Dear readers,

Our common European project is at a turning point. Never before have European citizens shown so little trust in governments and political establishments.

On 3 December, 2015 the people of Denmark voted against European regulations on cross border cooperation in a referendum.

On 6 April 2016, Dutch citizens voted against an EU association agreement with Ukraine.

And on 23 June, the British people voted to leave the European Union.

Let us make no mistake. This is not just a blow against Europe, but also against existing policies, which are not understood by EU citizens, and are perceived to serve those who support globalisation, instead of citizens and their needs.

The regional governments we represent in the CPMR feel these concerns on a daily basis.

European’s priorities and concerns today are focused on the migration crisis and its consequences, the horrifying terrorist attacks and Europe’s safety, the persistent economic crisis and increased youth unemployment.
And the European Union, the level of government we support and stand for, is the body that is most capable of addressing the reservations of our citizens.

Any attempts to reduce regional structures that are focused on support for citizens, by reducing financial resources, will further jeopardise the already fragile European project.

In this annual report, the CPMR outlines its continuing efforts to inform, assist and implement the policies and programmes in place for growth and jobs in traditional and emerging economic sectors.

European maritime regions are at the heart of solutions in all important policy areas, ranging from addressing humanitarian emergencies at their borders to integration policies for asylum seekers.

They are addressing mitigation to climate change, as well as developing measures to adapt to the situation, thus preventing costs from natural catastrophes.

This is shown in our concrete contribution to the agreements made at COP 21 in Paris.

Our regions ensure that all citizens, wherever they live, have physical or digital accessibility, whether they are in metropolitan or islands areas. This is fundamental to our actions and lobbying efforts.

Investing in people and creating long lasting jobs through Cohesion policy has also been at the core of the CPMR’s work programme.

We are bringing together partnerships from European to local level, involving a variety of organisations in several growth sectors through smart specialisation strategies, using the ESI funds.

This is a valuable way to break through the stagnation of economic development and experience the added value of Europe on the ground.

These are difficult times but we, European regions, can and will endeavor to implement economic strategies, and create and sustain jobs.

We will aim to receive and integrate, and ensure the mobility of young students and entrepreneurs in maritime professions,

Together in CPMR we are stronger and better placed to take substantive action to endure the European adventure that has secured peace for the last 70 years in this continent.

We hope the recommendations and activities described in this activity report will inspire European leaders, and we wish you an enjoyable read.

Vasco Cordeiro, President of the CPMR and President of the Government of the Autonomous Region of Azores (PT)

Eleni Marianou, CPMR Secretary General
Cohesion Policy programmes for 2014 – 2020 are well underway and attention has now turned to the future of the policy after 2020.

The policy faces considerable pressure for reform in the future:

> The Investment Plan for Europe is challenging Cohesion Policy as the traditional European investment policy;

> Member States are asking for a substantial reform to simplify the management of European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF);

> Cohesion Policy is under pressure to show results and for taking up a third of the EU budget;

> Some are also asking for Cohesion Policy objectives to be significantly reshuffled, so that the policy fully supports Member States’ efforts to comply with the EU economic governance framework in the future.

The CPMR has been monitoring discussions that have emerged over the future of Cohesion Policy, together with reflections on the future of the EU Budget, launched under the Dutch Presidency early in 2016.

The mid-term review of the EU Budget for 2014-2020 was particularly critical about the effectiveness of Cohesion Policy funds. It paves the way for a real debate over the shape of Cohesion Policy for the post-2020 period. The Commission is expected to present its first ideas on the future of Cohesion Policy by the end of 2017.

CPMR ACTIONS

The actions carried out by the CPMR in 2016 focused on developing a strong evidence base with its Members to propose a vision for a reformed Cohesion Policy for the post-2020 period. The CPMR concentrated its efforts on four areas in particular:

> The role of regions in Cohesion Policy;

> The contribution of Cohesion Policy towards investment;

> The evolution of Regional Policy trends;

> The island dimension of Cohesion Policy.

