

# **The Health Crisis Re-Shuffles the Cards of Geopolitics in the Transport and Logistics Sector in the Western Mediterranean:**

## **The Case of the Maritime Sector**

**Oumnia Boutaleb<sup>1</sup>**

Historically, transport has always been a key sector in the operation of the world economy. In the modern era marked by interdependence and interconnection of states, economies and world and regional trade, the transport and logistics sector takes on an increasingly important role. It is therefore the driver of development and regional integration, particularly in the countries of the Mediterranean region that have experienced a real revolution in the two last decades in terms of the evolution of their infrastructures and means of transport. The latter largely participate in the facilitation of mobility of people and goods and in the development of international trade. Thus, better transport policies as well as strengthening the transport and logistics infrastructures, be it air, port, road or rail, are necessary to the economic development of the countries of the Mediterranean basin at a domestic and regional level but also internationally. Moreover, solid modern infrastructures are essential to encourage the growth of the Mediterranean countries, their economic and social development, as well as their competitiveness in the international market. Likewise, an efficient transport sector could only enable the development of all economic sectors through a more substantial creation of jobs, greater attractiveness to foreign investment, and a social cohesion between the people around the Mediterranean Basin.

The current health crisis, beyond having severely tested the world health systems, has redefined world geopolitics. The large transport networks must readapt and adjust to the geopolitical evolutions and the new world dynamics. The relationship between politics and transport is, therefore, paramount in the contemporary world. Moreover, there is a close link between geopolitical dynamics and the large transport networks.

It is precisely the case of maritime transport and port infrastructures that have been put under strain during the COVID-19 crisis. The Mediterranean Sea is an important trade and maritime route because it serves many markets, whether regional or international. Comprising almost 87 ports with diverse specificities and activities, it has revealed the vulnerability of its activities and facilities as well as their lack of efficiency and connectivity. It is therefore clear that the maritime sector and the port activity have been impacted by the new international dynamics and that they must strengthen their resilience and competitiveness in the international market.

**With the COVID-19 Crisis, the Transport and Logistics Sector is Readapting in the Western Mediterranean**

---

<sup>1</sup> Research Assistant in International Relations, Policy Center for the New South (PCNS).

The transport and logistics sector is unquestionably among the most harshly and directly hit by the crisis, whether in the Mediterranean region or elsewhere. With the almost total interruption of air connections, the reduction of maritime activities and the drastic drop in rail and road traffic, the two sectors have suffered greatly, thereby impacting all economies in the region. However, despite the great difficulties for Western Mediterranean countries, they have taken some measures to counter the impact of the virus and endeavour to relaunch the two sectors.

While the health crisis has had a devastating effect on the air and urban transport sectors, it has not completely brought an end to maritime traffic and the activity of ports in the Mediterranean (AVITEM, 2020). Quite the contrary, the situation has enabled the maritime actors to urgently reflect on the activity and connectivity of Mediterranean ports and maritime activity. Indeed, this activity has been maintained while all other means of transport have seen their activity stop or at least drastically decrease and the urban ports have emerged as the new points of trade stability. This is explained, for example, by the need to continue to supply countries with raw materials and food products, as the value chains are dispersed in several continents and often depend on one destination. More importantly, ocean freight has even had to fill the void left by air transport to enable the transit of goods even though world maritime transport accounts for 80% of world trade. Several ports have also had to innovate to maintain the level of activity, such as in the case of Barcelona, which has diversified its port activity. Barcelona has implemented a new line, secured by the German company JSV Logistics, connecting Spain to the two Turkish ports of Gebze and Ambarli. Along with reducing delivery times for imports and exports, it should enable the development of trade relations with Turkey.

Established very recently in July 2020, the ocean freight company Anarres Shipping, based in Cyprus, launched a new maritime line in August connecting three Western Mediterranean countries, i.e., France through its port in Sète, Tunisia in Sousse, and Italy from Marina Di Carrara. This initiative seeks to bring these countries together by boosting activity in the non-priority ports of the Mediterranean region with a view to closer relations and economic integration. The effects of the health crisis have revealed the need to bring the supply chain closer. Several regions like Africa or the Mediterranean, which in the past had been supplied from Asia or the American continent, have been heavily hit by the crisis when traditional means of transport have been paralysed. Thus, several factories are today relocating from Asian countries to North African countries. In Tunisia, for instance, several factories are under construction (Khdimallah, 2020).

