



TUNISIA  
PPP 2018



13



Location:  
Gabès - Médenine



Company:  
SNCFT



Mission:  
New rail line



Cost:  
TND 240/600 million

## Pipeline of PPP projects in Tunisia

### Gabès – Médenine railway line

#### General project presentation

The Gabès – Médenine railway line project consists in a new rail line, connecting Médenine in Southern Tunisia to the SNCFT national railway network from Gabès. Investment costs vary from **TD 240 to 600 MM** depending on technical variants. The project is planned to be implemented in 2022.

Launched in 1985 and interrupted in 1988 after three years of land acquisition and infrastructure works at 45% completion, the project has been reprogrammed as part of the 2016-2020 development plan.

To avoid high expropriations costs and delays, the current project is expected to stay within the area planned and acquired in the 80s.

The project will also pave the way for future rail projects, including:

- The railway connection to Tataouine
- The link to the port and the logistics zone of Zarzis
- A rail connection to Libya

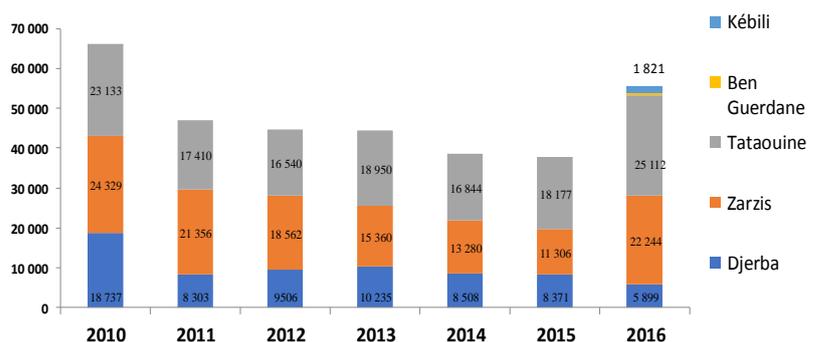
#### Project justification

The project will reinforce Médenine as a major hub in South-East Tunisia, connecting several economic centers:

- The port and logistics zone of Zarzis
- The industrial zones of Tataouine, Médenine and Gabès
- The free trade area of Ben Guerdane

In addition, the line will serve densely populated areas, answering the growing passenger demand for public transport, as observed in Gabès coach station for passenger from/to:

- Zarzis via Médenine
- Djerba (Houmet Essouk and Midoun)
- Tataouine via Médenine
- Ben Guerdane



Passenger traffic in Gabès coach station



## Legal and institutional framework

The main public stakeholder is the SNCT (Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer Tunisiens) the Tunisian public rail operator. The SNCFT is a commercial public company whose network covers 2.167 km. The suburban network of Tunis covers 23 km of which 17 km in triple track between Tunis and Hammam-Lif and 6 km in double track between Hammam-Lif and Borj Cedria. As for the park, 122 trains run daily on the suburbs of Tunis, 46 on the outskirts of the Sahel, 58 on the main lines. The SNCFT was created by decree on 27 December 1956. The northern part of the network (471 km) is on standard gauge (international gauge of 1 435 millimeters) while the southern part (1 688 km) is on metric gauge (gauge of 1 000 millimeters) and mainly used for freight. The North network is connected to the Algerian network by the Ghardimaou border post. The map below illustrates the extent of the Tunisian rail network as well as the parts made up of standard and metric gauges.



Map of the rail network (Source: SNCFT)

## Functional scope of the project

The current project covers:

- An update of the study
- Potential additional expropriations
- The completion of works between Gabès and Médenine over 74km, including:
  - Restoration of land and water facilities built in the 80s
  - Completion of main technical installations
  - Construction of stations and tracks
  - Electrification of the line (studies, materials and works)
  - Line and station signalling (studies, materials and works)
  - Communication network (optical fiber) installation

## Completed technical studies (on going or yet to be carried out)

A call for tenders was published in August 2017 by SNCFT and the contract signed with the consultancy company SCET Tunisie in February 2018 for 18 months.

## Prospective implementation schedule

The project is estimated to be commissioned in 2022 after the following works schedule:

- Technical studies on the tracks and trackbed, bridges and buildings: 1<sup>st</sup> March 2018 – June 2019
- Additional expropriations: end 2018 / end 2019
- Infrastructure works: end 2019 / end 2021
- Signalling and communications equipment: end 2019 / end 2021
- Passenger and freight equipment: end 2019 / end 2021



## **Tentative cost estimates: CAPEX, OPEX**

Total cost of the project is estimated at **240 million** of Tunisian Dinars for a **single-track non-electrified** rail line, and **TND 600 million** for a **double-track electrified** rail line.

## **Conclusion and recommendations**

The Gabès – Médenine railway line project has a strong justification in terms of land planning by opening up and connecting Southern Tunisian cities and industries to the rail network. Reaching the Libyan border, the line also represents an essential link of a future Trans Maghreb rail network.

Though additional expropriations, restoration and updates would surely be required to meet today's needs, existing acquired land, works and studies should limit investment costs.

Complementary traffic studies and surveys will also be necessary to estimate potential revenues for private investors, to define the best PPP option to be considered.