In addition, the CPMR worked on state aids related to transport and macro regional strategies.

With these actions in mind, in July CPMR Vice President, Enrico Rossi, met with Frans Timmermans, First Vice-President of the European Commission.

President Rossi meets First Vice-Pdt Timmermans
President Rossi stressed that the Juncker Plan should not replace Cohesion Policy, as both policies fulfil different, but complementary, objectives.

**Role of regions in Cohesion Policy**

The CPMR produced a [study to assess the level of involvement of CPMR Regions](#) with Cohesion Policy programmes. It paid particular attention to the relationship between the areas of intervention of Cohesion Policy and the legislative competences of regional authorities.

Developed with the input of 40 regions from the CPMR membership, the study confirms that most regions across Europe have legislative competences in the areas of intervention of Cohesion Policy.

The study also confirms that the introduction of reinforced provisions on multilevel governance and partnership (Article 5 CPR) have been positive, despite vast differences between Member States in the way these provisions were implemented.

**Regions contribution to investment**

The CPMR undertook a series of activities to demonstrate the added value of Cohesion Policy funding towards the EU investment efforts.

A conference was organised in February 2016, together with the Dutch Presidency.

The conference presented concrete examples of [how regional and local authorities in Europe stimulate economic development](#) linked to the maritime economy, thanks to support provided by EU funds and financial instruments.

Hosted by the Province of Zuid Holland, the conference brought to light the variety of functions carried out by regional authorities to create jobs and growth, particularly in the maritime sector.

The conference also confirmed the need to think about providing a territorial dimension to financial instruments and the EU investment plan to avoid some territories in Europe being left out.

**CPMR Vice-President, Rogier Van Der Sande, meets with Jyrki Katainen, Vice-president of the European Commission, in April.**

During the meeting, Mr Van Der Sande stressed the vital role that regions play in fostering investment in the context of the implementation of the European Fund for Strategic Investment.

The CPMR also further investigated the functions carried out by financial instruments for regional development.

It initiated a study with its Members to analyse the impact of financial instruments since 2007.

The results will be presented at the 2016 CPMR General Assembly and will feed in to the CPMR reflection on the future of Cohesion Policy.
Evolution of Regional Policy trends

The CPMR General Secretariat monitored the evolution of statistical trends in relation to Cohesion Policy, in particular the impact of regional GDP statistics on Cohesion Policy regional eligibility.

Analysis produced by the CPMR confirms regional disparities are rising and the development gap between the centre and the periphery has increased.

The same paper provides estimates of how post-2020 Cohesion Policy might look like based on the most recent statistics.

The CPMR was also invited to present the conclusions of its Cohesion Policy indicators task force to the European Parliament in January 2016.

During the presentation, the CPMR emphasised the political nature of Cohesion Policy budgetary negotiations.

Territorial dimension

The CPMR worked closely with its Islands Commission in particular to enhance the place of islands and outermost regions in the post-2020 Cohesion Policy.

The European Parliament’s Seas, Rivers, Islands and Coastal Areas (SEARICA) Intergroup invited the CPMR to present prospective scenarios reinforcing the island dimension of Cohesion Policy at a special conference in March.

16 MEPs were present to give their views on the CPMR scenarios.

Islands Commission members met to further develop these scenarios at their General Assembly in May 2016, hosted by South Aegean Region in Rhodes.

State Aids

The CPMR is keeping a watching brief on state aid legislation of relevance to its Members.

The Secretariat presented an overview note at the February 2016 Political Bureau meeting.

This compared CPMR positions on state aids and the current framework for 2014 – 2020, focusing in particular on the issue of regional state aid guidelines.

The CPMR and its Island Commission also adopted an opinion in May 2016 on operating aid for ports and airports.

It called for better consideration of additional costs in islands regions and certain types of aids to be exempted from state aid legislation.

Macro regional strategies

The CPMR continues to monitor developments related to macro regional strategies and sea basin strategies via a dedicated Task Force, which met in November 2015.