In France, where ocean freight companies have found themselves in difficulty faced with the effects of the crisis, the Prime Minister has announced the provision of 30 million euros in the framework of the government rescue plan to ensure that jobs are safeguarded in the sector as well as French competitiveness (Descamps, 2020). This amount complements loans to a value of 115 million euros recently granted to them (Le Figaro, 2020).

The Grand Port Maritime de Marseille has been hard hit by the slowdown of maritime activity since February 2020. Although it has recorded a drop of 15% of its maritime traffic, and this only in the first quarter of the

year (traffic of 33.6 million de tonnes compared to 39.5 in the same period of the previous year), and that for the end of the year a drop of 20% of turnover is expected, the planned investment of 57 million euros has been maintained and 6.5 million has been added to encourage the relaunch of the port and therefore trade activity (Dubessy, 2021c). Moreover, all the projects initially planned have also been resumed, such as the new Cap Janet international terminal (Econostrum, 2020), which will connect France with its Maghreb neighbours. This strategy of investment maintenance has allowed a rebound of activity even though it is still fragile. Incentive measures such as the reduction of port fees and the signing of a covenant of commitment to meet the crises with the whole port community have boosted the resumption of global maritime activity.

These brief examples, albeit not exhaustive, nevertheless have the merit of shedding light on a key element. While, in the past, Mediterranean ports operated independently of one another, favouring specific countries for their trade activity, the health crisis has shown them the need to promote better regional cooperation and bring supply chains closer. Moreover, maritime transport and port activity seem to have taken over from other means of transport mainly at a time when the COVID-19 crisis has emphasised their resilience.

## **How Has the Mediterranean Been transformed into a Geopolitical and Strategic Arena for Confrontation in the Maritime Sector?**

### **The case of the Beirut port, representative of the geopolitical challenges in the Eastern Mediterranean**

While Chinese companies exert their influence in several ports in the region, thereby providing access to Middle Eastern markets and opening a door to Africa, such as the case of Alexandria or Haifa in Israel, the recent explosion in the port of Beirut has stirred Chinese interest. The resumption of the management of this port has revealed a real geopolitical arm-wrestle between regional and international powers. For China, a point of anchorage in the Lebanese port would enable a maritime route to be secured, in the framework of its initiative “The New Silk Route”, towards Arab countries while avoiding the obstacles found in other ports of the region because of domestic political issues. However, Lebanon, traditionally close to the West, would probably refuse to authorise such a Chinese enterprise in its territory, despite Hezbollah’s inclination to this possibility, which does not conceal its desire to reorient the country towards the East by strengthening links with China and Iran, especially because the United States has sounded the alarm about Chinese investments in the region. However, a reconstruction of the port by France, Lebanon’s traditional ally, would be more feasible and less criticised by the United States. The French have also expressed their interest in the Lebanese port and have multiplied the political, social and aid actions in the aftermath of the explosion that hit this country already weakened by the health crisis, thereby consolidating France’s influence in Lebanon. Meanwhile, Beijing has moved its trade activity towards the Libyan port of Tripoli.

In its search for influence in the Western Mediterranean, Turkey sees the port of Beirut as a key point of presence and, as it only has its national ports in the region, would wish to expand its presence through the

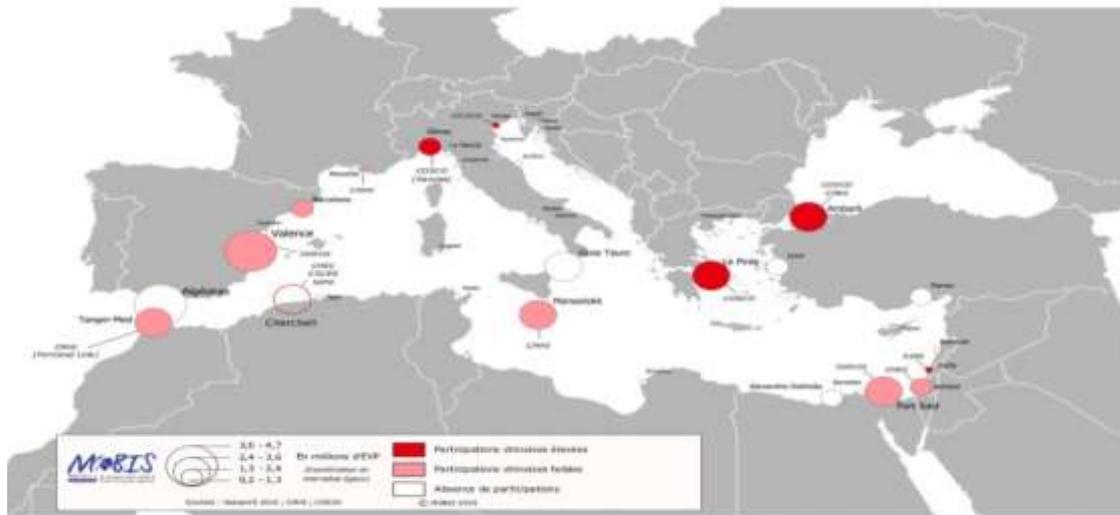
Lebanese capital. Nevertheless, given the French-Lebanese relationship and Lebanon's reticence about greater influence of Ankara in the region, which it criticises for intervening in the Libyan conflict, a reconstruction of the port by Turkey is quite unlikely. Moreover, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), whose Mediterranean ambitions have led them to become interested in the port of Beirut, share French fears over Turkey. The UAE have contributed humanitarian aid to Lebanon through their company Dubai Ports World, which they often use as a geopolitical lever. The recent tensions between the countries and closer relations between other countries have been transposed to the Eastern Mediterranean region. An alignment between Abu Dhabi and Paris on the port issue would not be surprising.

