europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/tender/gestion/index_en.htm

Search engine for calls for tenders and for proposals:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/cgi/frame12.pl>

EuropeAid Co-operation Office organigram:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/general/org_graph_en.pdf

Official Journal of the European Union: http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/search/search_oj.html

The European Commission Delegations in the Mediterranean Region:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/med/link_deleg_en.htm

Mailing address: The European Commission, EuropeAid Co-operation Office, 1049 Brussels, Belgium
The European Commission Switchboard: +32 2 299 11 11.

The MEDA Programme

The establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership between the EU Member States and 12 Mediterranean Partners¹ in 1995 provided a comprehensive and cohesive framework of co-operation for the activities supported by the European Union in the Mediterranean. The MEDA programme (budget line B7-4100), as the main financial instrument of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, supports a set of measures and objectives set by the Barcelona Process aiming at supporting economic transition, developing a better socio-economic balance, and fostering regional integration for free trade by the year 2010 through a multi-sectoral approach. The

¹ Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia, and Turkey.

MEDA programme, currently in its second programming period (2000-2006) with a budget of €5,350 million, consists of bilateral co-operation and regional co-operation instruments.

A large part of the resources are channelled through bilateral funding to the eligible Partners: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and the Palestinian Authority. The rest of the resources are devoted to regional activities.

Who might benefit from the MEDA projects?

The beneficiaries may include States and regions as well as local authorities, public agencies, local or traditional communities, organisations supporting business, private operators, co-operatives, mutual societies, universities, associations, foundations and non-governmental organisations.

How to benefit from the MEDA programme?

The European Commission in collaboration with the Mediterranean Partners defines the priorities for each country in the Country Strategy Papers and in the National and Regional Indicative Programmes. For the region as a whole, a Regional Strategy Paper and a Regional Indicative Programme is also established. In accordance with the priority areas, the list of projects financed each year is included in the yearly National Financing Plan for each Partner and the region.

These projects are then announced regularly and throughout the year in the European Commission's EuropeAid Co-operation Office's website. The criteria for participating in each call for tender or call for proposals are included in the relevant documentation, also available from EuropeAid's website. After the announcement, the projects are managed by the European Commission Delegations in the Mediterranean countries.

Where to obtain additional information?

EuropeAid Co-operation in the Middle East and the Southern Mediterranean Region:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/med/index_en.htm

Information on the EU's Middle East and Mediterranean Policy:

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/med_mideast/intro/index.htm

Information on the MEDA Programme:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euromed/MEDA.htm

This programme is mainly co-ordinated by the EuropeAid Co-operation Office, Directorate B Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East, Unit B1 Co-ordination for the Mediterranean Region. E-mail: europeaid-info@cec.eu.int

The Middle East Peace Process (MEPP)

The Middle East Peace Process aims to help to provide a solid foundation at the civil society level for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. It gives priority to initiatives that have a potential to act as a bridge between large audiences in Israeli and Arab societies in order to promote mutual understanding. It also aims at creating channels of communication on informal levels and to support civil society initiatives.

In the context of the Middle East Peace Process, EU funded projects are mainly financed through the Community Operations Connected with the Israel/PLO Peace Agreement (B7-420).

How to benefit from MEPP projects?

Following the announcement of a call for proposals, proposals can be submitted in accordance with the instruction given in the notice. The notice and the relevant documentation will be available at the European Commission's EuropeAid website.

Where to obtain additional information?

Additional information can be obtained at the following websites:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/med/regional/middleeastpeaceprcs_en.htm

http://europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat_general/sgc/aides/forms/aidco11_en.htm

The European Commission Delegations in the Mediterranean Region:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/med/link_deleg_en.htm

European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)

European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (budget lines B7-701 and B7-702) provides aid to projects in the EU and third countries. Activities principally aim at promoting and defending human rights and fundamental freedoms, supporting the democratisation processes, and providing support for measures to promote respect for human rights and democratisation by preventing conflict and dealing with its consequences.

The total budget of the initiative is € 150 million for the period 1999-2004. The EU level of contribution might vary between €300,000 and €1,500,000.

