

FIPA News

Newsletter concerning Tunisia issued by FIPA-Tunisia

N 36

January 2010

E-government:

Tunisia first in North Africa and on the Continent

The survey of the United Nations (UN) on e-government ranked Tunisia first in North Africa and even on the whole continent and 66th on a global scale out of a total of 192 listed countries, gaining hence 58 places compared to 2009 (124th).

Entitled "2010 UN Global E-Government readiness survey", this index assesses the degree of use of information and communication technology (ICT) and its application by public institutions to provide better information and improved public services to the citizens.

The UN ranking is based on a composite index including several criteria. These relate mainly to how efficiently Internet, telecommunication infrastructure and human resources are used.

The purpose of this classification is to consolidate the credibility of government initiatives among citizens, especially in these times of economic crisis.

In Africa, Tunisia performs better than South Africa (97th), Mauritius (77th) and Zambia (143rd).

In the Arab and North African area, Tunisia is ahead of several countries such as Oman (82nd), Egypt (86th), Lebanon (93rd), Libya (114th), Morocco (126th), Algeria (131st), Syria (133rd), Mauritania (157th) and Yemen (164th).

Another performance to the credit of Tunisia revealed by the same index is that the country is better ranked than China (72nd).

Doing Business Report 2010 edition:

Tunisia improves its ranking by four places

According to the "Doing Business 2010" annual ranking, Tunisia moved up from the 73rd to the 69th place out of the 183 countries and is thus ahead of the other North African countries and Egypt in terms of ease of doing business.

Among the ten topics covered by the index to assess countries, Tunisia achieves a better performance in trading across borders (40th), starting a business (47th), registering property (59th), protecting investors (73), enforcing contracts (77th), getting credit (87th), dealing with construction permits (107th), employing workers (108th) and paying taxes (118th).

Ranking of the magazine

"International living": Tunisia ahead of Arab countries in terms of quality of life

The magazine "International Living" ranked Tunisia for the second year in a row ahead of all Arab countries in terms of quality of life with a score of 59 out of 100 points improving hence its score by three points compared to 2009.

Tunisia is particularly well rated in the categories of safety and risk (86/100), health (73/100), climate (85/100) and the cost of living (63/100).

Tunisia is ahead of Jordan (55 points), Kuwait (55 points), Morocco (54 points), Lebanon (54 points) and Bahrain (54 points).

The countries are ranked according to an index taking into account a series of ratings based on qualitative indicators: cost of living, economy, environment, culture, leisure, liberties, health, infrastructure, risk, security and climate. For each of these criteria, each country is given a score out of 100.

In the latest edition of this ranking created 30 years ago by International Living, France ranks first worldwide for the fifth year in a row ahead of Australia (2nd), Switzerland (3rd), Germany (4th), and New Zealand (5th). The United States is now seventh dropping by four places. This classification is released each year during the month of January to identify places where life is simply good.

Tunisia-Trade Facilitation

The single transportation bundle generalized in the first commercial port

The use of a transportation bundle, a virtual one stop front office which has been operational since 2008 has been generalized in the port of Rades, the first commercial port in Tunisia.

All stakeholders in the port sector (operators, agents, freight forwarders and others) can submit their files virtually, which contributes to achieving Tunisia's objectives concerning the use of new technologies in the transport sector.

The Customs Service accepted starting from January 5, 2010 "zero paper" documents through the system operated by the "Tunisie Trade Net" Company.

The bundle includes all procedures for transport and documents exchanged electronically between all stakeholders. The procedure mainly involves the entry of vessels into the port, processing of cargo records, removal of goods from the port, export and import of goods, shipping and customs clearance depots.

The transportation bundle is a pioneering experience in promoting online administration so that it meets world standards.

This is a materialization of the choice to promote intelligent transport through the adoption of modern technological applications, in order to give greater efficiency to maritime transport which represents 98% of trade.

The Tunisian administration to meet the operators

The number of offices delivering instant administrative services and set up in shopping centers and other highly frequented places, is expected to reach 40 in 2010. The new offices will be set up in the El Manar University compound, Lafayette, Gafsa, Menzel Bourguiba, Medenine and Jendouba.

Offices delivering instant administrative services are currently located in 17 governorates including 5 in Sousse and 4 in Tunis and La Mannouba.

They allow citizens and economic operators to carrying out specific administrative procedures without recourse to the central administration.

Mecano increases its production capacity in Hungary and Tunisia

Phoenix Mecano S.A. will increase its manufacturing capacity at its sites in Kecskemet in Hungary and Ben Arous in Tunisia. The manufacturing facilities should be operational by the end of 2010.

Due to the continuing high demand for components for modern, environmentally friendly technologies, especially transformers and chokes for use in solar inverters, the company is enlarging its factory space in the two sites. In total, around 8,000 m² of new floor space will be created.

The plans also include significant investments in modern storage technology and production equipment, with the total investment budgeted at around €5 million.

Tunisia - Investment:

The textile & clothing industry is still attracting FDI

Foreign direct investment (FDI) in textiles & clothing grew significantly in late 2009, hence reaching 89.3 MTDs as against 47.3 MTDs for the same period in 2008, which represents nearly 30% of investments in the manufacturing industries. According to available data, these investments involve 92 projects, i.e., 53 recently created units at a cost of 66 million dinars.

