Dear readers,

Last year was a complex time for Europe and the EU following Brexit and US President Trump’s election on a populist platform. But a more positive mood has developed in recent months with the election results in the Netherlands, Austria and France, where anti-nationalist governments have inspired a more pro-European approach to global issues, as well as a slow paced but steady recovery of economic indicators across the continent.

It is imperative that Europe continues this path forward in a more united fashion to play its role as a peace project, not just for Europeans but for all of the world’s citizens.

In response to the overall debate on Europe, the CPMR has embarked on a thorough reflection with its members on what the future European project should look like and how it will embrace its fundamental values and a promising agenda on security, prosperity and inclusive cooperation.

Reacting to similar reflections by the EU Institutions and looking firmly into the future, our aim is to demonstrate that regions remain central to the European project, not as another stakeholder but as a fundamental co-author of any sustainable project for Europe.

Economic, social and territorial Cohesion are not just empty words written somewhere in the treaty. They represent the essence of what Europeans aspire to.

We in CPMR believe in a greater future for Europe, based on a Europe of regions that accommodate the pluralism and multi-stakeholder engagement that is so integral to facing external challenges, inclusively and sustainably.

There is a growing impetus around the reviving European project by young Europeans. Those who have experienced ERASMUS, moved and worked within Europe appreciated the harvests of freedom and peace.

Now is the moment for Europe’s states to allow a greater involvement of sub-national governments in the shaping and implementing of a future European project democratically accountable, prosperous and safe.

European Cohesion Policy is at the heart of such an all-encompassing approach that can accompany all regions and Nations towards a better future while walking in different paces to the same goal. We wish you happy reading!

"...Our aim is to demonstrate loud and clear that regions remain central to the European project..."

Design by Andrew Kennedy; Lucille Ehrhart
Produced by CPMR Secretariat
Photos © CPMR
The CPMR’s reflections on the future of Europe have taken place in a changing political environment. The mood at the beginning of January was very anxious following the Brexit vote, the election of President Trump, and the uncertainty surrounding forthcoming elections in Europe. However, there has been a more positive shift since then. First with the Dutch elections and subsequently with the election of President Macron in France, and in the unified response of the EU27 to Brexit.

This has moved discussions very much towards a reform and change at EU level in 2019. The negotiations on Brexit and the upcoming elections in Europe.

The five Reflection Papers, following up to the White Paper, have addressed some concerns around the absence of detailed policy focus, with more recognition of the growing socio-economic disparities between regions and states across Europe.

The emerging priorities facing Europe are in areas that directly affect regional authorities on a day to day basis, including migration, security, defence, social and economic, climate and the environment.

The CPMR will present a policy position for adoption at its General Assembly in Helsinki, in October 2017, based on discussions to date.

The CPMR has undertaken thematic brainstorming sessions on maritime affairs and migration, bringing together politicians and senior officials from the EU institutions, experts from EU networks, and its member regions to debate key issues and themes.

The session was led by Anna Terrón, ex-MEP and former Spanish State Secretary for Migration, who is undertaking a detailed piece of work to map the role of regions in asylum and migration policies.

The CPMR is also drawing from the work of other thematic working groups and task forces, including the Climate Task Force established earlier this year.

The CPMR’s Political Statement, published on 9 May, presented three initial political messages, with regions occupying a central place in their realisation.

These messages are the need for: territorial, social and economic cohesion; cooperation and partnership; and a robust defence of European values.

A media briefing to launch the Statement was held in Brussels. The briefing was led by CPMR President, Vasco Cordeiro, and was attended by 12 journalists from high profile EU media outlets.

The migration session reiterated the central role of regions in addressing this issue as part of a coherent European policy, based on the principle of solidarity.

The CPMR’s Political Statement, published on 9 May, presented three initial political messages, with regions occupying a central place in their realisation.

These messages are the need for: territorial, social and economic cohesion; cooperation and partnership; and a robust defence of European values.

A media briefing to launch the Statement was held in Brussels. The briefing was led by CPMR President, Vasco Cordeiro, and was attended by 12 journalists from high profile EU media outlets.

The maritime session endorsed the principle of solidarity.

The migration session reiterated the central role of regions in addressing this issue as part of a coherent European policy, based on the principle of solidarity.

The session was led by Anna Terrón, ex-MEP and former Spanish State Secretary for Migration, who is undertaking a detailed piece of work to map the role of regions in asylum and migration policies.