Who might benefit from European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights?

Regional and international organisations, non-governmental organisations, national, regional and local authorities and official agencies, EU-based organisations and public or private-sector institutes and operators might benefit from the initiative with the condition that their headquarters are either in an EU Member State or in the beneficiary third country.

How to benefit from European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights?

Eligible partners might submit proposals following the call for proposals announced in the European Commission's EuropeAid website. In addition, projects developed with international and regional organisations, including the specialised UN agencies, might also benefit from the available funds.

The European Commission launches calls for proposals under EIDHR throughout the year. The announcements for relevant call for proposals are listed at the EuropeAid website under the heading 'other' of the tender search engine.

Where to obtain additional information?

For more information on the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR):

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/eidhr/index_en.htm

Additional information on the initiative can be obtained from the EuropeAid Co-operation Office, Directorate F Horizontal operations and RRD (Relief, Rehabilitation and Development Link), Unit F3 Democracy, Human Rights and Thematic Support. Additional information on micro-projects can be obtained from the European Commission Delegation in the beneficiary country in question.

Decentralised Co-operation

Decentralised co-operation operations and initiatives in the developing countries (budget line B7-6002) aim to promote a more participatory approach to development, responsive to the needs and initiatives of the populations in the developing countries, to contribute to the diversification and reinforcement of civil society and grassroots democracy in the countries concerned and to the mobilisation of decentralised co-operation agents in the EU and the developing countries in pursuit of these objectives within the structured programmes. All developing countries are eligible for operations to promote decentralised co-operation.

Who might benefit from Decentralised Co-operation programme?

Decentralised co-operation agents in the European Union or the developing countries, namely: local authorities, non-governmental organisations, local traders' associations and local citizens' groups, co-operatives, trade unions, women's and youth organisations, teaching and research institutions, churches and any non-governmental associations likely to contribute to development and that are located in a EU Member State or the beneficiary country, might benefit from the available funds.

How to benefit from Decentralised Co-operation programme?

The launch for a call for proposals for decentralised co-operation is announced in the European Commission's EuropeAid website. All the necessary documentation is also published with the notice. The announcements for relevant calls for proposals are listed at the EuropeAid website under the heading 'other' of the tender search engine.

Where to obtain additional information?

EuropeAid's Decentralised co-operation programme's website:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/ong_cd/intro_coop_en.htm

Additional information can be obtained from the EuropeAid Co-operation Office, Directorate F Horizontal Operations and RRD (Relief, Rehabilitation and Development Link), Unit F2 NGO co-financing.

Co-financing with non-governmental organisations (NGOs)

Co-financing with non-governmental organisations programme (budget line B7-6000) aims, among others, at co-financing European NGOs' activities in developing countries particularly in the fields of strengthening civil society and participatory development, promotion and defence of human rights and democracy, the role of women in development, and sustainable development. Protection of threatened cultures, especially endangered indigenous cultures and

protection and improvement of the circumstances and of the rights of children in the developing countries are also among the priorities of the programme.

Who might benefit from Co-financing with NGOs programme?

The NGOs, whose headquarters are located in an EU Member State, whose co-financed operations are mainly decided by their headquarters and whose main funding originates in the EU, can benefit from the programme. Priority is given to networks and consortia of NGOs that prove their ability to support development operations proposed by the partners in the developing countries and the nature and scope of its links with similar organisations in the developing countries. Consequently, the NGOs in the partner countries where the operation is planned to take place can also benefit from the programme but only upon the initiative of a European NGO and in collaboration with a European NGO.

How to benefit from Co-financing with NGOs programme?

The launch for a call for proposals is announced in the European Commission's EuropeAid website. All the necessary documentation is also published with the notice. The announcements for relevant calls for proposals are listed at the EuropeAid website under the heading 'other' of the tender search engine. In general, the launch for call for proposals takes place once a year.

Where to obtain additional information?

EuropeAid's website for Co-financing with NGOs programme:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/ong_cd/intro_ong_en.htm

Additional information can be obtained from the EuropeAid Co-operation Office, Directorate F Horizontal Operations and RRD (Relief, Rehabilitation and Development Link), Unit F2 NGO co-financing.