These units are active in the sectors of garment (38), knitwear (5), finishing (5), embroidery (1), washout (1) knitting (2) and printing (1). 39 other extension projects were completed.

Tunisia's electrification rate highest in Africa

In a special report on energy in Africa: "Powering Africa", the journal "African Business " ranks Tunisia as the country with the highest electrification rate on the continent, including North Africa and the Sub-Saharan Africa.

Tunisia, which is credited with an electrification rate of 99% is ahead of Algeria, 98%, Egypt 98%, Libya 97%, Mauritius 94%, Morocco 85% and South Africa which surprisingly features only 70%.

Noting that some African countries are approaching universal electrification, the report added that Tunisia, Libya, Algeria and Egypt have provided "sustained support for rural electrification as a form of social development during the last 10 to 15 years"

Tunisian products reinforce their position in Dubai

Tunisian products in the fields of agriculture, industry and handicraft ... keep reinforcing their presence in major North African, Western and Eastern markets, and namely in the Emirates' city of Dubai, one of the foreign direct investment providers for Tunisia, renowned worldwide for its prestigious shopping and business centers.

Actually, Tunisian products are marketed since Sunday February 24th, 2010, on a permanent basis within the Tunisian Shopping Center in Dubai, the first permanent sales exhibition abroad..

Fitch Ratings

With a "BBB" rating, the outlook remains stable for Tunisia

Fitch Ratings affirmed on Thursday, February 18th the Issuer Default Rating (IDR) an international rating in currency assigned to Tunisia a 'BBB' with stable outlook. The agency also affirmed the long term IDR ratings in local currency at 'A-' with stable outlook and short-term IDR ratings in foreign currency at 'F2', while the country ceiling is affirmed at 'BBB+'.

«Tunisia's macro economic stability and its resilience to external shocks are its main rating strengths » said Charles Seville, Associate Director in Fitch's Sovereign Group.

The Dermscan laboratory moves to Tunis

Created in 1990 in Lyon (France), the Dermscan laboratory started to grow both quickly and steadily. It was soon recognized for its innovation capabilities, its high-quality work, its dedicated and competent team, as well as its responsiveness and thoroughness.

This recognition has led the Dermscan management to consider international expansion and diversification. In this context, a new site will be created this year in Tunisia. But then why choose Tunisia? Sonia Bellon, marketing assistant at Dermscan said that "for us Tunisia is an entirely appropriate location."

The 4 main reasons for this choice according to Bellon are that the country is "easily accessible with regular air links between Lyons and Tunis; higher education and hospital infrastructures are developed with an excellent reputation for Tunisia's medical facilities; Students receive high-quality education, and French is used widely, which makes communication easier...".

Some components of the CSeries aircraft will be manufactured in Tunisia

Several components of the new single-aisle CSeries commercial jet with about 100 to 149 seat, which will enter into service in 2013, will be produced and assembled in the factories of the Italian aerospace company DEMA in Italy and Tunisia.

The Italian company signed two contracts with the Canadian manufacturer Bombardier to supply six components of the new vehicles.

The contracts are worth 300 million dollars. According to DEMA, all the group's plants will be involved in the C S e r i e s p r o d u c t i o n p r o g r a m .

The engineering units in Italy and Canada will be responsible for the design and industrialization, while the vehicle's parts will be manufactured and assembled in factories in Italy and Tunisia.

Reducing the cost of transportation logistics by 5% in 2010

Through its efforts to upgrade the sector in 2010 the Tunisian Ministry of Transport is working towards improving service delivery and reducing the costs of logistics services.

In addition, 1.5 billion dinars will be allocated to the projects of empowerment and development of the transport sector in 2010.

The regulatory authorities expect this sector to increase its participation to the GDP by two percentage points to reach 9 and / or 10% in 2010, becoming thereby in line with the internationally applicable level of participation which is 10% in the countries of the European Union.

Tunisia - Economy:

Authorities promise counterfeiting will be fought

The National Council of fight against counterfeiting has announced its determination to combat this scourge which has become a universal phenomenon.

In 2009, 25,000 units were seized by the competent authorities in Tunisia; 14 campaigns were conducted and 460 violations were recorded. Over the period 2006-2009, no fewer than 4.7 million items were seized and 1928 crimes recorded.

For 2010, the National Council of fight against counterfeiting is now starting a new battle. In its last meeting on January 14, 2010, it adopted a program to fight against counterfeiting as part of the national plan which started in 2006.

First axis of the program: strengthening the regulatory framework by establishing anti-counterfeiting procedures in the sectoral specifications as well as for procurement and transactions between professionals.

Second axis: planning and follow up. The Council is currently harmonizing a common monitoring program in the area of trademarks, intellectual and artistic property and e-commerce. The goal is to establish a schedule for action at the national level and to set up joint teams and common specifications for the fight against counterfeiting among the different stakeholders.

Third axis of the program: communication and awareness-raising. The Council aims to ensure media coverage of its ongoing activities throughout the year. In addition to television, radio and newspaper articles, advertisements and awareness campaigns are planned in schools and universities as well as the organization of information seminars and participation in exhibitions and fairs in the country's regions.

Happy
New
year
2010