The CPMR is also drawing from the work of other thematic working groups and task forces, including the Climate Task Force established earlier this year.

The CPMR’s Political Statement, published on 9 May, presented three initial political messages, with regions occupying a central place in their realisation.

These messages are the need for: territorial, social and economic cohesion; cooperation and partnership; and a robust defence of European values.

A media briefing to launch the Statement was held in Brussels. The briefing was led by CPMR President, Vasco Cordeiro, and was attended by 12 journalists from high profile EU media outlets.

The maritime session endorsed the principle of solidarity.

The migration session reiterated the central role of regions in addressing this issue as part of a coherent European policy, based on the principle of solidarity.

The session was led by Anna Terrón, ex-MEP and former Spanish State Secretary for Migration, who is undertaking a detailed piece of work to map the role of regions in asylum and migration policies.

The CPMR is also drawing from the work of other thematic working groups and task forces, including the Climate Task Force established earlier this year.

The CPMR’s Political Statement, published on 9 May, presented three initial political messages, with regions occupying a central place in their realisation.

These messages are the need for: territorial, social and economic cohesion; cooperation and partnership; and a robust defence of European values.

A media briefing to launch the Statement was held in Brussels. The briefing was led by CPMR President, Vasco Cordeiro, and was attended by 12 journalists from high profile EU media outlets.

The maritime session endorsed the principle of solidarity.

The migration session reiterated the central role of regions in addressing this issue as part of a coherent European policy, based on the principle of solidarity.

The session was led by Anna Terrón, ex-MEP and former Spanish State Secretary for Migration, who is undertaking a detailed piece of work to map the role of regions in asylum and migration policies.

The CPMR is also drawing from the work of other thematic working groups and task forces, including the Climate Task Force established earlier this year.

The CPMR’s Political Statement, published on 9 May, presented three initial political messages, with regions occupying a central place in their realisation.

These messages are the need for: territorial, social and economic cohesion; cooperation and partnership; and a robust defence of European values.

A media briefing to launch the Statement was held in Brussels. The briefing was led by CPMR President, Vasco Cordeiro, and was attended by 12 journalists from high profile EU media outlets.
The CPMR’s Political Statement noted its preference for Europe to ‘walk at the same pace’, and avoid any fragmentation of Europe.

Responding to concerns about the absence of a territorial dimension in the Commission’s White paper, the CPMR highlighted the need for a sixth scenario which places regions at the heart of the debate on the future of Europe.

**KEY THEMES**

Since the publication of its Political Statement, the CPMR has worked with its regions to develop an updated policy position, to be presented for adoption at the CPMR General Assembly in October 2017.

The position proposes an alternative scenario to those presented in the European Commission’s White Paper and Reflection Papers. It places citizens at the centre of the Europe’s future. The CPMR’s vision is of a European project where:

> Regions and local authorities are placed at the core, in recognition of their essential role as the bridge between citizens and the EU, in addressing democratic deficit, and in finding solutions to the challenges that Europe faces, including unlocking the potential of Europe’s peripheral and maritime regions;

> Territorial, social and economic cohesion is a fundamental pillar, complementing the Single Market, focused on addressing inequalities and disparities, and in helping to address key societal challenges facing Europe;

> Co-operation and partnership is reinforced and strengthened (including post-Brexit), validating the role played by regions and local authorities in animating this;  

> European values and rights are robustly defended, in face of the many external and internal threats and risks to stability, and clear recognition given to the role of regions and local authorities in supporting and spreading these values internationally and through the EU’s Neighbourhood Policy.

**Brexit: Key milestones**

The CPMR has undertaken considerable work on Brexit. Brexit ‘taskforces’ were established in 2017 in two of the CPMRs Geographical Commissions:

- Atlantic Arc Commission (has met twice: 29 March; 07 June)
- North Sea Commission (has met twice: 29 April, 06 September)

A ‘Channel taskforce’ is also being established given the strategic importance of the Channel and relations with English authorities over this shared space.

On 7 June, the CPMR held a Brexit session in Brussels with Stefan de Rynck, a member of Michel Barnier’s Brexit Taskforce in the European Commission, and with senior officials from the Irish Permanent Representation to the EU, Scottish Government and Flemish Government.