Food Aid and Food Security

This world-wide Food Aid and Food Security programme (budget lines B7-2000 and B7-2010) aims at bringing assistance to developing countries facing food deficit problems - temporary and mostly structural - linked to poverty. This programme is particularly active in post-crisis situations and implements the link that must exist between relief, rehabilitation and development. Eligible countries are food-insecure countries, countries in situations of crisis, post-crisis or structural food shortage. The EU contribution levels usually vary between 90% for NGO programmes and 100% for grant aid programmes.

Who might benefit from Food Aid and Food Security programme?

Beneficiary country governments, international agencies and Northern and Southern NGOs as well as the NGO network EnronAid might benefit from the programme.

How to benefit from Food Aid and Food Security programme?

In the case of NGOs, a call for proposal is announced at the European Commission's EuropeAid website. All the necessary documentation is also published along with the notice. For international organisations and governments, a financing application is necessary prior to financing agreement. The relevant information can be obtained at the EuropeAid website under thematic programmes and projects.

Where to obtain additional information

European Programme for Food Aid and Food Security:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/foodsec/index_en.htm

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/resal/>

Additional information can be obtained from the EuropeAid Co-operation Office, Directorate F Horizontal Operations and RRD (Relief, Rehabilitation and Development Link), Unit F5 Food Security and Thematic Support.

Promotion of the full integration of the environmental dimension in the development process of developing countries

With the aim of integrating the environmental dimension into the development process, this programme (budget line B7-6200) promotes implementation of the policies, strategies, tools and technologies in line with sustainable development. The programme has a budget of €12 million per year and the EU contribution covers the totality of the project costs only in a limited number of cases.

Who might benefit from the programme?

International organisations, states, regions, regional bodies, decentralised departments, public agencies, private operators, non-governmental organisations, co-operatives, local communities, that have their headquarters either in the EU or the beneficiary country, might benefit from the available funds.

How to benefit from the programme?

The launch for a call for proposals for the programme is announced in the European Commission's EuropeAid website. All the necessary documentation is also published with the notice. The announcements for relevant call for proposals are listed at the EuropeAid website under the heading 'other' of the tender search engine.

Where to obtain additional information?

In addition to announcements for calls for proposals and tenders at the EuropeAid website, the European Commission's Secretary General's grants website provides additional information on this programme at the following website: http://europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat_general/sgc/aides/forms/aidco18_en.htm

Further information can be obtained from the EuropeAid Co-operation Office, Directorate F Horizontal Operations and RRD (Relief, Rehabilitation and Development Link), Unit F4 Social and Human Development, Environment and Thematic Support.

Promotion of the conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests and other forests in developing countries

This programme (budget line B7-6200) aims at promoting the conservation and sustainable management of tropical and other forests in developing countries through raising the status of forests in national policies, promoting the production and use of wood and non-wood forest products from sustainably managed resources, ensuring the participation of forest-dependent people in policy formulation. The programme has a budget of €30 million per year and the EU contribution is normally 80% of the total eligible cost of a project.

Who might benefit from the programme?

International organisations, States, regions and regional bodies, decentralised departments, public agencies, private operators and industries, co-operatives, local communities, non-governmental organisations and associations representing local people, in particular forest-dependent people might benefit from the funds available under the programme. The beneficiaries have to be based either in an EU Member State or in the beneficiary developing country. Though the international public sector organisations and other duly justified cases are eligible even if their headquarters is outside the EU and not in an eligible developing country.

How to benefit from the programme?

Grants are generally awarded following a call for proposals. The launch for a call for proposals for the programme is announced in the European Commission's EuropeAid website. All the necessary documentation is also published with the notice. The announcements for relevant calls for proposals are listed at the EuropeAid website under the heading 'other' of the tender search engine.

Where to obtain additional information?

In addition to announcements for calls for proposals and tenders at the EuropeAid website, the European Commission's Secretary General's grants website provides additional information on this programme at the following website: http://europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat_general/sgc/aides/forms/aidco17_en.htm

Further information can be obtained from the EuropeAid Co-operation Office, Directorate F Horizontal Operations and RRD (Relief, Rehabilitation and Development Link), Unit F4 Social and Human Development, Environment and Thematic Support.

