



**CPMR
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Conclusions

CPMR EXTERNAL COOPERATION BRAINSTORMING MEETING

11 October 2017 (9.00-11.30) – Brussels

Venue: CPMR Office, 14 rond point Schuman

PARTICIPANTS

REGIONS ATTENDING IN PERSON

BASQUE GOVERNMENT:	Marta MARIN, Delegate, Basque Government Delegation to the EU Camila DE EPALZA, EU Policy Officer
PROVENCE ALPES CÔTE D'AZUR	Marine SILVA, Officer in charge of External Relations, Brussels Office
CANARIAS:	Diego YANES, Assistant
CATALONIA:	Javier SANCHEZ, Head of the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, DG Development Cooperation
KYMENLAAKSO	Toni VANHALA, Head of International Affairs
EMILIA-ROMAGNA:	Graziana GALATI, Policy Officer, EU Delegation - Emilia-Romagna Region

REGIONS ATTENDING BY GOTOMEETING

PODLASKIE	Michal PODBIEKLSKI, Deputy Director Department of External Relations and Promotion, Anna Otapowicz, Civil Servant
TULCEA:	Mircea IORDACHE, Public Officer
TUSCANY:	Flavia DONATI

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Eleni MARIANO, Secretary General
 Maruxa CARDAMA, Consultant to the CPMR on external cooperation issues
 Asa BJERING, Executive Secretary of the Baltic Sea Commission
 Stavros KALOGNOMOS, Policy Officer in charge of follow-up of the Balkan & Black Sea Commission
 Claire STREET, Policy Assistant (by gotomeeting)

APOLOGIES

Southwest Finland / Crete / Murcia / Västerbotten / Norrbotten / Sicily

1. General Context

Global agendas have changed since the group was set up.

There is a growing importance of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are guiding EU strategy.

The EU institutional landscape has also changed. European Commission contacts for the regions have changed further to a restructuring of DG DEVCO with a new Directorate C Planet & Prosperity and new Unit C5: Cities, Local Authorities, Digitalisation, Infrastructures.

Many policy areas that the CPMR deals with are touching on external issues: e.g. links with climate and migration.

There is a varying degree of involvement in development cooperation from our regions: big regions from Southern Europe (Italy, Spain) with their own development cooperation policy (not necessarily linked to EU policy) vs. small regions from the North involved through state-led development cooperation activity with no own policy/budget.

CPMR has been a partner of [PLATFORMA](#)¹ since 2009. However, it has always been difficult to make the regional voice heard. The network is more local authority/city oriented, although more recently this had started to change.

CPMR has decided to withdraw from PLATFORMA at the end of this year.

Questions to address:

- What are the possibilities in terms of future legislation, strategy, programmes?
- How to keep a privileged lobbying relation with the EU institutions?
- Which topics to address, which partnerships, which type of activities?

2. The CPMR Working Group and its achievements under the Basque leadership

The Basque Government took over from Catalonia as leader of the group in 2014.

Up to now, the group's work has focused mainly on the territorial approach to development cooperation, SDGs and global agendas, innovative approach of the regions to global challenges, highlighting territories specialisations- stakeholders/regional added value based on evidence of regional practices and seeking to promote innovation, effectiveness, accountability and policy coherence.

¹ PLATFORMA is [a pan-European coalition of 30 local and regional governments](#), and includes the associations representing them at the national, European and global level. They are all key players of international cooperation for sustainable development. The secretariat is hosted by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR).

With a core group, the group accomplished the objectives set out in its action plan developed in 2014– [see Camila’s report](#)

The EC has listened and taken on board our proposals. Thanks to the action of the Working Group and its lead region there is a better understanding among institutions of the regional perspective which was not the case before (tendency to group together local and regional). After that, the EC is open to collaborate with the CPMR and understands the new narrative.

Otherwise, and led by the Basque Government, the Group has coordinated and participated in several events with partner stakeholders to showcase the territorial approach, and partnerships have been established with UN agencies and other stakeholders.

The CPMR External Cooperation members now have a more strategic vision concerning the external cooperation potential of their territories. It was the first time that a common strategic tool/matrix/mapping has been done with the regional external cooperation aspects concerning the CPMR regions.

The external cooperation dimension has been reinforced at the CPMR but the Basque Government encourages the need to have a more formal link under a CPMR Directorate.

Within PLATFORMA, the CPMR led a study with expert Agusti Losada on a new generation of decentralised cooperation. This will be circulated among CPMR members. It will also produce a second study on public-private partnerships and a training manual for delivering public services in the southern Mediterranean (focus on Morocco and Tunisia).

3. Future of the Working Group

It is agreed that the group cannot continue in its present form and needs to find a new way forward.