A Brexit conference, in co-operation with the Welsh Government, is being held in Cardiff in November 2017.

**FUTURE ACTIVITIES**

**Looking towards the second phase of the CPMR’s work**

The CPMR will call upon a CPMR Scientific Council, led by former Deputy Director-General of DG Regional Policy, Jean-Charles Leygues.

It will consider a range of scenarios for reform of EU finances in the future EU post-Brexit, looking at implications to CPMR regions and impact on our key policy priorities.

**Future themes**

The CPMR will undertake further thematic sessions through its working groups and taskforces, themes and technical questions, including:

- **Multi-speed Europe**: understanding what this could look like in practice and how it could impact at a territorial level and on key priority concerns for CPMR regions;

- **Questions around institutional structures**: how to strengthen the regional voice in the policy decision-making process; how to bring EU Institutions closer to citizens;

**Local events**

This aspect of the reflection is very much led and initiated by the CPMR Member Regions, whilst the CPMR Secretariat is keen to receive feedback and information on local events. This could be in the form of blogs on the Future of Europe web-forum.

**Visibility Event**

Looking towards the second phase of the CPMR’s work, starting in the autumn, the CPMR proposes to shift attention towards budgetary and institutional questions.

The CPMR will therefore developed detailed proposals to legitimise Cohesion policy as an investment policy for Europe, based on the **CPMR principles for post-2020 Cohesion policy** adopted at the CPMR General Assembly in the Azores in November 2016.

**Key proposals from the policy paper**

- The EFSI and financial instruments
- Simplification
- Multilevel governance and partnership
- Territorial dimension
- Link between Cohesion Policy and the European Semester
- European Social Fund
- Interreg

The CPMR policy position sets out concrete proposals on topics of special relevance to the future of Cohesion policy:


The document was adopted by the CPMR Members at the June Political Bureau in Stavanger.

**New priorities arising**

Internal and external security, the fight against terrorism and the management of the migration crisis are high on the EU agenda.

**Brexit**

The UK’s exit from the EU creates a financial gap for the EU budget, estimated at €60 billion.

**The reform of the EU budget**

Some Member States are in favour of decreasing the traditional headings of the EU budget, including Cohesion policy as the second biggest share, to finance new challenges.

Cohesion policy is not at the forefront of the EU political agenda.

**BACKGROUND**

The CPMR proposes to organise a high-level meeting in Brussels, most likely in November, to present the CPMR’s policy position to the European Commission.

The aim will be to meet with European Commission President Juncker. At the end of November the CPMR will meet Brexit chief negotiator, Michel Barnier, Head of the Commission’s Brexit Taskforce.

Several CPMR working groups, led by Member Regions, were set up to lead on these issues.
The CPMR produced a study on the territorial dimension of the financial instruments. Developed with the input of 26 regions, the study paid attention to the experience of CPMR Members in relation to the use of financial instruments. The study confirms that financial instruments are more suited to certain types of actions than others.

The CPMR was invited to present the conclusions of the study to the European Parliament. CPMR Vice President, Enrico Rossi, emphasised the need to define where financial instruments add most value, within a future Cohesion Policy that should continue to rely primarily on grants.

"CPMR has an important role to play in the reform of the post-2020 Cohesion policy..." Marc Lemaître
Director General for Regional Policy

The CPMR carried out a reflection on the European Fund for Strategic investment (EFSI).

A brainstorming meeting, held in December 2016, considered the link between the EFSI and Cohesion Policy. It was attended by Nicola de Michielis, Head of Cabinet of the Commissioner for Regional Policy.

In addition, the CPMR working group on the EFSI, led by the Region Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, agreed that clear boundaries between the Juncker Plan and Cohesion Policy should be established regarding areas of intervention and types of projects supported.

The CPMR also carried out an analysis on the territorial dimension of the EFSI. The results confirm the uneven territorial distribution of the EFSI.

Simplification

The CPMR working group on simplification, led by the Region Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur, developed concrete proposals to make the management of and access to the funds simpler.

The CPMR was invited to present evidence to the High-Level Group on Simplification, organised by the European Commission, on three occasions.

The set of recommendations adopted by the high-level group include some of the CPMR proposals for simplification.

Multi-Level Governance & Partnership

The CPMR working group’s proposals on this topic, led by the region Västra Götaland, were presented to the Commissioner for Regional Policy, Corina Cretu, at the Commission expert group of ESI funds partners in March 2017.