### **Maritime transport and port facilities: new strategic challenges of geopolitical clashes in the Western Mediterranean**

The weakness of Southern Mediterranean countries opens the way to regional and international ambitions. With a weak Libya, a Tunisia with an uncertain domestic future and a cooling of relations between Algeria and Morocco, the Maghreb is weakened. Turkey's so-called neo-Ottoman ambitions as well as its desire to become a real regional power push the country to multiply the initiatives in the Mediterranean. Its intervention in Libya, which it sees as an obstacle to the Maghreb and by extension sub-Saharan Africa, explains its interest in the country.

Moreover, the new world geopolitical dynamics can be seen, in relation to the transport and logistics sector, in the south-western Mediterranean countries. China, the main country with ambitions in the Mediterranean, began its port expansion in the framework of the New Silk Routes well before the start of the health crisis. Historically, the Mediterranean area is not a prime location for Chinese economic interests. It was not until 2008, following the financial crisis and the lack of interest of certain historical partners in this region, that the Asian power showed renewed interest in this maritime space. In the framework of the New Silk Routes, China has placed the Mediterranean basin at the centre of its deployment strategy mainly with respect to transport infrastructure and port hubs through control of the Mediterranean logistics chains and maritime routes, investing considerably in the ports of the region.

With the investment of Chinese enterprises in Mediterranean ports, China has managed to impose its presence in the most strategic points of the region.



Source : Institut MOBIS

Figure 1: The presence of Chinese enterprises in Mediterranean ports

Source: J. Verny, O. Oulmakki, Th. Blayac, (2019). Positionnement stratégique de la Chine en Méditerranée : Le projet « Belt and Road Initiative ». Les cahiers scientifiques du transport (n°75). Pages 63-79.

Figure 2: Main Chinese investments in the Mediterranean

Year	Location	Projects
2008	Piraeus (Greece)	COSCO obtains the concession for 35 years of the Piraeus port: COSCO becomes main stakeholder of the port in 2016.
2013	Tanger-Med (Morocco) Marseille (France) Marsaxlokk (Malta)	China Merchant buys 49% of Terminal Links from CMA CGM
2014	Ashdod (Israel)	CHEC (China Harbour Engineering Company) is chosen to build a deep-water port
2015	Kumport/Ambarli (Turkey)	A Chinese consortium (40% COSO, 40% China Merchant, 20% CIC Capital Corporation) buys 65% of the shares in the port
2015	Haifa (Israel)	Shanghai International Port Group (SIPG) becomes the port operator
2015	Venice (Italy)	VOOPS project: a Sino-Italian consortium (with China Communication Construction Company Group) undertakes construction of an offshore terminal and a container terminal
2016	Vado-Savona (Italy)	COSCO buys 49.9% of the shares in the port
2016	Cherchell-EI Hamdania (Algeria)	Decision to construct a 23-dock port with capacity of 6.5 million TEU. CHEC and CSCEG (China State Construction Engineering Group) will be the constructors and Shanghai Port the operator
2017	Valencia (Spain)	Acquisition of 51% of Noatum Port, main Spanish operator

Source: J. Verny, O. Oulmakki, Th. Blayac, (2019). Positionnement stratégique de la Chine en Méditerranée : Le projet « Belt and Road Initiative ». Les cahiers scientifiques du transport (n°75). Pages 63-79. Extrait de : <https://vdocuments.mx/document/les-cahiers-scientifiques-du-transport-n-752019-pages-63-79-2020-2-20.html>

China has recently signed an economic and technical cooperation agreement with Algiers. In the framework of this agreement, Beijing plans the construction of a deep-water port in El Hamdania (Cherchell). This major project, in which China will invest 5 to 6 billion dollars, will be one of the biggest maritime ports at world level and consolidate China's Silk Route project (Algérie Presse Service, 2020). This new project will be able to accommodate ships up to 21.500 EVP (Demmad, 2020). Moreover, it will make Algeria a regional commercial hub and will unquestionably offer Beijing an opening to an African trade corridor and greater influence on the continent.