The CPMR Geographical Commissions are active individually regarding macro regional strategies, both at their initiation and operating phases.
Further activities

CPMR President, Vasco Cordeiro, and representatives from the CPMR Political Bureau, met with Regional Policy Commissioner, Corina Crețu, in May.

They stressed the importance of Europe’s regions in shaping Cohesion Policy that reduces disparities, increases competitiveness and helps to deal with the refugee crisis.

The European Commissions’ Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO) and the CPMR organised a joint conference on the contribution of Cohesion Policy towards EU priorities in October 2016 in Brussels.

The conference was opened by Commissioner Crețu and involved 80 participants.

The CPMR also organised brainstorming sessions on the future of Cohesion Policy, gathering experts from CPMR regions and the EU institutions to discuss options for reforming Cohesion Policy for the post-2020 period.

MARITIME EUROPE

BACKGROUND

The CPMR’s main objective over the past year has been to contribute to the implementation of EU maritime policies in the areas covered in its maritime agenda.

This is giving the CPMR the opportunity to build future proposals regarding the future of EU policies after 2020.

CPMR ACTIONS

Strategy & Governance

The CPMR held strategic discussions with EU institutions about prospects for the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP). Key meetings were organised with Member States. These included:

> The participation of the Dutch presidency in the maritime session of the CPMR Political Bureau in Haarlem;

> A joint seminar on maritime investments in Haarlem, which was identified as an official maritime event in the Dutch Presidency calendar;

> CPMR participation, for the first time, in the meeting of the High Level Focal Points on the Integrated Maritime policy in Turku in May 2016;
Discussions with the Maltese government, resulting in an agreement that the CPMR will contribute to the key maritime initiatives of the Maltese Presidency. This will include a political declaration about EU maritime policies, and the development of a maritime strategy for the west Mediterranean.

The CPMR also collaborated with the European Parliament’s Seas, Rivers, Islands and Coastal Areas (SEARICA) Intergroup on the future of the IMP.

As Secretariat of SEARICA, the CPMR supported the organisation of a number political conferences, which several regions took part in.

At European Commission level, the CPMR worked closely with Commissioner Vella and the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE).

In May 2016, the CPMR was invited to take part in the European Maritime Days in Turku, where George Alexakis and Kerstin Brunnström were speakers.

In June 2016, a meeting involving CPMR President Vasco Cordeiro and a delegation of CPMR Regions, was organised in the Azores with European Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Karmenu Vella.

They discussed ways to collaborate to support blue growth and IMP.

Addressing maritime affairs in an integrated manner also involved cooperation with the CPMR Geographical Commissions, on the development and implementation of sea-basin strategies:

> The CPMR supported its North-Sea Commission in the follow-up of the preparatory action for the North Sea Strategy, with information on maritime investments used in the North Sea Conference 2016 in June in Billund.

> The CPMR and its Baltic Sea Commission developed collaborations between regions on blue growth value chains. This work is helping to prioritise the Baltic Sea strategy;

> The CPMR and its Intermediterranean Commissions helped develop the West Mediterranean Sea strategy. IMC also joined the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) blue economy working group and the Blue Med Initiative;

> The CPMR and its Atlantic Arc Commission continue to be closely involved in the implementation of the Atlantic strategy and project development;

> The CPMR and its Balkan and Black Sea Commission took part in the third ‘High Level Black sea conference on the blue economy’ in Odessa, in June 2016.

**Investment**

The CPMR’s work on maritime investments is an important basis for preparation of discussions on the Multi-Annual Financial Framework, and to organise collaborations between regions, EU institutions and stakeholders.
A study on blue growth and smart-specialisation strategies was developed, showing that blue growth is a key priority in regional strategies. In addition, the CPMR developed a study on financial instruments which included discussions with DG MARE on their future in the maritime field.

**Marine Resources**

**Common Fisheries Policy (CFP)**

The CFP was revised in 2013. The CPMR took part in discussions with DG MARE about the implementation of the new measures adopted.

