The EuroMed Trade and Investment Facilitation Mechanism (TIFM) is an EC funded project (2014-16) to facilitate closer economic ties between the EU and South Mediterranean countries as well as to improve economic integration between these countries, by providing an online portal of trade related information, covering “TIFM” countries including: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia. Turkey will also join the project.

The project is being implemented by the International Trade Centre (ITC), a joint agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization. ITC’s mission is to foster sustainable economic development in developing countries and economies in transition through trade and international business development. It does this by working with the private sector in collaboration with trade support institutions and policy makers.

The project will deliver an online information portal – the EuroMed Trade Helpdesk – as well as coordinate a TIFM problem solving network of national institutions, responsible for responding to enquiries posted to the online portal, so as to facilitate trade and investment.

The EuroMed Trade Helpdesk, will be modelled on the EU Export Helpdesk and will contain information on: trade statistics; applied customs tariffs and preferential arrangements, rules and certificates of origin, VAT and excise taxes; general requirements and product specific market requirements (such as sanitary and phytosanitary regulations, labelling regulations etc.); business contacts (e.g. relevant institutions, chambers of commerce etc.) as well as news and events.

The portal and problem solving network will continue beyond the project duration, hence information will be collected and catalogued in a sustainable manner. ITC will coordinate this in collaboration with national technical focal point institutions in TIFM countries via a nominated technical focal point. ITC will process and upload data to the portal. Particular emphasis will be on market requirements and regulations. For technical sustainability the portal will be hosted with ITC’s Market Analysis Tools, which are free as public goods and provide a database infrastructure well adapted to host TIFM data.

The TIFM problem solving network of trade support institutions will be responsible for promoting trade and investment between TIFM countries and the EU. The network will provide data and respond to trade and investment related enquiries posted to the online portal by economic operators within the region. ITC will coordinate this enquiry response service.

For more information about the TIFM project, please contact ITC’s Market Analysis and Research Section euromed@intracen.org