GEPCI 2000

The short story of a European Grouping

International cooperation: An example
Its involvement in the MEDA Programme
Creation of the Grouping – November 92

GEPCI, the European Grouping for International Trade Promotion, founded in November 1992, brings together 9 Trade Promotion Organisations of the European Union.

GEPCI was born of an informal co-operation between various European organisations for international trade development.

These organisations, apart from their common interest in GEPCI, mutually co-operate with other European organisations such as the European Trade Promotion Organisation (ETPO) as well as WETFEG / the West European Trade Fair Expert Group, which bring together trade Fair operators – Most of them being also part of GEPCI. Some are also involved in FORUM, a platform of Import Promotion Organisation or Comité de Liaison specialised in agrofood.
GEPCI Members

- **In Austria**: The “Außenwirtschaftsorganisation” (AWO, Austrian Foreign Trade Organisation part of the Austrian Federal Chamber.
- **In Belgium**: L’ Office Belge du Commerce Extérieur (OBCE) - De Belgische Dienst voor Buitenlandse Handel (BDBH) - The Belgian Foreign Trade Board
- **In France**: L’ Agence pour la Promotion Internationale des Technologies & des Entreprises Françaises (CFME-ACTIM)
- **In Greece**: The Hellenic Export Promotion Organisation (HEPO)
- **In Ireland**: Enterprise Ireland.
- **In Italy**: Il Istituto Nazionale per IL commercio Estero, the Italian Institute for Foreign Trade (ICE)
- **In Portugal**: Investimentos, Comércio e Turismo de Portugal (ICEP)
- **In Spain**: El Istituto Español de Comercio Exterior (ICEX)
- **In the UK**: British Trade International.
Definition of GEPCI

What do we mean when we refer to “GEPCI”
In order to avoid confusion, it is worth mentioning that there is a difference between:

- GEPCI as the overall concept / the collective effort of cooperation on the EU scene “binding” its Members.

- GEPCI as the GEPCI Members. They meet at different levels:
  - General Meeting (Assemblée Générale) level;
  - Management Committee level;
  - Working Groups, task forces or individual level;

- GEPCI as the GEPCI Secretariat whose role is to organise meetings and provide support to GEPCI Members in every possible ways.
The 3 objectives of the Grouping
(Introduction)

GEPCI mission statements / objectives and ways to achieve them (designing of an overall strategy) were discussed at length during the first years of existence of the Grouping. Due to differences in constituencies, goals and objectives had to be given great attention.

While some of the Members - as Ministries - were able to discuss and take position in trade policy as well as trade promotion per-se (AWO, British Trade International/UK); some restricted their activities to the sole promotion of trade (CFCE-CFME ACTIM, HEPO, ICE, ICEP and ICEX).

In 1998, it was agreed that GEPCI activities were to be concentrated on 3 objectives;

In a nutshell, they are:

1. Information
2. Dialogue with the European Commission
3. Common Projects
The 3 objectives of the Grouping

(I)

**Objective 1:**
To obtain and circulate information about European Commission (EC) projects and decisions, for the benefit of our companies:
This is being achieved:

- On an **"ad-hoc" basis** by GEPCI Members.
- On a **regular basis** by GEPCI Working Platforms
- On an **every day basis** by the GEPCI Secretariat which is pooling information from:
  - **Internal sources** (contacts with REPs as well as technical and geographical units of the EC)
  - **External sources:** OJEC and all relevant European literature as well as the EUROPA Server.
  - **“Gossips”** collected in the “EU village” (in Seminars, EP sessions, etc.) because after all it is - to a certain extent - a lobbying group!

(A web site is being developed to facilitate pooling and circulation of information)
The INTERNET frontpage will contain:

- Profiles and links to their site of GEPCI Members (in replacement of the brochure)
- Links to TPOs Programmes and networks
- Links to … interesting links (EC, world organisations etc.)
The EXTRANET frontpage. Only accessible to Members, it will contain:

- Tailor-made information on the EC activities;
- GEPCI Activity report and archives;
- Special information on TPOs (ETPO surveys, etc...);
- A GEPCI Members Forum.
The 3 objectives of the Grouping (II)

**Objective 2:**
To act as the discussion partner of the EC in the preparation of its programmes;

This is being achieved:

- by means of **high level contacts** - Commissioners and Director Generals - maintained by the Representatives at GEPCI General Meeting.

- By means of **attendance in Advisory Committees** : such as ASIA Invest and AL Invest advisory Committees that are meeting twice a year. These are platforms involving a number of European interest groups, the programme secretariats and EC officials.

- By means of “EU Seminars on European Programmes” organised by GEPCI and aimed at facilitating direct multilateral discussions between EC officials and GEPCI Members regional or technical experts.
The 3 objectives of the Grouping (III)

**Objective 3:**
To work together on joint projects as desired:

This is being achieved:

- By means of “Variable Geometry Projects” undertaken by GEPCI Members (with or without the help of the Secretariat).