The European Parliament’s Seas, Rivers, Islands and Coastal Areas (SEARICA) Intergroup invited the CPMR to speak about investments in islands, at a conference in Strasbourg in May 2017. CPMR representatives expressed the difficulties for islands to access EFSI financing and the need for EU policies to support balanced territorial development.

At the invitation of the Maltese Presidency of the EU, the CPMR was also invited to an informal Council meeting of Ministers for Cohesion Policy. Represented by Vice-President Rossi, the CPMR stressed the importance of maintaining a strong role for regional authorities in the management of the funds.

Territorial Dimension

The CPMR took part in a series of activities to promote a strong territorial dimension in the future Cohesion policy.

The CPMR took a leading role at the Fourth Forum of the Outermost Regions, stressing the importance of Cohesion policy for economic growth across all of Europe’s territories.

CPMR Secretary General, Eleni Marianou, was the moderator of the event which was opened by the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker.

The CPMR also invited the Committee of the Regions (CoR) to a high-level event on the future of Cohesion policy in May 2017.

At the meeting, Erik Bergkvist, President of the Regional Executive Committee, Region Västerbotten, stressed that territorial specifics should be addressed through a strong Cohesion policy, based on better recognition of the EU territorial diversity.

Link with the European Semester


Opened by Regional Policy Commissioner, Corina Cretu, it was attended by over 100 people, including 43 CPMR member regions.

The CPMR was also invited by the Committee of the Regions (CoR) to an informal meeting with four CPMR elected Members held in May 2017.

They also presented CPMR proposals on the future of INTERREG programmes developed by a dedicated working group, led by the Dutch Provinces.

The meeting offered the opportunity to put forward the results of the CPMR survey, developed together with Emilia-Romagna, entitled ‘the European Social fund (ESF) 2014-2020 and the Youth Employment Initiative’.

CPMR Projection of Cohesion policy Eligibility

The CPMR carried out a map projection of the eligibility of the regions in the Cohesion policy if the latest Regional GDP statistics were used. The result is that 34 regions would change category, of which 11 would outperform the lower category. The CPMR also produced a video presenting the projection of Cohesion policy eligibility.

The CPMR followed the discussions on the EU budget closely, with a technical note on issues at stake for the future of the EU budget adopted at the March Political Bureau in Gozo.

Nicola de Michielis provided CPMR members with a presentation on the reflection paper on the future of EU finances. This meeting was also the opportunity to share a CPMR analysis on the reflection paper.

Cohesion Working Group

The Cohesion Policy working group met several times to discuss the development of CPMR proposals on post-2020 Cohesion Policy. Several experts from the European Commission participated in the meetings.

Director General of DG REGIO, Marc Lemaître, reacted positively to CPMR’s initial ideas on future of Cohesion policy at a Core Group meeting in February.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

The year 2018 is a milestone year as two key legislative proposals are expected to be published by the European Commission: on the future of Cohesion policy; and on the future of the EU budget.

The CPMR will continue to make the case that the need for a strong Cohesion policy remains extremely valid today. It will emphasise that Cohesion policy budgetary resources must not be sacrificed during the difficult negotiations ahead on a future EU budget for the post-2020 period.
Commissions. Group and its Geographical

implemented in close cooperation

These activities have been

last CPMR General Assembly, held in

began in November 2016.

These activities have been implemented in close cooperation with the CPMR’s Maritime Working Group and its Geographical Commissions.

The CPMR’s activities over the past year have been developed in line with the objectives set out in its maritime agenda, presented at the last CPMR General Assembly, held in the Azores in November 2016.

The CPMR used this policy position to actively contribute to the development of:

> The interministerial declaration on blue growth, adopted in Malta in April 2017;

> The Searica Declaration on blue growth, also adopted in April 2017;

> And the Committee of the Region’s (CoR) opinion on blue growth, adopted in May 2017.

These policy declarations provided a solid political foundation to argue in support of strong future EU maritime policies.

The state-of-play regarding the preparation of post-2020 policies was analysed in a technical paper prepared for the CPMR Political Bureau, held in Stavanger in June 2017.

The CPMR also worked on the Black Sea Blue Growth conference in Georgia in September 2017. Ms Christiana Kalogirou, Regional Governor of North Aegean (Greece), and President of the CPMR Balkan & Black Sea Commission, was a speaker.

