

Tunisia

Partner country

Status of the project: Completed technical assistance



Basic Information

Population: 11,540,000 | Growth rate: 1.1%

Percent of urban population: 70%

GDP per capita: USD 3,317

Percentage of the population living below the national poverty line: 15.5%

Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC): no mobility/transport-related NDC

CO₂ Emissions (total in million tonnes CO₂/ per capita in tonnes): 32.07 / 2.74

CO₂ Transport Emissions (total in million tonnes CO₂/ per capita in tonnes): 7.27 / 0.62

The proportion of transport-related GHG emissions: 21%

Climate change risk: High

Context

The development of the transport sector in Tunisia resembles a pathway that is common across most countries in the Global South; Tunisia is experiencing a steady rate of urbanisation that is expected to result in three-fourths of the population living in urban areas by 2030. A growing citizenry exerts increasing pressure on the existing urban transport infrastructure, already characterised by an inefficient public transport service that has been historically underfunded – state budgets for road infrastructure development are as high as those for public transport - and unable to satisfy the mobility demands of the urban population. These factors have resulted in an increasing motorisation rate, particularly private means of transportation, and subsequently, high GHG emission levels:

- Individual transport accounts for 63% of all motorised passenger journeys. This percentage stands in opposition to the 1970s modal distribution when public transport represented 70% of the modal share.
- Nonetheless, active mobility still constitutes an essential means of transportation commonly used by more than 50% of medium-sized cities and approximately 36% of citizens in Tunis, Sousse and Sfax.
- Paratransit has experienced tremendous gains since 2001, with the number of permits granted increasing by 89% for private taxis and 260% for collective taxis between 2001 and 2015.
- The vehicle fleet has increased by more than 55% between 2006 and 2015, comprising now more than 1.5 million cars.
- In 2012 the transport sector emitted 6.5 MtCO₂e, or 21% of total net GHG emissions.

- Congestion in urban areas has become a frequent problem, such as reducing average speeds to 7 km/h during rush hours in Tunis and inflicting a cost of up to 2% of the country's GDP.
- Air pollution represents a significant health and economic problem, its cost amounting to between 2% and 10% of GDP.
- While the transport sector accounts for 30% of the country's energy consumption, 94% of this share is concentrated in road transportation, which is in turn disaggregated by the following sub-sectors:
 - » Passenger cars: 49%
 - » Commercial vehicles 19%
 - » Buses 15%
 - » Freight transport 18%

Support from the Partnership

Technical Assistance: National Urban Mobility Policy and Investment Programme (NUMP)

Type of NUMP: Policy NUMP

Funded by: FFEM and BMU-ICI

Funding amount: EUR 0.3 M (FFEM), 0.1 M (Cerema) and 0.2 M (BMU-ICI)

Implemented by: GIZ, AFD, Codatu and Cerema

Local counterpart: Ministry of Transport

Finance leverage: EUR 850,000

The primary purpose of the NUMP is to contribute to the country's NDC and offer cities a general enabling framework for sustainable urban mobility planning.

Supported activities:

With support from MobiliseYourCity's implementing partners AFD, GIZ, Cerema, and Codatu, the Tunisian Ministry of Transport began the process of developing a National Urban Mobility Policy (NUMP) after the country submitted its first NDC in 2015 and joined the Partnership in 2016. The Tunisian NUMP has a strong focus on climate change mitigation and aims to contribute to the country's NDC target of reducing carbon intensity (tCO₂e/GDP) in 2030 by 41% compared to the reference year 2010.

The Tunisian NUMP includes a broad package of measures to decarbonise transport, increase institutional capacities, and improve the governance of the sector:

- Development of technical and institutional frameworks to support Tunisian cities in SUMP development
- Identification of sustainable urban mobility measures, including an action plan for paratransit reform
- Establishment of a national fund for urban mobility
- Establishment of the National Urban Mobility Observatory
- Capacity building programme for local and national agencies
- Support the ongoing decentralisation process in the country through the creation of local administrative entities

The NUMP, which included an emissions inventory, scenario modelling and definition of mitigation actions, was adopted by the national government in May 2020. The implementation of priority measures is currently underway thanks to the support of an AFD grant between 2020 and 2023.

