

Tanger Med promises to bring EU-Morocco cooperation to the next level

Written by Eli Hadzhieva on 10 July 2019 in Opinion Plus
Opinion Plus

Tangier overlooks a sea of opportunities with the launch of the Mediterranean's largest port just 14 km away from the EU, says Eli Hadzhieva - founder and director of Dialogue for Europe



Photo Credit: Adobe Stock

There is more to Tangier than its 'sheltering sky' and its artsy cafes, which were the favourite hangouts of literary giants and celebrities, such as Paul Powles, Jack Kerouac and Alan Ginsberg, when the North African city had an international status from 1924 to 1956.

Tangier evolved from being a melting pot of Arabs, Berbers, Jews, Spaniards, Italians, Belgians, Dutch, French, English, Americans to an international trade and logistics hub at present day.

High-speed trains connect the city to Rabat and Casablanca (and other cities along a 1300km railway network), whereas modern highways (as part of a 1800km highway system) link it to the rest of the country.

RELATED CONTENT

- [Post-Cotonou period is decisive for EU-Africa relations](#) [1]
 - [EU and Africa should do more to defend common interestes](#) [2]
 - [EU-Africa: Crucial time in history of continents' relations](#) [3]
 - [EU-Africa strategy requires real commitment at political and business level](#) [4]
 - [Tajani calls for €40bn 'Marshall Plan for Africa'](#) [5]
-

Part of these big infrastructure projects and strategic investments have been supported by the European Investment Bank, which shows the eagerness of the EU to enhance competitiveness and connectivity in Morocco.

So was the extension of the *Tanger Med* Port, which hosts a state-of-art facility special economic zone only 35 km from the city of Tangier, offering fiscal, administrative and customs advantages (i.e. temporary admission of raw material and less paper work) for investors.

Following the inauguration of a second port facility *Tanger Med 2* on June 28th this year, the container capacity of the port is expected to increase to 9 million Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit (TEU), making it the biggest port in Africa and on the Mediterranean Sea.

As envisioned by the Moroccan King Mohammed VI, the port is strategically situated on the Strait of Gibraltar where the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean meet and European and African continents embrace each other.

The 1000-hectare port complex is already home to 912 companies - half of them European-representing aeronautics, electronics, paramedical, agribusiness, textile and automotive industry (including the largest car plant in Africa run by France's Renault).

“There is more to Tangier than its ‘sheltering sky’ and its artsy cafes, which were the favourite hangouts of literary giants and celebrities, such as Paul Powles, Jack Kerouac and Alan Ginsberg, when the North African city had an international status from 1924 to 1956”

Three out of four terminals of *Tanger Med* are operated by leading European port operators, such as the Netherlands-based APM Terminals and Germany-based Eurogate.

Major European and international companies have established themselves in *Tanger Med* not only for the port facilities but for the industry behind.

The automotive industry is exploding in the Kingdom and surpassed the biggest export sector phosphate for the last three years, 65 percent of the car parts being actually made in Morocco.

The proximity to Europe, cost of factors of production (electricity, labour etc.), availability and good temper of human resources, facility for import and export, tax incentives, stability of dirham to euro and possibility to retain talent are cited as the determining factors by international companies for choosing to invest in the *Tanger Med* regional platform for industrial competitiveness.

Linked to 186 ports in the world in 77 countries, Tanger Med now ranks 17th in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) shipping connectivity index.

Not only Spain's Algeciras is 14 km away from Tanger Med but the port finds itself in the centre of global maritime routes, permitting for close to zero deviation for ships at a crossing point for 20 percent of global trade.

This makes the Moroccan port an ideal gateway for trans-shipments to African countries, which cannot accommodate big vessels in the absence of deep-water ports.

“As envisioned by the Moroccan King Mohammed VI, the port is strategically situated on the Strait of Gibraltar where the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean meet and European and African continents embrace each other”

To have such facilitated access to booming markets in West Africa and beyond represents new opportunities for the EU, which has an Association Agreement with Morocco and relaunched negotiations for a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement.

The EU is the number one trading partner of Morocco but the relationships between the two neighbours go far beyond.

The two parties gave a new impetus to their ‘strategic, multidimensional and privileged partnership’ in June this year by developing a Euro-Moroccan partnership for shared prosperity in the area of convergence of values, economic convergence, shared knowledge, as well as political consultation and enhanced cooperation on security in addition to climate change and migration.

In this context, the EU sees Morocco as a key partner in the Euro-African and the Euro-Mediterranean area for ‘its political stability and many reforms carried out’ and attaches great importance to reinforce trilateral cooperation between the EU, Morocco and the African Union.

Strategic infrastructure projects, such as Tanger Med, promise to bring this cooperation to the next level, not only benefiting the EU and Morocco but the Maghreb region and the African continent as a whole.

About the author

Eli Hadzhieva is the founder and director of Dialogue for Europe

Tags

[Development](#) [6]

[Trade](#) [7]

[Foreign Affairs](#) [8]

Categories

[International Relations](#) [9]

Twitter Link

Read more on:

[Facebook](#) [10]

[Twitter](#) [11]

[Website](#) [12]



Site Sections

- [Home](#)
- [Content](#)
- [Policy](#)
- [Magazines](#)
- [PM+](#)
- [Thought Leader](#)
- [Climate Crisis](#)
- [Editorial Calendar](#)
- [Policy Events](#)
- [Event Coverage](#)
- [MEP Awards 2020](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

Services

[Dods PeopleDods](#)
[MonitoringDods](#)
[ResearchDods](#)
[EventsDods](#)
[Training](#)

Media & publishing titles

[Politics HomeThe](#)
[HouseThe](#)
[Parliament](#)
[MagazineHolyrood](#)
[Total PoliticsPublic](#)
[Affairs NewsCivil](#)
[Service](#)
[World](#)
[PublicTechnology](#)
[Training](#)
[JournalDods](#)

[Parliamentary
CompanionVacher's
Quarterly The
European Union and
Public Affairs
Directory](#)

Dods events

[Westminster
BriefingDigital
Health & Care
ScotlandMEP
AwardsThe Skills
SummitScottish
Public Service
AwardsPublic Sector
Procurement
SummitPublic
Sector ICT
SummitCyber
Security
SummitCyber
Security
2017Training
Journal Awards](#)

**Partnership
events**

[The Health and
Care Innovation
ExpoCivil Service
LiveCivil Service
AwardsChief
Nursing Officer for
England's
SummitWomen into
LeadershipThe
Youth Justice
ConventionSocitm
Spring
ConferenceNHSCC
Annual Members'
EventDods at Party
Conference](#)

Source URL: https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/partner_article/tanger-med-promises-bring-eu-mo-occo-cooperation-next-level

Links

- [1] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/post-cotonou-period-decisive-eu-africa-relations>
- [2] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/eu-and-africa-should-do-more-defend-common-interests>
- [3] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/eu-africa-crucial-time-history-continents-relations>
- [4] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/eu-africa-strategy-requires-real-commitment-political-and-business-level>
- [5] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/tajani-calls-%E2%82%AC40bn-marshall-plan-africa>
- [6] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/development>
- [7] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/trade>
- [8] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/foreign-affairs>
- [9] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/categories/international-relations>
- [10] <https://www.facebook.com/TheParliamentMagazine/>
- [11] <https://twitter.com/parlimag>
- [12] <http://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/>