The CPMR also supported the work of its member regions on Brexit, contributing to the maritime section of a Brexit report published by the Brittany region, and to the work of its Geographical Commissions.

Notably, the CPMR worked with its Atlantic Arc Commission on the Atlantic Strategy and collaborated with its Intermediterranean Commission (IMC) on the EUSAIR and the new West-Med Strategy.

The IMC was also a partner in the InnoBlueGrowth project, which organises capitalisation activities for maritime projects funded by the Med programme.

The CPMR also worked on the Maritime Investments:

> A questionnaire on maritime investments;

> Work with specific EU projects such as CLIPPER on smart-specialisation and blue growth;

> Work on EU financial instruments and blue growth. Following a workshop on maritime start-ups organised at the EMD with Petros Kokkalis, Councillor at the Piraeus Municipality, the CPMR and the European Commission’s Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) held a meeting in Brussels on 11 July, to discuss the views of the regions;

> Work on the implementation of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) in support of the Fisheries sector. Supported by the CPMR Fisheries Working Group, this involved the development of a study. A meeting involving Jonathan Wills, Councillor of the Shetlands Islands, and Chairman of the CPMR Fisheries working group, was held between the CPMR’s member regions and DG MARE on 8 February. Pierre Karleskind, Vice-President of the Brittany region, was confirmed as the new Chairman of the Fisheries Working Group by the CPMR Political Bureau in June 2017.

The CPMR organised discussions on how to boost maritime cooperation in the North Sea, and supported its Baltic Sea Commission on preparations for the Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, held in Berlin in June 2017.

The CPMR was involved in several high-level discussions with EU institutions about future EU maritime policies:

> CPMR President, Vasco Cordeiro spoke at the European Maritime Days, held in Poole, UK, in May 2017.

> CPMR Secretary General, Eleni Marianou, spoke at a Policy event ‘A sustainable future for our oceans – Can the EU set the course?’ attended by Karmenu Vella, European Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, in June 2017.

> The CPMR took part in the ‘Our Ocean’ conference in Malta in October 2017, and published a document about regions’ commitments in the areas covered by the conference.

> The CPMR also participated in several political discussions organised by the European Parliament’s Searica Intergroup on issues such as marine data and maritime spatial planning.

The CPMR has focused on how to improve the efficiency of EU funding instruments in support of blue growth at regional level. This has involved the development of proposals, based on collaboration with its regions and the European Commission, through:

> Participation in the European Commission’s conference on the future of the EMFF, held in Tallin in October 2017. Several member regions took part.

> Exchange of best practices between regions and stakeholder organisations, carried out through EU projects, such as Co-Evolve, PANACEA and its Biodiversity Protection Community.

> The implementation of the landing obligation. This issue was discussed in the meeting between the CPMR’s regions and DG MARE on 8 February.

The CFP and its landing obligation were also the focus for a meeting between Bruno Retailleau, President of Region Pays de la Loire and the AAC, Carwyn Jones, First Minister of Wales, and European Commissioner Vella in December 2016.

The CPMR has been working on the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), analysing the issues and their solutions. Besides its work on the implementation of the EMFF, this involved work on:

> Work on the implementation of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) in support of the Fisheries sector. Supported by the CPMR Fisheries Working Group, this involved the development of a study. A meeting involving Jonathan Wills, Councillor of the Shetlands Islands, and Chairman of the CPMR Fisheries working group, was held between the CPMR’s member regions and DG MARE on 8 February.

> A questionnaire on maritime investments;

> Work with specific EU projects such as CLIPPER on smart-specialisation and blue growth;

> Work on EU financial instruments and blue growth. Following a workshop on maritime start-ups organised at the EMD with Petros Kokkalis, Councillor at the Piraeus Municipality, the CPMR and the European Commission’s Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) held a meeting in Brussels on 11 July, to discuss the views of the regions;

> Work on the implementation of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) in support of the Fisheries sector. Supported by the CPMR Fisheries Working Group, this involved the development of a study. A meeting involving Jonathan Wills, Councillor of the Shetlands Islands, and Chairman of the CPMR Fisheries working group, was held between the CPMR’s member regions and DG MARE on 8 February.

> Participation in the European Commission’s conference on the future of the EMFF, held in Tallin in October 2017. Several member regions took part.