Its Tunisian neighbour, considered an ally of certain Western powers in the Libyan issue, also enters the recent geopolitical game. With the health crisis, Tunis has recorded significant negative effects on key sectors of its economy, i.e. transport and logistics. The transport sector accounts for 7% of GDP as well as 11.5% of investments (Business France Tunis, 2020). In order to counter the attempts of Turkish and Russian influences in the country as well as the increasingly significant Chinese presence, the American ambassador met the Tunisian Minister of Transport and Logistics in October. The discussion dealt with the possibilities of bilateral cooperation<sup>2</sup> as well as support concerning the crisis in the two sectors at hand (Ministère tunisien du Transport, 2020). The first investment to this end, for an amount of 300 million dinars, concerns the improvement of the infrastructure of the port of Radès. It is worth recalling that in 2017 a direct maritime line connecting this port with that of Quigdao in China had been implemented by the Spanish company Transglory. Its objective is to boost trade between Northern Mediterranean countries and China and Africa. Moreover, the Chinese, who for some time have sought to secure a port in the country, ideally Zarsis or Bizerte,<sup>3</sup> are still trying and have recently confronted American hostility. However, the Chinese are persistent and continue their progress in the transport and logistics sectors in this Mediterranean country. Indeed, a meeting was held on 10 November 2020 between the Minister of Transport and a delegation of the company Huawei on the implementation of technological and digital solutions in transport infrastructure, i.e. airports, ports and urban transport (Réalités, 2020). China therefore seems very present through different channels in Tunisia despite the reticence of some of its rivals.

However, the view that powers traditionally confronted in the Mediterranean region would be the only ones seeking to impose their influence is outdated. The Gulf countries increasingly emerge as key actors in the Western Mediterranean. Although their interest mainly focuses on transport in the eastern part of the sea, today we witness a growing interest of Gulf countries in North Africa and Southern European countries. Indeed, their maritime strategy is led by their desire for commercial and economic diversification, and the Northern and Southern Mediterranean countries offer them a strategic location of choice. The UAE are undoubtedly the most active country in the transport and logistics sectors in the Western Mediterranean. With the perpetual confrontation of powers in its traditional area of influence, i.e. the Persian Gulf, and as a result of

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.transport.tn/fr/article/240/le-ministre-detat-recoit-son-excellence-lambassadeur-des-etats-unis-damerique-en-tunisie>

<sup>3</sup> <http://kapitalis.com/tunisie/2020/09/28/maghreb-un-nouvel-enjeu-geopolitique/>

the stagnation of the Libyan crisis and its desire to increase its geostrategic influence in the Mediterranean, the UAE have been forced to reorient their maritime strategy. In Algeria, for instance, Dubai Ports World is responsible for the management of two ports, Algiers and Djen Djen. It is also present in Spain and France in the port of Marseilles. Despite the considerable investment in diverse transport infrastructure and logistics projects mainly with a view to securitisation of the ports, the UAE are faced with their European and Chinese competitors in this region.

The UAE have indeed chosen one of the countries with the most strategic geographical positions in the region, i.e. Morocco, which in recent years has invested in ambitious transport projects that have driven it as a key actor in the geopolitical scene in the Mediterranean. It forms part of the country's commercial transport corridor between Africa and Europe as well as Africa and Asia. Morocco, having surpassed the whole of the African ports in terms of capacity, will not take long to emulate the biggest European ports on the northern Mediterranean shore, the Strait of Gibraltar or Algeciras, for instance. Moreover, this port has enabled Morocco to become a point of passage or a real maritime and commercial hub. In other words, the port of Tanger-Med provides the country with a significant geostrategic position and Euro-Mediterranean anchorage and transforms it into a port highly coveted by the international actors (Ministère de l'Équipement et des Transports du Maroc, 2011). Morocco is also the first African country to have a high-speed train whose extension will be able to connect Europe to Africa. The Chinese have announced their desire to participate in the extension of this rail connectivity although it is not guaranteed by France, traditionally the most important presence. With the COVID-19 crisis and the greater investment and Chinese interest in the country, France further mistrusts an omnipresence of the Asian power, thereby complicating its implementation. It is also hindered by France's lack of European partners, above all because Morocco has been very open to cooperation with other countries such as Russia through the signing of economic association agreements. Until now these countries have only invested in the energy sectors but investment in transport infrastructures should not be dismissed, especially if they decide to join Chinese or Emirati projects. Both have also shown interest in Morocco by resuming most if the air links.