Ideas from Maruxa Cardama, Consultant to the CPMR:

1. Understand the impact and new framework of the SDGs. The findings of the studies produced by Agusti Losada on a new generation of decentralised cooperation and public-private partnerships could be a basis on which to carry on discussions, e.g. through the organisation of events.
2. Implementing SDGs, notably SDG 11 “Sustainable Cities & Communities”. Address issues such as accountability, monitoring, data.
3. Detecting different level of engagement of local and regional governments. Contribute to capacity building and removing obstacles. Regional governments are not positioning themselves with as much strength as local authorities. Actions could be to organise webinars, with experts on specific issues where we can bring in more regions. Define lobby objectives linked to the multiannual framework.
4. Establishing structured dialogue, annually with the EU and other stakeholders including the UN based around defined topics, findings and messages to be conveyed.

Themes raised by the Regions:

SDGs as a transversal issue, notably SDG 17 “Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development” as a common framework for regional development cooperation

External borders:

- Eastern Partnership (EaP).
- Relations with Russia and Arctic
- Southern Med

Could these be more effectively addressed through the Geographical Commissions rather than within the CPMR working group? Some issues related to territorial cooperation funding could be addressed through the cohesion CORE group.

Proposals/Possible areas of action:

1. Proposals by the Basque Government: *Advocacy, lobbying and concrete projects at EU, concerning territories cooperation potential and under SDGs dimension*

Can the [CPMR position paper of 2015](#) be reinforced or the external cooperation issue under the CPMR structure?

Recommendations and guidelines based on capitalising on best practices and with concrete common projects to reinforce the territories’ potential. Use as a basis the studies carried out as part of the Platforma activity.

Therefore, The Basque Delegation will coordinate the organisation of a stakeholders’ meeting during the first quarter of 2018.

2. How to shape good practice using SDG 17 as a model. (Proposals by Catalonia)

After many years of advocacy onto the global agendas, the challenge is now the “localisation” of sustainable development goals (SDG). Development cooperation is no longer –as it was with the preceding Millennium development goals– the only or main policy responsible for this task. SDGs are universal in scope and should inform the whole of public policies with an impact on human, sustainable development. However, this does not mean that SDGs have no implications for national or regional development cooperation policies, including its planning, monitoring, and results.

The proposal is to use SDG 17 “Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development” as a guide for rethinking development cooperation and aligning it to the 2030 vision. Implementation of SDG 17 entails new roles for development cooperation, and regions in the CPMR working group can reflect together on how to act upon these goals and targets by establishing benchmark and good practice, assisting each other, and generating common knowledge. Initial targets could be:

- 17.3. Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources
- 17.9. Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the sustainable development goals, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation
- 17.14. Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development

- 17.17. Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships, and
- 17.19. By 2030, build on existing initiatives to develop measurements of progress on sustainable development that complement gross domestic product, and support statistical capacity-building in developing countries.

This dynamic can help development cooperation units become relevant actors to achieve the 2030 vision by ultimately shifting from their current mission (implementing their own programmes with their own funding) to a new, key role: connecting the domestic and the foreign development agendas, catalysing positive change and building a global partnership.

3. Multi-stakeholder Twinning, – (Led by a Geographical Commission or a specific region, to be defined)

I. Development of reflections and proposals on the future twinning programmes and dialogue with the EC on the following elements (in the short term):

- Possibility to shape the new twinings as instruments for cooperation that could foresee a significative participation of regional and local governments, and establish horizontal partnerships with a more marked territorial dimension, that can really foster multi-level governance and integrated territorial development.
- Promote the idea of "partnerships between territories", rather than just between entities of a certain administrative level (e.g. state or municipality). These partnerships could involve a core of "multilevel" actors in the territories participating in a twinning.
- Give more emphasis on "capacity building" regarding territorial governance, integrated territorial development, and decentralisation support.

II. Promotion of CPMR regions' direct participation in the new generation of twinings (if applicable) and elaboration of the future reflections based on the exchange of experiences (in the medium-long term).

4. Cooperation on external borders/Eastern & Southern Partnership.

These issues need to be treated within the CPMR's existing Geographical Commissions (e.g. BSC, Balkan/Black Sea/IMC) and not be part of the activities of this working group.

4. Next steps

1. Circulate a questionnaire based on the work and results of the Working Group to find out the priorities of the regions.
2. Produce a document describing building blocks, activities, timetable.
3. Organise a follow-up session in Brussels where clear actions and new areas of work for the group will be developed.
4. Identify the right people (lead regions on specific topics based on the interest of the regions) within a timeframe of 2 years between now and May 2019 (appointment of new Commission).
5. Organise a structured dialogue meeting in 2018 to disseminate results of studies through Platforma and work with other stakeholders on relevant areas.