Integration of gender issues in development co-operation

This programme (budget line B7-622) aims at supporting the mainstreaming of gender analysis in all areas of development co-operation, supporting and facilitating the inclusion of actions addressing major gender disparities, and developing and promoting local public and private capacities in developing countries for mainstreaming the gender dimension in the development effort. The programme has an average budget of €2 million per year and the EU contribution covers the totality of the project costs only in a limited number of cases.

Who might benefit from the programme?

Public authorities, government agencies, decentralised departments, regional bodies, universities, research centres, traditional and local communities, trade unions, non-governmental organisations, public utility associations, associations representing local people (particularly women), co-operatives and agricultural and craft-based credit institutions might benefit from the funds available under the programme. The beneficiaries have to be based either in an EU Member State or in the beneficiary developing country.

How to benefit from the programme?

Grants are generally awarded following a call for proposals. The launch for a call for proposals for the programme is announced in the European Commission's EuropeAid website. All the necessary documentation is also published with the notice. The announcements for relevant call for proposals are listed at the EuropeAid website under the heading 'other' of the tender search engine.

Where to obtain additional information?

In addition to announcements for calls for proposals and tenders at the EuropeAid website, the European Commission's Secretary General's grants website provides additional information on this programme at the following website: http://europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat_general/sgc/aides/forms/aidco25_en.htm

Further information can be obtained from the EuropeAid Co-operation Office, Directorate F Horizontal Operations and RRD (Relief, Rehabilitation and Development Link), Unit F4 Social and Human Development, Environment and Thematic Support.

1.2. EU ACTIVITIES MANAGED BY OTHER DIRECTORATE-GENERALS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Jean Monnet Project

The Jean Monnet Project (budget line B3-3040) 'European Integration in University Studies' is a European Commission information project, undertaken at the request of the universities, whose aim is to facilitate the introduction of European integration studies in universities by means of start-up subsidies.

The Mediterranean Partners can also participate, on a co-financing basis, in the setting up of projects concerning European integration issues under the Jean Monnet scheme. In this light, the European Commission co-finances Jean Monnet Chairs (full time teaching posts devoted to teaching European integration), permanent courses on European integration, European modules consisting of short programme of European studies, and European Centres of Excellence.

At the moment, the programme covers 48 countries throughout the world and has a total budget of €3.5 million. A large part of the grants are allocated to the EU Member States and the Candidate Countries. Grants in all cases may not exceed 80% of the total project cost and for the third countries EU support for the Jean Monnet Centres may not exceed a total of €30,000, and for Chairs €15,000 for the start-up period of three years.

Who might benefit from the Jean Monnet programme?

University-level academic institutions established in the Mediterranean Partner countries are eligible to participate in the Jean Monnet programme. The participation is also open to a wide range of other countries.

How to benefit from Jean Monnet programme?

Candidates are required to submit an application for each proposed project in response to the yearly call for proposals announced in the European Commission's Directorate-General Education and Culture website. All the information needed for the application and the supporting documents are provided on the Jean Monnet programme's website.

Where to obtain additional information?

Jean Monnet Programme's home page:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/ajm/index_en.html

Directorate-General Education and Culture's call for proposals website:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/calls/callg_en.html

Additional information can be obtained from the European Commission's Directorate-General Education and Culture, Directorate A Education, Unit Higher Education: Socrates-Erasmus, Jean Monnet.

Tempus

The Mediterranean Partners can participate in the Tempus programme aimed at restructuring higher education in the partner countries. Their participation in Tempus, however, is funded by the MEDA programme and does not involve an increase of the funds available under the MEDA budget line (B7-4100).

Tempus encourages institutions in the EU Member States and the partner countries to engage in structured co-operation through the establishment of 'consortia'. The 'consortia' implement Joint European Projects (JEPs) with a clear set of objectives. Such projects may receive financial aid for two or three years.

Tempus also provides Individual Mobility Grants (IMGs) to individuals working in Higher Education institutions to help them work on certain specified activities in other countries.