> Exchange of best practices between regions and stakeholder organisations, carried out through EU projects, such as Co-Evolve, PANACEA and its Biodiversity Protection Community.

> The implementation of the landing obligation. This issue was discussed in the meeting between the CPMR’s regions and DG MARE on 8 February.

The CFP and its landing obligation were also the focus for a meeting between Bruno Retailleau, President of Region Pays de la Loire and the AAC, Carwyn Jones, First Minister of Wales, and European Commissioner Vella in December 2016.
The CPMR's work on this issue continues, and one of the Vigo seminar outcomes was a call for stronger coordination between the CPMR and organisations representing Fisheries.

In the field of blue biotechnologies, the CPMR strengthened its cooperation with the European Marine Biological Research Infrastructure Cluster (EMBRIC). The CPMR is also a member of EMBRIC's advisory committee which met in Paris in March 2017.

Marine Energies and Maritime Industries

Work on this topic has focused on the implementation of current policies. This involved:

- Key activities through the CLIPPER project, which began in Nantes in February 2017. This interregional project aims to develop better public policies to support the competitiveness of SMEs working in maritime industries. DG MARE has identified CLIPPER as a key project for maritime development.
- Coordination of the AAC and NSC to organise a specific meeting on the management of wind parks in Aberdeen.
- Collaboration with Ocean Energy Europe (OEE), which participated in several discussions with CPMR member regions. The CPMR is also a member of the Advisory Committee of the ETIP Ocean platform on investments in ocean energies.
- Protection of the Marine Environment and Oil Spills: The CPMR continues to collaborate with the International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds (IOPC), and with the European Commission on the European Liability Directive (ELD).
On a number of occasions throughout the year, the CPMR has presented its positions to key EU institutions, including:

> A meeting with Karima Delli, Chairwoman of the European Parliament’s Transport Committee on 21 March, 2017;
> A meeting with the Cabinet of EU Transport Commissioner, Violeta Bulc on 5 July, 2017;
> Contact with national transport Ministers and the European Coordinators of the CEF corridors to suggest amendments;
> Involvement in discussions on the MoS on 7 March at the European Parliament’s Seas, Rivers, Islands and Coastal Areas (SEARICA) Intergrupo, attended by Brian Simpson, European Coordinator for the MoS.

The paper calls for territorial cohesion and accessibility to be included among the “specific sectoral objectives” for transport in the CEF regulations.

The CPMR had its second Political Bureau held in Gozo on 29 March, 2017, adopted on Wednesday 29 March, 2017.

The meeting explored compensation mechanisms to cover extra costs for islands related to transport. Among the recommendations were:

> The necessity in a future revision of the State Aids Regulation for compensation or a correction mechanism to overcome the lack of economies of scale in transport for islands.
> The need for the CEF to provide better access to remote areas and a better link between existing predominantly North/South corridors.
> The incoherence in the evaluation criteria for projects undertaken. This necessity is under negotiation for the MoS on 7 March.
> The European Commission’s MoS forum, held on 16 June in Brussels.

The Commission has already taken these recommendations into account in the drafting of its revised version of the MoS Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP).

Adopted by the CPMR’s Political Bureau in Gozo in March, the recommendations were then presented at the European Commission’s MoS forum, held on 16 June in Brussels.

The Commission has already taken these recommendations into account in the drafting of its revised version of the MoS Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP).

The CPMR has already made contact with key stakeholders including Eurocontrol, ARC, and ERA.

The challenge is to extend the core network to remote areas and islands that are currently not covered by the regulation.

As for the MoS, the latest call for projects to be funded by the CEF before 2020 should be launched in 2018.

To counterbalance the underfunding of islands and outermost regions since 2014, the CPMR will make concrete proposals for more funding to be made available to them.

The CPMR prepared its positions in 2017, and now comes the time to defend them.

The TEN-T regulation is not supposed to be renegotiated until 2023, but arguments must be prepared sufficiently in advance. The CPMR’s Geographical Commissions could begin to work on potential positions in 2017, with the support of the cpmr General Secretariat.
A new CPMR Climate Task Force was launched in 2017 to steer the work of the CPMR on EU climate action. The Task Force is chaired by the Brittany Region, under the political leadership of Thierry Burlot, Vice President of Climate and Environment, and André Crocq, Regional Councillor for Energy Transition.