This involved work on the implementation of the discard ban and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), which were discussed at the Fisheries working group meeting in April 2016, under the coordination of the Shetlands.

The CPMR also guided the work with Geographical Commissions, such as the new task force on Fisheries, launched with the Intermediterranean Commission in June 2016.

Regarding the issue of governance, the CPMR has begun the process of becoming a member of the Advisory Council on aquaculture. In addition, the CPMR collaborated with the FARNET platform to organise seminars on Community Led Local Development.

**Blue biotechnologies**

Blue biotechnologies are one of the sectors with the highest growth potential. The CPMR collaborated with the European Marine Biological Resources Centre (EMBRC), the leading European network of research infrastructures in this field.

The CPMR, through the Horizon 2020 project EMBRC PP2, analysed how these technologies are addressed in regional strategies. It then organised discussions on investments with regions and the EMBRC in Bilbao in June 2016.

The annual meeting of the European Marine Biological Research Infrastructure Cluster, held in Napoli in September 2016, confirmed prospects for collaboration.

**Coastal Management & Protection**

**Management and environment**

Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) and Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) ensure the coexistence of maritime and coastal human activities. Led by the Noord-Holland region, work focused on the role of regions, and on land-sea interactions in the implementation of the EU Directive on MSP.

**CPMR President, Vasco Cordeiro, discussed these issues with Commissioner Vella at the European Commission’s conference on MSP worldwide in the Azores in July 2016.**

Following its admission into the coordination group of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), the CPMR continued to monitor the main issues linked to this directive.
This involved the preparation of several project applications with the Intermediterranean Commission.

**Coastal data**

The production and use of coastal data from geo-information services is an issue of strategic importance for public authorities, including regions, and businesses. Off-shore industries cannot be developed without this information.

A big challenge is to ensure that data produced across Europe can be effectively interpreted, so that it can be used.

The CPMR collaborated with national Hydrographical Services, using the ‘Coastal Mapping’ EMFF project. This work involved developing standards that all European projects would be required to adhere to.

**Maritime safety**

The CPMR is campaigning for the continuous development of international and European initiatives in order to prevent maritime disasters.

Following the support expressed in the European Parliament’s Feirerra report for the idea of an Erika IV package, the CPMR has called for improved compensation for ecological damage.

At international level, in April 2016 the CPMR called for a voluntary supplementary fund, dedicated to environmental damage, to be established within the IOPC Funds.

A meeting to discuss this fund took place between IOPC members in October 2016 and continues.

In parallel, in April 2016 the CPMR contributed to the Commission’s report on the European Liability Directive.

According to this report, the Commission will explore how to better understand concepts used at international and European levels about ecological damage.

**Education - Vasco Da Gama**

The CPMR initiative ‘Vasco da Gama’ aims to improve maritime education.

It was based on the pilot project ‘Vasco da Gama: Training for Greener and Safer Maritime Transport’.

At the final conference of this project, in March 2016, the CPMR presented propositions on maritime education relating to transport.

Vasco Da Gama programme trainees

As well as developing initiatives in maritime education, the CPMR is also developing initiatives in relation to transport, blue technologies and coastal management at EU sea basin levels.

Maritime education is a strong focus for the Atlantic Arc Commission.
Marine renewable energies and industries

The marine energies sector is booming in Europe. It helps create employment, provides a sustainable supply of energy for the territories, and benefits regions suffering from permanent geographic or demographic handicaps.

The CPMR priorities, developed alongside ‘The Maritime Industries for Blue Growth’ working group, led by the Pays de la Loire Region, include work on investments.

The CPMR is now a member of the new ‘Innovation Platform for Ocean Energy’, set up by Ocean Energy Europe. The CPMR has also begun work on the social acceptance of marine energies.

Discussions on how to combine marine energies with EU environmental regulations took place at a conference organised by the CPMR and the SEARICA Intergroup in June 2016. It was attended by the Orkney Islands.

Maritime and coastal tourism

The CPMR’s work, led by the Västra Götaland (SE) region, is focused on the implementation of the European strategy for coastal and marine tourism. It has also developed several projects to enable cooperation between regions and stakeholders with the Atlantic Arc and Intermediterranean Commissions.