Status of implementation

Project start: 2017 Q1

Project completion: 2020 Q2

Completed outputs:

- Initial diagnostic and priority setting
- Definition of a vision and strategic orientation
- Definition of action plans, responsibilities and resources
- NUMP elaboration
- Official adoption of the NUMP by the national government
- Tunisian MRV approach
- Tunisian SUMP approach
- Sustainable Mobility Forum to kick-start the implementation of the NUMP
- Mobilisation of international experts to support the Ministry of Transport in implementing prioritised actions: Preparation of the framework and identification of administrative resources and competencies for the establishment of local transport authorities, to be mandated by law

Next expected outputs

- Support SUMP elaboration in the Great Tunis area.
- Development Policy Loan funded jointly by AFD and World Bank using the NUMP as the backbone of a public policy matrix

NUMP key measures and cost estimates

The following list highlights the most significant measures identified in the NUMP.

Strategic area 1: Governance

- Establishment of appropriate structures at the local level for the planning, development and management of sustainable mobility
- Creation of a Central Technical Support Unit for the implementation of the NUMP
- Creation of a National Commission on Urban Mobility
- Implementation of governance measures for the mobility sector

Strategic area 2: Capacity building

- Development of capacities of managerial and administrative staff
- Integration of urban mobility into the training programmes of civil engineers, urban planners and administrative staff
- Establishment of networks for knowledge exchange and dissemination within the sector
- Development of an implementation plan for awareness raising of civil society, elected officials and media
- Development of capacities of technical, operational, and administrative staff involved in urban mobility

Strategic area 3: Financing sustainable urban mobility

- Improvement of the role of the State through the establishment of a National Fund for Urban Mobility
- Definition of competencies of local governments to finance urban mobility
- Revision of fare policy and financing of public transportation
- Reduction and redirection of fuel subsidies to the Urban Mobility Fund
- Improvement of the compensation system for school transport

Strategic area 4: Urban public transport

- Development of public transport rationalisation plans
- Establishment of a public transport regulatory unit within metropolitan mobility authorities
- Restructuring of public transport companies
- Set up public service delegation contracts between authorities and public transport companies
- Regulation of paratransit services

Strategic area 5: Improved coordination between transport and land-use planning

- Promotion of integration between master development plans, urban travel plans, and urban development plans
- Establishment of legal provisions for greater coherence between land-use and transport planning
- Promotion of densification of major transit routes through Transport Oriented Development (TOD)

Strategic area 6: Management of individual motorised transport development

- Improvement in road sharing between different modes
- Design of a legal and regulatory framework for carpooling
- Establishment of company travel plans for public organisations
- Mainstreaming and supporting the development of traffic management plans at the local level
- Feasibility study for introducing restrictive parking policies
- Implementation of initiatives to improve freight transport efficiency
- Promotion of intermodality and fare integration between collective transport modes
- Expedite implementation of mass transit projects

Strategic area 7: Promotion of active transportation

- Development of an Active Mobility Action Plan at the national level
- Development of Active Mobility Master Plans in main urban areas
- Implementation of a sidewalk rehabilitation campaign
- Improvement of enforcement capacities to fight the illegal use of public space
- Integration of active mobility into major infrastructure projects

Strategic area 8: Promotion of safer, cleaner and more inclusive urban mobility

- Improvement of road safety in urban areas
- Promotion of e-mobility and alternative fuels
- Introduction of vehicle emission standards
- Promotion of accessibility for the most vulnerable populations