Who might benefit from the Tempus programme?

Universities and higher education institutions in the eligible countries, among which the Mediterranean Partners, can benefit from the programme.

How to benefit from Tempus programme?

Following a call for proposal announced by the European Commission, proposals can be submitted by consortia of institutions from the partner countries and the EU Member States. Further details are included in the respective calls for proposal.

Where to obtain additional information?

The Tempus programme is managed by the European Commission, Directorate General Education and Culture, Unit Tempus Programme - USA/Canada agreements. Technical assistance is provided by the European Training Foundation (<http://www.etf.eu.int/>).

The Tempus Programme home page: <http://www.etf.eu.int/tempus.nsf>

Directorate-General Education and Culture:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/tempus/index_en.html

Directorate-General Education and Culture's calls for proposal website:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/calls/callg_en.html

Additional information can be obtained from the national sources of information and contact points in each eligible country. The list of national sources of information is also provided at the Tempus programme's website.

LIFE-Third Countries

LIFE, the Financial Instrument for the Environment, introduced in 1992, is one of the spearheads of the European Union's environmental policy. LIFE co-finances projects through LIFE-Nature, LIFE-Environment and LIFE-Third Countries. Among others, the Mediterranean Partners can benefit from funding allocated under LIFE-Third Countries (budget line B7-8100). The objective of LIFE-Third Countries is to contribute to the establishment of capacities and administrative structures needed in the environmental sector and in the development of environmental policy and action programmes in third countries bordering the Mediterranean and the Baltic Sea other than Central and East European countries.

The European Union has allocated over €38 million (6% of the total available funds for LIFE) to LIFE-Third Countries for the period 2000-2004. The EU funding for the projects within LIFE-Third Countries supports two types of action: technical assistance projects and accompanying measures. The rate of Community co-financing can be up to 70% of the maximum cost of technical assistance projects and 100% for accompanying measures.

Who might benefit from LIFE-Third Countries?

LIFE-Third Countries is primarily intended to support the efforts of national administrations in implementing, updating and developing environmental policies and action programmes in the eligible countries.

However, LIFE Third Countries is also open to persons or companies/organisations of whatever legal status provided that they reside/are established in one of the eligible countries and to governmental and non-governmental organisations, technical assistance bodies and regional networks which have an international status and operate in the Mediterranean and/or Baltic regions for the protection of the environment.

How to benefit from LIFE-Third Countries?

Proposals for projects are transmitted to the Commission by the national authorities of the third countries in question or by international organisations working for the protection of the environment in the geographic area in question. The yearly calls for proposals are then announced in the European Commission's LIFE-Third Countries' website.

Technical assistance projects are eligible for LIFE-Third Countries if they:

- are of interest to the Community, notably through their contribution to implementing regional and international guidelines and agreements;
- promote sustainable development at international, national or regional level;
- provide solutions to major environmental problems in the region and the relevant sector.

Priority is given to projects, which will promote co-operation at the cross-border, transnational, or regional level.

Where to obtain additional information?

Life Programme Home Page: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/life/home.htm>

Life-Third Countries, Call for Proposals 2004 (including the application guide):

http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/life/funding/life-tc_call2004/index.htm

Additional information on whom to contact and a list of national contact points in the Mediterranean Partner countries can be obtained from <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/life/contact/index.htm>.

Community Framework for Co-operation to Promote Sustainable Urban Development

As third countries that have concluded association agreements with the EU, the Mediterranean Partners are also eligible to participate in Urban Development through a network of local authorities. This Community Framework for co-operation (budget line B4-3050) is a legal instrument allowing the Commission to provide financial and technical support to networks of local authorities in promoting sustainable urban development.

A total of €14 million is allocated for the period 2001-2004. Support for projects is available for a maximum of 3 years and projects financed under other Community programmes are not eligible for funding under this co-operation framework. The level of the financial contribution cannot exceed 95% of the eligible costs.

Who might benefit from Urban Community Framework?

Networks of local authorities comprising members from at least four EU and EFTA countries. The networks may also include Central and Eastern European Countries, Cyprus and Malta as well as other countries, which have concluded association agreements with the European Union.