The new Vice-Chair of the Task Force is Cees Loggen, Deputy Governor of Noord Holland, in his role as Vice President of the CPMR Political Bureau Responsible for Climate and Energy. He replaced Rogier van der Sande from Zuid Holland.

The Climate Task Force currently counts about 30 CPMR regions as members, with a wide geographical diversity within this membership.

By the end of 2017 the Climate Task Force will have held four meetings:

> **28 June** – its second meeting focused on the revision of the EU’s Adaptation to Climate Change Strategy;
> **26 September** – Meeting focused on energy transition and the draft Clean Energy Package;
> **18 October** – At the CPMR Annual General Meeting in Helsinki, focusing on agreeing two policy position papers and planning the work of the Task Force for 2018.

The approach of the Task Force during its first meetings has been to focus on two specific dossiers: the review of the EU Adaptation strategy in June and the Clean Energy Package in September.

In relation to these issues, the Task Force has combined perspectives from the EU Institutions, including the European Commission’s DG CLIMATE and DG ENERGY, the European Parliament, the Estonian EU Presidency, and the Committee of the Regions (CoR).

The Task Force has also spoken to think tanks including the Jacques Delors Institute, Heinrich Böll Foundation, and the IEEP.

And it has engaged with sectoral interests/lobby organisations such as The Climate Group, CAN Europe, nrg4SD, and RESCOOP.

In addition, the Task Force has gathered the experiences and interests of CPMR regions – through case studies – on these dossiers.

It is also proposed that it could hold ‘spin off’ activities, including local events organised by member regions, and specific thematic events on topics of particular interest to some regions.

”...The Climate Task Force is ready to contribute to coordinated regional action on issues such as climate change adaptation and mitigation...”

**Thierry Burlot**
Chair of CPMR Climate Task Force

It underlines the need for EU level action to drive forward and support adaptation policies and initiatives across the EU.

It also stresses the importance of EU funding and co-operation between regions, and the need to strengthen data and knowledge sharing.

**Clean Energy Package**

A draft CPMR policy position on the Clean Energy Package and on energy transition will also be presented at the CPMR’s General Assembly in Helsinki in October.

The negotiations on the Clean Energy Package are already underway in the EU Institutions, so the focus of the CPMR paper is to ensure that key amendments are supported in these discussions.

The CPMR position will be presented at the CPMR’s General Assembly in Helsinki in October.

The negotiations on the Clean Energy Package are already underway in the EU Institutions, so the focus of the CPMR paper is to ensure that key amendments are supported in these discussions.

**EU Adaptation Strategy**

A draft CPMR policy position on adaptation to climate change will be presented for adoption at the CPMR’s General Assembly in Helsinki.

This will provide the basis for the CPMR’s response to the Commission’s online consultation on the review of the EU Adaptation Strategy, which will be launched in the autumn.

The policy position focuses on governance, EU policy tools, and knowledge and innovation.
A coherent and coordinated approach is needed to tackle the current migration crisis. The CPMR in 2015 launched a Task Force (TF) on Migration, led by Sicily and the region of Skåne. This Task Force has led the CPMR’s work on migration management.

The CPMR’s Geographical Commissions, particularly its Intermediterranean Commission (IMC), have also provided key input into its activities.

The Migration Task Force is made up of several regions from most of the CPMR Geographical Commissions.

The CPMR's Political Bureau met in Brussels to discuss migration management.

CPMR representatives also took part in seminars and discussions on migration organised by its own regions, or external organisations, such as the Euro Mediterranean Cooperation and Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM).

Overall, in the first semester of 2017 the CPMR reviewed its work on migration and held several key actions, producing new proposals and recommendations that will benefit members and be presented to the EU institutions in the months ahead.

In close connection with this work, the CPMR is also beginning to develop consistent and precise technical and political proposals regarding the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) reform and the revision of the Multiannual Financial Framework for the post-2020 programming period.

The mapping-survey exercise is one of the CPMR’s key actions and will feed into the development of a key Issue Paper on ‘Migration management on the ground, experiences, needs and potential for action of CPMR Regions towards a multilevel governance approach’.

In terms of a timeframe, the Migration Issue Paper will be published at the beginning of 2018. The proposals for the CEAS reform and funding instruments concerning migration and the regions will be produced by the end of the first semester of 2018 and used mainly for future lobbying purposes, including ad hoc meetings with Institutions.