The CPMR has also ensured the involvement of regions in the European Cruise Dialogue.

ACCESSIBILITY

BACKGROUND

The CPMR’s transport priorities are to promote accessibility at EU level for peripheral, outermost and island regions, and to develop sustainable maritime transport.

It does this by influencing the implementation of two European instruments: The Trans European Transport Network (TEN-T) and the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF).

The TEN-T defines the European priorities for infrastructure and transport services. It describes in particular a priority core network to be achieved by 2030, and a global network to be completed by 2050.

It includes the Motorways of the Sea (MoS).

The CEF, the financial instrument of the TEN-T, outlines the funding arrangements for the various components of the TEN-T.

In addition to the long-term goals for 2030 and 2050, the CPMR is also focused on short-term goals and deadlines including the revision of the CEF in 2020, and the TEN-T core network in 2023.
CPMR ACTIONS

As part of the accessibility campaign, the 2015/2016 priorities implemented by the CPMR and its Geographical Commissions cover the following topics:

- Influencing the work plans of the nine priority corridors of the CEF;
- Taking part in redefining the Motorways of the Sea;
- Proposing European instruments to support sustainable shipping;

The CPMR Transport Working Group is currently working on these issues.

It continues to meet with the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE) to share information.

Nine priority corridors of the CEF

![Map of the core network corridors](image)

For 2014-2020, the budget of the CEF dedicated to transport is over €24 billion.

Of this amount, €11.3 billion is available only for projects in Member States eligible for the Cohesion Fund.

However, the European Commission attaches the highest priority to projects on nine trans-European corridors.

They have benefited from more than 93% of the envelope mobilised during the first CEF call for projects, launched in 2014. This call has allocated over 50% of the CEF budget for 2014-2020.

The CPMR continues to challenge the hyper-concentration of these budgets, ensuring that regions are involved in Commission Forums that meet three times a year.

The Transport Working Groups of the CPMR’s Geographical Commissions support the actions of the CPMR at these forums.

Redefining Motorways of the Sea

The CPMR has always supported the Motorways of the Sea (MoS).

However, in agreement with the European Parliament, the CPMR wants to redefine the concept to make it accessible to stakeholders such as ship owners, ports and public authorities from peripheral, outermost and island regions.

Due to their heavy traffic, and the often unbalanced nature between inflows and outflows, these areas deserve special treatment.

As a result, the CPMR sent a questionnaire to its members proposing a change in the implementation of MoS during the current programming period (2014-2020) and the next.
The recommendations from this survey were communicated to the European MoS coordinator, Brian Simpson, when he attended the CPMR’s Transport Working Group meeting in 19 May, 2016.

However, it was said to have generated unbalanced competition and was abandoned by the European Commission in 2013, without being replaced.

During this period, the EU adopted the Sulphur Directive which increases the cost of shipping by enforcing the use of more expensive fuels or installing scrubbers on ships.

As a result, maritime transport is decreasing in intra-European transport, a development that concerns the European Organisation of Shipowners (ECSA).

Faced with strong EU ambition on climate change, without concrete support for sustainable transport, the CPMR is calling for the European Commission to open discussions on this issue.

The CPMR is proposing that existing tools, such as CEF, TEN-T and Eurovignette, are utilised in order to develop a support instrument to replace Marco Polo. The CPMR advised the Commission about its proposals during this year’s European Sustainable Shipping Forum meetings (ESSF).

This Advisory Forum took the CPMR’s concerns into account, but a European Commission initiative is yet to take place. The Forum has also responded to a CPMR request to clarify the range of European funding available to professionals and public actors.

On 30 September 2016, the European Commission published a report on the implementation of the EU Maritime Transport Strategy 2009-2018. The CPMR will study this document carefully, feeding back relevant comments.