- by means of **GEPCI projects**: While a number of GEPCI cooperation projects had taken place in the past in the field of publication, To date the **GEPCI EURO-MED Project is the flag ship of the Grouping.**

(This is what we are going to develop in the second part of this presentation)
EURO-MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERSHIP

Euro-Mediterranean Network of TPOs
in the field of information and
Human Resources (Training)
The GEPCI EURO-Mediterranean Project
NETWORK of Trade Promotion Organisations
from the EU and the 12 Mediterranean Partner Countries

With the financial support of the EC and in cooperation with their counterparts from the South and East border of the Mediterranean, GEPCI Members launched their very first common project in the field of institution building within the framework of the MEDA Programme.

The partners are
• the EC,
• GEPCI Members and
• the TPOs of the 12 MPCs participating in the MEDA Programme.
### The GEPCI EURO-Mediterranean Project

#### Our Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country / Language</th>
<th>Organization</th>
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| Algeria / Algérie  | APSI - Agence de Promotion de soutien et de suivi des investissements  
|                    | CACI - Chambre Algérienne du Commerce et de l'Industrie  
|                    | PROMEX - Office Algérien de Promotion du Commerce Extérieur  
| Cyprus / Chypre    | Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism  
| Egypt / Egypte     | EEPC - Egyptian Export Promotion Center  
| Israel / Israël    | IEI - Israel Export Institute  
|                    | Federation of Israeli Chambers of Commerce Israel Business Organisation  
| Jordan / Jordanie  | Amman Chamber of Industry  
|                    | JEDCO - Ministry of Industry and Trade - Jordan Export Development Co.  
| Lebanon / Liban    | Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie de Beyrouth  
|                    | ALI - Association des Industriels Libanais  
| Malta / Malte      | METCO - Malta Export Trade Corporation  
| Morocco / Maroc    | ASMEX - Association Marocaine des Exportateurs  
|                    | CMPE - Centre Marocaine de Promotion des Exportations  
|                    | CNCE - Conseil National du Commerce Extérieur  
| Palestinian Autho. | Ministry of Economy and Trade Industry  
|                    | Paltrade - Palestinian Trade Promotion Organisation  
| Syria / Syrie      | Federation of the Syrian Chambers of Commerce - Damascus CofC  
| Tunisia / Tunisie  | API - Agence de Promotion de l'Industrie  
|                    | CEPEX - Centre de Promotion des Exportations  
| Turkey / Turquie   | IGEME - Export Promotion Center of Turkey  

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The GEPCI EURO-Mediterranean Project
NETWORK of Trade Promotion Organisations
from the EU and the 12 Mediterranean Partner Countries

It aims at:

- **Strengthening** co-operation between the TPOs from the 2 shores of the Mediterranean through the creation of an information and a human resources network and through realization of joint promotion trade and industrial partnerships initiatives.

- **Disseminating** trade related information in order to sustain MNCs TPOs in their effort to create (legal, managerial etc.) conditions, necessary to facilitate access of Mediterranean firms to the European market and contribute to the establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean free-trade zone by the year 2010.

- **Enhancing** the know-how and management capacities of the Mediterranean TPOs in the implementation of promotional activities.
The GEPCI EURO-Mediterranean Project
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from the EU and the 12 Mediterranean Partner Countries

With the financial support of the EC and in cooperation with their counterparts from the South and East border of the Mediterranean, GEPCI Members launched their very first common project in the field of institution building within the framework of the MEDA Programme.
This three-fold project comprises:

- Regular MEETINGS
- An INFORMATION Component
- A TRAINING Component
The GEPCI EURO-Mediterranean Project
NETWORK of Trade Promotion Organisations
from the EU and the 12 Mediterranean Partner Countries

REGULAR MEETINGS
of all the partner involved in the project:

- The 2nd Euro-Mediterranean Meeting took place in Tunis on 17-19 May 1999. It aimed at establishing a network and finalising an action plan in the field of information and training.

- The 3rd Euro-Mediterranean Meeting will take place in Athens in January 2001 with the aim of examining the follow up of the project;
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An information Network
by means of a Web site

Exchange of information and access to databases help developing the adequate conditions for companies to get access to markets from both sides of the Mediterranean.

When fully operational, it will be the foundation for the realisation of joint trade and industrial partnership initiatives of interest to companies from the MNCs and EU
The GEPCI EURO-Mediterranean Project
NETWORK of Trade Promotion Organisations from the EU and the 12 Mediterranean Partner Countries

A Training Network and Programme aimed at 3 groups

- **TPOs staff**
  Internal staff of the Trade Promotion Organisations partners of the project;

- **Extended Network Staff**
  Ministries of trade, trade related organisations and associations, chambers of commerce, development agencies, investment promotion agencies;

- **Trainers in the field of international trade**
The GEPCI EURO-Mediterranean Project
NETWORK of Trade Promotion Organisations
from the EU and the 12 Mediterranean Partner Countries

A Training Network and Programme
of 32 training activities in the field
of Trade Promotion

- 3 “Training Platforms”
  In Cairo / Egypt - In Nicosia / Cyprus - In Tunis / Tunisia

- A range of seminars, internships and study Tours
  1. Management of business information
  2. Management of new communication systems
  3. Organisation of trade promotion events
  4. International Marketing
  5. Entering new markets
  6. Train the trainers programmes
  7. EU trade and co-operation programmes
  8. Improvement of skills
  9. Internships in TPOs Study tour in the EU
Many thanks for your kind attention

GEPCI Secretariat
(October 2000)