However, the Emirati interest in Moroccan airport facilities has somehow been undermined since 2018. Today, Saudi Arabia and the UAE are seeking to secure their political and military influence in Mauritania through major investment in transport infrastructure and airport facility projects. In 2018, the Mauritanian authorities entrusted the management of Nouakchott airport to Abu Dhabi Airports Company PJSC for 25 years (Yabiladi, 2019). Moreover, the management of the port of Nouadhibou at the border with Morocco, which had been entrusted to a Chinese company but seems to be crumbling, has stirred Emirati and Saudi interests, which have expressed their intention to invest. This would not only risk competing with the project of the Dakhla Atlantique port in which Morocco is so deeply invested but would also counterbalance Moroccan interests in Mauritania. Russia, which has RSW (Refrigerated Sea Water) vessels in Mauritanian waters with a competitive capacity, would also be attracted by Mauritanian ports.

Moreover, Turkey seems to gain ground in the Western Mediterranean through a rapprochement with Italy. Indeed, in July 2020, Turkey established a transport corridor bringing closer Italy but also Tunisia. Formed around a focal point, which is the deep water port of Tarento in southern Italy, a strategic place in the Mediterranean managed by the Turkish company Yilport, this corridor will enable closer trade relations between three regions, i.e. Africa, Europe and the Middle East. Along with connecting the Southern Mediterranean countries to the European countries through Italy and the rail systems, this corridor has even greater strategic interest for Turkey and Europe. From Algeria and through the trans-Saharan route, it opens the way towards sub-Saharan Africa, which Turkey increasingly covets.

In contrast to the international actors investing in the two sectors in search of influence, the European strategy turns out to be different. Little motivated by its geopolitical ambitions, Europe mainly relies on regional integration and the development of Western Mediterranean countries. Indeed, along with the countries in the north-western shore forming part of the European Union (EU), the Maghreb countries located on the southern shore are its closest neighbourhood. It is from this perspective that the Centre for Transportation Studies for the Western Mediterranean (CETMO) signed an agreement protocol with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) in November 2018. The objective was to create an interconnected Mediterranean transport corridor and to develop all the means of transport, i.e. road, rail, port and airport networks. It will act as a link between the continent and Africa through the Western Mediterranean. However, it is true that the European countries of the region and those belonging to the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) do not enjoy the same level of development, another reason to take this factor into account in the midst of the economic crisis. Europe will have to provide aid to the most affected countries and help harmonise the adoption of legal instruments in the field of transport. Moreover, the rupture of the world supply chains has revealed the need to bring them closer together. The agreement should insist on the development of efficient logistics and transport infrastructures that will enable the supply chains to be perfected in the region and make the Western Mediterranean countries key actors in international trade.

## **Conclusions**

- With the weaknesses of transport revealed by the current health crisis and the fact that the maritime sector has proven more resilient than air, road and rail sectors, in the coming years the maritime sector will emerge as the one that will channel the main strategic interests in the Western Mediterranean.
- The world value and supply chains do not seem to be controlled by the different states that should integrate into them to avoid a repeat of the difficulties experienced during the COVID-19 crisis.
- Northern and Southern Mediterranean countries, which during the crisis suffered because of their supply dependence on relatively distanced countries, have understood the need for a rapprochement. It therefore seems important to develop maritime connections between the European Northern and Southern countries to encourage regional integration as well as a socioeconomic development, mainly between the five Maghreb countries that have been severely hit by the health crisis.