The CPMR meets European MoS coordinator Brian Simpson

Following this, the European Coordinator presented a Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) for MoS to the European Parliament on 22 June, 2016. This DIP will now undergo wide consultation for one year.

The CPMR and its Geographical Commissions will continue their advocacy work to integrate accessibility among MoS selection criteria within the next calls for European Commission proposals.

The transport session of the CPMR General Assembly, due to meet on November 3, will take part in this consultation.

In addition, the CPMR Islands Commission outlined its position on these issues at its General Meeting in May. It also discussed the subject at a transport seminar in the Balearics in October, 2016.

EU instruments to support sustainable shipping

Marco Polo was the only European programme that encouraged a shift from road transport to more environmentally friendly modes such as maritime transport.

During this period, the EU adopted the Sulphur Directive which increases the cost of shipping by enforcing the use of more expensive fuels or installing scrubbers on ships.

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Promoting extra EU dimension of transport policy

In its 2012 policy position on the TEN-T, the CPMR called for the EU to show ambition by connecting the TEN-T to nearby EU states, candidate countries, or within the neighbourhood policy.

The European Commission is gradually adopting a vision and tools that contribute to this objective, as evidenced in an 'issue paper' circulated at the TEN-T Days in Rotterdam on 22 - 24 June, 2016.

The CPMR’s Geographical Commissions have incorporated this concept into their thinking on transport networks and their links to macro-regional strategies such as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the Baltic Sea strategy, and the Adriatic-Ionian Strategy.

The CPMR Political Bureau discussed these matters on 17 June, 2016 in Kotka, Finland, agreeing to develop this part of CPMR’s transport activities in the future.

Anchor with European Parliament

The CPMR continues to work closely with the European Parliament’s Committee on Transport and Tourism. It continues to strengthen this relationship in order to pursue the priorities of the Campaign for Accessibility.

One of the key illustrations of this strong partnership is the European Parliament’s draft declaration on improving the TEN-T contribution to territorial cohesion. The CPMR has played a key role in the development of this initiative.

The CPMR aims to make Parliament aware of the unbalanced nature of the recent allocations of CEF.

In the longer term, the aim is to prepare convergence for the negotiations on the European transport policy post-2020.

A debate will be held on these issues at the CPMR General Assembly in November 2016. A political position will be presented, explaining the CPMR arguments for balancing the CEF funding. This position will be based on the results of a survey conducted by the CPMR Geographical Commissions.

The survey will establish a territorial viewpoint on the results of calls to 2014 and 2015 CEF projects.

Partnerships with professionals

The CPMR uses its expertise to influence European decisions, but partnerships are also developed with professional organisations on specific activities.

The Organisation of European Shipowners (ECSA) was invited to present its shipping policy priorities at the CPMR Transport Working Group in May 2016. The CPMR has also joined with a number of European organisations to present a common approach on transport.

This initiative was coordinated by ESPO (European Seaports Organisation), and directed towards the European Parliament's co-rapporteurs on the mid-term review of the multiannual financial framework.

This common approach aims to make MEPS aware of the need to offset the reduction in CEF grants made by the EU, and the intention to supply the funds allocated to the Juncker Plan (EFSI). €2.8 billion has been withdrawn from the CEF transport budget to fund the Juncker Plan (EFS).
Three key elements form or affect the current EU energy and climate policy. They are:

> The new Framework for Climate and Energy. It sets targets for 2030 at EU level on energy efficiency, renewable energy and greenhouse gas emissions;

> The Energy Union;

> The post-2020 global climate agreement.

The CPMR has lobbied for a territorial dimension of each element.

Regional governments are often responsible for the development and implementation of policies, standards, programmes and fiscal mechanisms in areas that directly influence levels of greenhouse gas emissions and deal with the impacts of climate change.

As a result, regions can become facilitators of key elements of the Energy Union and the Framework for Climate and Energy, such as energy efficiency, the development of renewable energy and innovation.

Maritime regions have delivered sustainable solutions on the ground for the mitigation of climate change, as well as for adaptation of their coastal territories to the new climate reality.