How to benefit from Urban Community Framework?

Following a call for proposal announced by the European Commission, proposals can be submitted by networks of local authorities from eligible countries. Further details are included in the respective call for proposals. All the necessary documentation is available on the website.

Where to obtain additional information?

The European Commission's Urban Community Framework home page:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/funding/urban_en.htm

Additional information can be obtained from the European Commission's Environment Directorate-General, Unit B3: Territorial Dimension.

Humanitarian Aid Operations: ECHO

The European Commission's humanitarian aid office ECHO (budget lines B7-210 and B7-219), with a total budget of €400-500 million, finances humanitarian aid operations. They aim at saving and preserving life during emergencies and natural disasters and their immediate aftermath. ECHO might also organise operations to provide assistance and relief to people affected by longer lasting crises arising, in particular, from outbreaks of war.

ECHO operations might consist of distribution of food and hygiene items, providing shelter, medical aid, water and sanitation programmes, rehabilitation, health and psycho-social support and self-sustainability projects. Provision is also made for the financing of operations to ensure preparedness for risks of natural disasters. The EU funding for these humanitarian operations may reach the totality of the costs.

Who can apply for ECHO funds?

ECHO's assistance is channelled through European NGO's, the UN and other international organisations such as the Red Cross. The majority of these organisations are signatories to ECHO's Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA).

How to benefit from ECHO operations?

Expressions of interest in becoming an ECHO partner should be sent in writing to ECHO, European Commission, 1049 Brussels, Belgium. ECHO will then ask the organisation to send a number of documents in order to process the application. The organisation's administrative and financial management capacities, technical and logistic capacity, its experience, its readiness to take part in a co-ordination system will be evaluated.

Where to obtain additional information?

ECHO's home page: http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/index_en.htm

Additional information can be obtained from ECHO 2, Central and Eastern European countries, NIS, Mediterranean countries, and the Middle East.

II. EU ACTIVITIES FINANCED OUTSIDE THE EU BUDGET

European Investment Bank (EIB)

The European Investment Bank (EIB) is a major credit provider to the Mediterranean Partners. Between 1974 and 2001, EIB lent a total of €12.6 billion to these countries. In 2002, the EIB lending in the 12 Mediterranean Partner Countries reached the record figure of €1.8 billion.

On 18 October 2002, the Finance Ministers of the 15 EU Member States and 12 Mediterranean Partner Countries launched the European Investment Bank's new Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP).

Under FEMIP, the Bank plans to inject €8 to 10 billion in the Mediterranean Partners by 2006: over €7 billion from own resources, around €250 million in risk capital entrusted to it from the EU budget under the MEDA funds, as well as some €100 million in technical assistance provided by the EU in application of the decisions of the Barcelona European Council of March 2002.

Who might benefit from EIB financing facilities?

The EIB offers various financial services to support projects, depending on eligibility and project category:

- Loans for SMEs through an intermediary (Global loans) for local authorities or firms with fewer than 500 employees and having fixed assets of up to €75 million.
- Venture capital to strengthen the equity base of high-technology SMEs and those with strong growth potential.
- Direct loans (also known as Individual loans) for promoters in both the public and private sectors, including banks.
- Structured Finance Facility (SFF) for priority projects by complementing the commercial banks and capital markets. (These operations will be undertaken chiefly in the countries of the European Union, but also in third countries.)

How to benefit from EIB financing facilities?

Requests for credits financed in the framework of global loans should be addressed directly to one of the intermediary banks and financing institutions, which operates on the national, regional or local level. Requests for venture capital should be addressed directly to an intermediary (see www.eif.org for the list). Requests for individual loans can be addressed directly to the EIB, without specific formalities, either to its headquarters in Luxembourg, or to one of its external offices.

Where to obtain additional information?

The EIB home page: <http://www.eib.org>

For EIB activities in the Mediterranean region: <http://www.eib.org/lending/med/en/index.htm>

For additional information, you may contact Information and Communications Department, European Investment Bank. Telephone: (+352) 4379 3146, fax: (+352) 4379 3189.