## Recommendations

- European initiatives aimed at the transport and logistics sector are many. However, the European strategy vis-à-vis its neighbours continues to be blurred, despite great progress. It would therefore be necessary for it to engage in a clear and defined strategy. The 10th Group of Transport Ministers for the Western Mediterranean (GTMO 5+5) Ministerial Conference could provide the opportunity to discuss the effects of the crisis on the two sectors, identify the shortcomings in terms of transport and infrastructure in order to boost activity, and implement scenarios for a way out of the crisis. The EU should also help the Western Mediterranean countries to mobilise funders, whether national or international, with the aim of strengthening the transport and logistics sector in the post-COVID-19 era.
- The strategy of development of hubs in certain towns, such as the Tanger-Med port, which has made the town of Tangier a port and maritime hub, or Mohamed VI airport, which has turned Casablanca into a key air hub between Asia, Africa and Europe, should be continued and intensified.
- Finally, it would be appropriate to develop the motorways of the sea in the Western Mediterranean in order to enable a connection between the European ports and countries and the southern shore. This initiative should enable an increase in the commercial flows as well as a relocation of the industrial activity in the region, thereby bringing about economic and social development. In order to back up these efforts, the development of road transport must be supported to enable connections even within the countries and boost the development of the whole transport chain.

## Bibliography

**Agence des villes et territoires méditerranéens durables (AVITEM) (6 novembre 2020).** *Le port au cœur de la crise, vulnérabilité ou résilience ?* [Webinaire]. AVITEM.

**Algérie Presse Service (2020, October 5).** *Port du Centre : un coût de réalisation estimé entre 5 et 6 milliards USD.* Algérie Presse Service. Retrieved from <https://www.aps.dz/economie/110580-port-du-centre-un-cout-de-realisation-estime-entre-5-et-6-milliards-usd>

**Business France Tunis (2020, January 13).** Tunisie - Nombreux investissements dans le secteur du transport en 2020. Business France. Retrieved from <https://www.businessfrance.fr/tunisie-nombreux-investissements-dans-le-secteur-du-transport-en-2020>

**Cohen-Hadria, E. (2020 April).** COVID-19, a Stress-Test for Euro-Mediterranean Relations. EuroMeSCo. *Spot On*, no. 13. Retrieved from <https://www.euromesco.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Spot-On-13-Covid-19-a-Stress-Test-for-Euro-Mediterranean-Relations.pdf>

**Compte, A. (2005).** The Extension of the Trans-European Transport Network to Neighbour Mediterranean Countries. *IEMed Mediterranean Yearbook 2005*. Retrieved from <https://www.iemed.org/anuari/2005/anarticles/ancompte.pdf>

**Demmad, A. (2020, September 19).** *Djelloul Achour, P-DG du Groupe SERPORT : « L'Algérie va reconquérir sa place maritime »*. PME-DZ. Retrieved from <https://www.pme-dz.com/djelloul-achour-p-dg-du-groupe-serport-lalgerie-va-reconquerir-sa-place-maritime/>

**Deschamps, A. (2020, February 20).** Covid-19 : Le transport maritime, touché dans toutes ses composantes. *Le journal de la marine marchande*. Retrieved from <https://www.journalmarinemarchande.eu/enquete/covid-19-le-transport-maritime-touche-dans-toutes-ses-composantes>

**Dubessy, F. (2020a, June 8).** Les aéroports européens n'envisagent un retour au trafic aérien d'avant la Covid-19 qu'en 2023. *Econostrum*. Retrieved from [https://www.econostrum.info/Les-aeroports-europeens-n-envisagent-un-retour-au-traffic-aerien-d-avant-la-Covid-19-qu-en-2023\\_a26811.html](https://www.econostrum.info/Les-aeroports-europeens-n-envisagent-un-retour-au-traffic-aerien-d-avant-la-Covid-19-qu-en-2023_a26811.html)

**Dubessy, F. (2020b, November 6).** "The virus did not win against the ports", says Bernard Valero, Avitem's general manager. *Econostrum*. Retrieved from [https://en.econostrum.info/The-virus-did-not-win-against-the-ports--says-Bernard-Valero-Avitem-s-general-manager\\_a773.html](https://en.econostrum.info/The-virus-did-not-win-against-the-ports--says-Bernard-Valero-Avitem-s-general-manager_a773.html)

**Dubessy, F. (2021c, January 15).** *La crise sanitaire au Maghreb impacte les résultats du port de Marseille*. *Econostrum*. Retrieved from [https://www.econostrum.info/La-crise-sanitaire-au-Maghreb-impacte-les-resultats-du-port-de-Marseille\\_a27307.html](https://www.econostrum.info/La-crise-sanitaire-au-Maghreb-impacte-les-resultats-du-port-de-Marseille_a27307.html)

**Econostrum. (2020, May 28).** *Quatre entreprises marseillaises sélectionnées pour construire le nouveau terminal Maghreb de Marseille*. *Econostrum*. Retrieved from [https://www.econostrum.info/Quatre-entreprises-marseillaises-selectionnees-pour-construire-le-nouveau-terminal-Maghreb-du-port-de-Marseille\\_a26775.html](https://www.econostrum.info/Quatre-entreprises-marseillaises-selectionnees-pour-construire-le-nouveau-terminal-Maghreb-du-port-de-Marseille_a26775.html)