The CPMR shared these experiences in a brochure, which not only provides knowledge, but also conveys the ability of regions to contribute to a global solution.

In side events at COP21 and at Climate Chance the CPMR demonstrated that the global challenge of climate change:

> Requires the mobilisation of all levels of governance, and

> Presents an opportunity for regions for broader and deeper cooperation on concrete actions on the ground.

It took a leading role in the advocacy of maritime solutions for climate change mitigation, as well as for the role of maritime territories in adaptation to climate change.

The CPMR also promoted the role of regions as innovative leaders in energy efficiency and renewable energy, and the key supportive role that grants can play in delivering the EU climate goals in all territories.
The CPRM, represented by Maria José Asensio Coto, Secretary General of Innovation, Industry and Energy of the Andalusia Government, conveyed a series of messages to the Commissioner for Energy & Climate, Miguel Arias Cañete.

Maria José Asensio Coto, Andalusia Government, meets Commissioner Cañete.

During the meeting, organised in the Committee of the Regions in June 2016, the CPMR advised:

> Regions have a better understanding of the needs of territories, and they have expertise in managing funds. Maritime regions in particular have identified the maritime industry and maritime economy as their priority sectors to boost innovation and investments in the energy sector.

Therefore, they can play a valuable role in the promotion of innovation and in the implementation of the Energy Union.

> Financial instruments, such as the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), are being promoted as mainstream investment tools, but grants remain key in supporting investments for delivering the EU climate goals in all territories.

As a result, many regions, especially those where investments appear less attractive to the market, are not in a position to rely on private-sector involvement.

They risk being left behind in the delivery of investments.

In addition, the CPMR has contributed to the European Commission’s consultation on the preparation of the new Renewable Energy Directive. The key messages submitted were:

> Empowerment of governance within the new Directive, with an enhanced role for regional authorities

> Strengthening of renewable energy markets in peripheral and maritime regions

> Cooperation at macro-regional level (i.e. beyond boundaries of Member-States) for support schemes and programmes for renewable energy would be helpful

> Empowerment of citizens with regards to smart energy management, as well as of community ownership of investments

The EU is aiming to set up a balanced, comprehensive and common migration policy, built upon solidarity and responsibility, in order to seize opportunities whilst tackling the challenges related to migration flows.
Despite agreements at European level and with third countries so far, the EU faces two unprecedented challenges.

There are serious humanitarian emergencies at its borders, including thousands of migrant deaths, and a great challenge for the integration of asylum seekers in the EU’s societies.

**CPMR ACTIONS**

The CPMR has stressed the key role that Regions are playing in efforts to tackle the EU migrant crisis.

It has called on the EU Institutions to develop a European solution in the problem, and to give regions the resources to deliver solutions at ground level.

Through its dedicated Task Force, the CPMR has set up high-level meetings, workshops and seminars to promote dialogue between elected representatives from regions and EU institutions.

It has also carried out lobbying actions and launched a solidarity and awareness raising campaign.

The main messages that the CPMR has conveyed are:

> The need to tackle the roots causes of the crisis, including high unemployment and alienation;

> The need to provide support and funding for regions that are dealing with the most pressure from the migrant influx;

> Regions have key competences and a fundamental role to play in migration issues.

In particular, in relation to responses to emergencies within their territory, integration of migrants and socio-economic development.

By cooperating within the Task Force, member regions and the CPMR Secretariat have facilitated the exchange of good practices on the management of humanitarian emergencies in the border countries and on effective integration in the destination countries.

The CPMR has also taken part in a number of high-level events to present the regional perspective, as well as the solutions that regions can deliver.