Strategic area 9: Development of digital solutions for urban mobility

- Implementation of an action plan for Smart Mobility Tunisia

Finance leverage

Financing resulting from the NUMP	Source	Amount
Grant fund to support NUMP implementation	AFD	EUR 250,000
Grant fund to develop an urban mobility plan for the Greater Metropolitan Area of Tunis	Republic of Tunisia	EUR 600,000
Grant funds to finance actions of the NUMP (studies, capacity building and tender support for NUMP implementation)	AFD	EUR 400,000

Projected impacts

Indicator	Impact 2030 (SUMP vs BAU)	Baseline - 2015	Projected 2030 BAU	Projected 2030 SUMP scenario
Total annual GHG emissions (Mt CO₂eq)	-3 300 000 tCO ₂ eq	9 200 000 tCO ₂ eq	15 300 000 tCO ₂ eq	12 000 000 tCO ₂ eq
Access Increase in the proportion of the population living 500 meters or less of a public transport stop	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	80%
Modal share Increase in the modal share of trips by public transport, walking and cycling	TOTAL: 31.4 %	TOTAL: 53.6 %	Unknown	TOTAL: 85 %
Road safety Decrease in traffic fatalities in the urban area per 100,000 inhabitants	-50 %	-55 fatalities/100 000 hab	Unknown	-22 fatalities/100 000 hab

Insights from practice: lessons learned from NUMP development

New governance framework for urban mobility and a National Mobility Fund

From 2021 to 2022, an AFD-funded consultant assisted the Ministry of Transport in implementing a new governance framework for urban mobility, and a National Mobility Fund.

At the national level, the national government is planning the creation of a National Urban Mobility Commission (CNMU) to ensure the political support of the NUMP as well as all the structural reforms proposed, and a Central Technical Support Unit (UTAC) providing technical support to the CNMU and responsible for the operational implementation of most of the actions recommended by the NUMP. It should first be hosted in-house by the Ministry of Transport and later become an independent public institution.

To ensure that state funding is stable and predictable, the NUMP also plans to create a National Urban Mobility Fund (FNMU) in 2022, to which specific national tax resources from transport, such as the road tax, would be allocated, as well as specific local taxes.

The decentralisation process in Tunisia is still a major challenge, and adjustments to the legal framework to solve the governance problems created by the contradictions between the Local Authorities Code and Law 2004-33 of April 19, 2004, on the organisation of land transport still need to be made. An additional challenge is finding the proper legal status for the new entities created at the national level in a politically unstable context and very limited budgetary space.

At the local scale, depending on the size of the urban areas, Metropolitan Urban Mobility Authorities (AMMU) will be created, as well as Urban Mobility Departments (DMU) within the municipalities, to ensure the development of local mobility strategies and the management of public transport networks. Additionally, there has been an advanced discussion with the AUGT (Urban Planning Agency) on the preparation of a SUMP for the metropolitan area of Tunis.

The European Union supports the development of capacities for the transition to low-carbon mobility and the achievement of the Tunisian NDC

Tunisia has committed to reducing its GHG emissions by 45% by 2030 compared to 2010, and transport must contribute to 37% of this reduction target. To support the implementation of the new Regional Transport Action Plan, the **EU launched the EuroMed Transport Support Project (ETSP)** for a duration of 7 years (January 2017 to December 2023), including an extension due to the context of the pandemic.

This support includes a specific technical assistance project for the secondary city of Sousse. This technical assistance aims to develop the capacity of local authorities to support the transition to low-carbon mobility. Activities include the use of the MobiliseYourCity greenhouse gas emissions calculator to analyse the potential impact of different mobility planning approaches on emissions trajectories. The MobiliseYourCity Secretariat directly supported this technical assistance.

Highlights in the past year

A supported Urban Mobility Master Plan for the Great Tuniz

In 2024, the Japanese Cooperation (JICA) signed a Record of Discussions with the Government of Tunisia to develop an Urban Mobility Master Plan Study in Greater Tunis

Updated in December 2024