**Forum EuroMed Transport. (2015, March).** Plan d'action régional transport pour la région méditerranéenne 2014-2020. Retrieved from [https://ec.europa.eu/transport/sites/transport/files/themes/international/european\\_neighbourhood\\_policy/mediterranean\\_partnership/docs/rtap2014\\_2020\\_fr.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/transport/sites/transport/files/themes/international/european_neighbourhood_policy/mediterranean_partnership/docs/rtap2014_2020_fr.pdf)

**Gressel, G., & Popescu, N. (2020, November 3).** The Best Defence: Why the EU should forge security compacts with its eastern neighbours. The European Council on Foreign Relations. Retrieved from <https://ecfr.eu/publication/the-best-defence-why-the-eu-should-forge-security-compacts-with-its-eastern-neighbours/>

**Group of Transport Minister for the Western Mediterranean - GTMO 5+5. (2018, December 12).** Statement of conclusions of the 9th Conference of Transport Ministers of the Western Mediterranean,

Nouakchott. Retrieved from [https://www.secegsa.gob.es/NR/ronlyres/1C39AFBF-17C0-4F78-BD3E-A1090FED1C2F/150934/Declaracion\\_Ministros\\_121218.pdf](https://www.secegsa.gob.es/NR/ronlyres/1C39AFBF-17C0-4F78-BD3E-A1090FED1C2F/150934/Declaracion_Ministros_121218.pdf)

**Jelali, H. (2020, September 28).** *Maghreb, un nouvel enjeu géopolitique*. Kapitalis. Retrieved from <http://kapitalis.com/tunisie/2020/09/28/maghreb-un-nouvel-enjeu-geopolitique/>

**Hafidi, M. (2020, July 17).** Le Maroc, un gardien "géopolitique" du corridor Europe-Afrique. *Maroc Hebdo*. Retrieved from <https://www.maroc-hebdo.press.ma/maroc-gardien-corridor-europe-afrique>

**Khdimallah, M. (2020, November 29).** Rencontres Africa 2020 : Le Covid-19 pousse la France à relocaliser son industrie vers la Tunisie. *La Presse de Tunisie*. Retrieved from <https://lapresse.tn/80003/rencontres-africa-2020-le-covid-19-pousse-la-france-a-relocaliser-son-industrie-vers-la-tunisie/>

**Larroque, M. (2020, October 18).** Rebuilding the Port of Beirut: a competition for geopolitical influence. *Global Risk Insights*. Retrieved from <https://globalriskinsights.com/2020/10/rebuilding-the-port-of-beirut-a-competition-for-geopolitical-influence/>

**Le Figaro (2020, August 20).** *Prêts garantis par l'Etat : 115,5 milliards accordés aux entreprises*. Le Figaro. Retrieved from <https://www.lefigaro.fr/conjoncture/prets-garantis-par-l-etat-115-5-milliards-d-euros-accordes-aux-entreprises-20200820>.

**Ministère de l'Équipement et des Transports du Maroc. (2011).** La stratégie portuaire nationale à l'horizon 2030. Retrieved from <http://www.equipement.gov.ma/ports/Strategie/Pages/Strategies-portuaires-et-maritimes.aspx#:~:text=Cette%20strat%C3%A9gie%20constitue%20un%20cadre,%C3%A9conomique%20et%20social%20du%20pays>

**Ministère tunisien du Transport et de la Logistique (2020, October 13).** *Le Ministre d'Etat reçoit Son Excellence l'Ambassadeur des Etats-Unis d'Amérique en Tunisie*. Portail du Transport, République tunisienne. Retrieved from <http://www.transport.tn/fr/article/253/le-ministre-du-transport-et-de-la-logistique-recoit-lambassadeur-des-etats-unis-damerique-en-tunisie#:~:text=Le%20Ministre%20du%20Transport%20et%20de%20la%20logistique%20Monsieur%20Moez,en%20Tunisie%2C%20Monsieur%20Donald%20Blom>.