Among these initiatives are:

> A joint letter with CEMR and EUROCITIES to President Juncker, calling for a European solution and an inclusive approach to the migration crisis, with more cooperation with cities and regions on the ground;

> The presentation of the regional perspective in a panel on ‘Territorial aspects of refugee migration to Europe’ within the ESPON seminar ‘A world without borders: Refugees, cooperation and territories’;

> A letter to Dimitris Avramopoulos, European Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, presenting solutions that regions can offer for the resettlement of refugees, within the EU relocation mechanism;
The presentation of the regional perspective on migration policies and examples of solutions at regional level in a meeting on “Migration and Health: a contribution of Regional Experiences to international and European Policies”;

Participation as a key stakeholder in the 2nd EU Migration Forum and in its participatory workshop on the “Role of the local level in the effective integration of third-country nationals, including asylum seekers and refugees”.

The CPMR also proposed the monitoring of migrants’ integration through indicators at regional level.

In addition, Rena Dourou, Regional Governor of Attica, and Eleni Marianou, CPMR Secretary General, met with Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission, in April 2016.

They discussed the migration crisis and the key role that regions can play if they are given the support and resources they require.

Meeting on migration crisis with Jean-Claude Juncker

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Brussels seminar of regional governments in tackling global issues of human development

BACKGROUND

For the first time ever, local and regional governments, and the European Commission, are committed to working side-by-side to pursue objectives that will contribute towards achieving democracy, human dignity, equality, justice for all and a spirit of solidarity throughout the world.

CPMR ACTIONS

Over the past year the activity of the CPMR Working Group on External Cooperation, led by the Basque Country, has focused on the territorial dimension of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

It has also centred on the involvement of the CPMR in the Strategic Partnership signed by PLATFORMA and the European Commission.

Platforma, the Basque Country and the CPMR held a major seminar in Brussels in June 2016.
It focused on the role that Europe’s regional governments can play in tackling global issues of human development in the 21st century, such as poverty and inequality, climate change and sustainable cities.

The discussion, based around the framework of the newly adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, was held on the eve of the 2016 European Development Days.

Through PLATFORMA’s Strategic Partnership, the CPMR and its Intermediterranean Commission (IMC), in collaboration with the External Cooperation Working Group, are producing a training module for public service delivery, focusing on the EU’s Southern neighbourhood.

In addition, in September 2016 the IMC organised a workshop on Territorial Integrated Development in association with PLATFORMA and other Mediterranean organisations.

The workshop aimed to identify the needs of Southern authorities and to capitalise on existing practices, as well as contributing to debates on the upcoming Forum of Local and Regional Authorities for the Mediterranean.

Via the PLATFORMA Strategic Partnership, the CPMR External Cooperation Working Group also continues to work on two research studies.

These are: ‘Shaping a new generation of decentralised cooperation for enhanced effectiveness and accountability’, and “Towards a new generation of public-private partnerships for decentralised cooperation’. Both studies will be further developed in 2017.

NEIGHBOURHOOD

CPMR ACTIONS

In June 2015, the CPMR replied to a European Commission consultation dealing with the review of the Neighbourhood policy.

Following this, in November 2015 the Commission published a joint update on reshaping the policy, taking into account recent events in Europe, with particular focus placed on security and migration.

The CPMR then helped draft a joint declaration, coordinated by Platforma, titled the ‘New European Neighbourhood Policy needs greater recognition of local and regional governments’. This statement stresses the need for stronger support for decentralisation in partner countries.

It also emphasises the need to better integrate neighbours into the EU macroregional and sea basin strategies.

Neighbourhoods continue to be a key area of work for the CRPM’s Geographical Commissions. The Intermediterranean and Balkans and Black Sea Commissions have carried out a number of activities and meetings aimed at adding these principles to their work plans.
The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) brings together some 160 Regions from 25 States from the European Union and beyond.

Representing about 200 million people, the CPMR campaigns in favour of a more balanced development of the European territory.

It operates both as a think tank and as a lobby group for Regions. It focuses mainly on social, economic and territorial cohesion, maritime policies and accessibility.

www.cpmr.org

CONTACT:

6, rue Saint-Martin, 35700 Rennes
Tel: + 33 (0)2 99 35 40 50

Rond-Point Schuman 14, 1040 Brussels
Tel: +32 (0)2 612 17 00

Email: Secretariat@cpmr.org; Website: www.cpmr.org