**Pons, J. (2020, March 23).** Le coronavirus provoque une chute du trafic aérien dans les pays du Conseil du Golfe et du sud de la Méditerranée. *Atalayar*. Retrieved from <https://atalayar.com/fr/content/le-coronavirus-provoque-une-chute-du-traffic-a%C3%A9rien-dans-les-pays-du-conseil-du-golfe-et-du>

**Réalités (2020, November 10).** *Réunion entre le ministre des Transports et Huawei autour de l'accélération digitale des transports publics*. Réalités online. Retrieved from <https://www.realites.com.tn/2020/11/reunion-entre-le-ministre-des-transport-et-huawei-autour-de-lacceleration-digitale-des-transport-publics/>

**Rooley, J. (2020, July 9).** How COVID-19 has affected the aviation industry and its approach to risk. *Willis Towers Watson*. Retrieved from <https://www.willistowerswatson.com/en-GB/Insights/2020/06/how-covid-19>

[has-affected-the-aviation-industry?fbclid=IwAR0d5tgHO\\_wVebIHd4aga7iChXap0IgtKQTHZOxw5sGobQMClaoHJnHKjUU](#)

**Schulte-Strathaus, U.** (2017, November 21). Connectivity as a Geo-Strategic Game Changer: The Aviation Sector. *Medium*. Retrieved from <https://medium.com/espas17-shaping-the-future-of-geopolitics/connectivity-as-a-geo-strategic-game-changer-the-aviation-sector-7eb6ca311e61>

**Sensöz, B., Wagner, A. & Platzer, L.** (September 2020). Responsive Transportation-Oriented Policies for the MED Region in the Face of COVID-19. *FEMISE and The Center for Mediterranean Integration COVID-19 MED Briefs*. Retrieved from [https://www.cmimarseille.org/sites/default/files/newsite/cmi-femise\\_brief\\_no2\\_final\\_0.pdf](https://www.cmimarseille.org/sites/default/files/newsite/cmi-femise_brief_no2_final_0.pdf)

**Solis, D.** (2015, August 13). Airlines as Geopolitical Agents of Power. *Modern Diplomacy*. Retrieved from <https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2015/08/13/airlines-as-geopolitical-agents-ofpower/?fbclid=IwAR1qeJ9yJeFzW4ncbm46gottqeVyrHWtdivSc1k60wz1TcJk282ozJdaXwts>

**Tanchum, M. (8 July 2020).** Morocco's Africa-to-Europe Commercial Corridor: Gatekeeper of an emerging trans-regional strategic architecture. Austria Institut für Europa- und Sicherheitspolitik. Retrieved from <https://www.aies.at/publikationen/2020/fokus-20-08.php>

**Tanchum, M. (2020, October).** Italy and Turkey's Europe-to-Africa Commercial Corridor: Rome and Ankara's Geopolitical Symbiosis Is Creating a New Mediterranean Strategic Paradigm. Austria Institut für Europa- und Sicherheitspolitik. Retrieved from: <https://www.aies.at/download/2020/AIES-Fokus-2020-10.pdf>

**Tazi, Y. (2015).** Transport et logistique en Méditerranée du Sud, sur la voie de la compétitivité pour rejoindre les économies émergentes. *Quaderns de la Mediterrània*, no. 22, pp. 169-176, European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed). Retrieved from [https://www.iemed.org/observatori/arees-danalisi/arxius-adjunts/qm22/993Quaderns\\_TransportSudMed\\_YTazi.pdf](https://www.iemed.org/observatori/arees-danalisi/arxius-adjunts/qm22/993Quaderns_TransportSudMed_YTazi.pdf)

**Touret, P.** (2019, June). La Méditerranée, nouveaux enjeux, nouveaux défis. *Note de synthèse no. 211*, Institut Supérieur d'Economie Maritime Nantes –Saint Nazaire (ISEMAR). Retrieved from <https://www.isemar.fr/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Note-de-synthe%CC%80se-211-La-Me%CC%81diterrane%CC%81e-nouveaux-enjeux-nouveaux-de%CC%81fis.pdf>

**Union for the Mediterranean.** (2020, June 3). *L'impact du COVID-19 sur les ports et le transport maritime dans la région méditerranéenne* [webinar]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/mRV1n71OoiE>

**J. Verny, O. Oulmakki, Th. Blayac (2019).** Positionnement stratégique de la Chine en Méditerranée : Le projet « Belt and Road Initiative ». *Les cahiers scientifiques du transport* (n°75). Pages 63-79. Retrieved from <https://vdocuments.mx/document/les-cahiers-scientifiques-du-transport-n-752019-pages-63-79-2020-2-20.html>

**Yabiladi (2019, April 23).** *La percée des Emirats en Mauritanie voisine se confirme.* Yabiladi. Retrieved from <https://www.yabiladi.com/articles/details/77459/percee-emirats-mauritanie-voisine-confirme.html>