The Migration Task Force will also continue to monitor and support the development of the MIPEX Regions first phase of implementation, as well as other relevant projects and initiatives, boosting collaboration with key stakeholders.

The Migration Task Force continues to work with other initiatives dealing with migration, developed by partners organisations, institutions and programmes, building collaborations and partnerships for a multilevel cooperation.

Finally, the CPMR continues to work with other initiatives dealing with migration, developed by partners organisations, institutions and programmes, building collaborations and partnerships for a multilevel cooperation.

These include work with the EU Committee of the Regions (CoR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and the MEDI TERREG Program.
The CPMR took part in the PLATFORMA Eastern Neighbourhood Coordination Seminar in Tbilisi, Georgia on 15-16 December 2016, where it presented its Balkan & Black Sea Commission’s actions to help develop the work of the Eastern Partnership.

The seminar gathered high-level speakers from European and national level and aimed to develop further reflection on fostering cooperation in the wider Black Sea region and making better use of upcoming opportunities.

In April 2017, the CPMR signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC).

The CPMR is already a Sectoral Dialogue Partner of BSEC, a fully-fledged regional economic organisation promoting regional economic cooperation and contributing to enhancing economic stability, peace, security and prosperity.

The MoU will mean that the CPMR’s Balkan & Black Sea Commission (BBSC) will be able to collaborate more closely with BSEC on activities and issues of common interest, as well as further developing partnerships in the Black Sea Region.

It is anticipated that the collaboration will focus on several areas including Transport (Maritime Transport, & Accessibility), Social & Economic Cohesion, Environment & Energy, Tourism, Trade, Economic Development and SMEs, Science & Technology, and Information & Communication Technologies.

In July 2017, the CPMR’s Intermediterranean Commission was presented with a prestigious award from the Fondazione Mediterraneo a non-profit network promoting dialogue and peace in the Mediterranean areas and around the world.

The CPMR IMC was given the Mediterranean Award 2017 in the category ‘Institutions’ for its collective efforts and actions towards cooperation, cohesion and regional development in the Mediterranean basin.

The CPMR appointed an expert, Mr Federico Martire, to carry out the task.

He worked closely with the Intermittent Mediterranean Commission, in collaboration with the member regions in the CPMR External Cooperation Working Group.

The final version of the manual is due to be issued in the autumn of 2017 and a training session to be delivered by early 2018.

Throughout 2016-17, the CPMR Working Group on External Cooperation, led by the Basque Government, continued its work on:

> The territorial dimension, decentralised cooperation and localising the global 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

> Research Study: “Shaping a new generation of decentralised cooperation for enhanced effectiveness and accountability.”

This study, developed in collaboration with the Basque Government, was developed in association with an appointed expert, Mr Agustí Fernández de Losada, of Tornos Abogados.

The MoU will mean that the CPMR’s Balkan & Black Sea Commission (BBSC) will be able to collaborate more closely with BSEC on activities and issues of common interest, as well as further developing partnerships in the Black Sea Region.

As part of the CPMR’s actions towards fostering cooperation and dialogue and peace in the Mediterranean areas and around the world.

The CPMR IMC was given the Mediterranean Award 2017 in the category ‘Institutions’ for its collective efforts and actions towards cooperation, cohesion and regional development in the Mediterranean basin.

The CPMR appointed an expert, Mr Federico Martire, to carry out the task.

He worked closely with the Intermittent Mediterranean Commission, in collaboration with the member regions in the CPMR External Cooperation Working Group.

The final version of the manual is due to be issued in the autumn of 2017 and a training session to be delivered by early 2018.

Throughout 2016-17, the CPMR Working Group on External Cooperation, led by the Basque Government, continued its work on:

> The territorial dimension, decentralised cooperation and localising the global 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

> The CPMR undertook three main activities in 2017 related to the objectives of the Strategic Partnership between the PLATFORMA network and the European Commission:

> Training module ‘Delivery of public services with a territorial integrated approach in the Mediterranean’.

This capacity building activity, with a specific focus on the local and regional authorities of Morocco and Tunisia, concerns all the Mediterranean.

The CPMR appointed an expert, Mr Agustí Fernández de Losada, of Tornos Abogados.

The study aims to provide enhanced understanding on how to adapt decentralised cooperation models by regional and local authorities to meet strengthened standards of effectiveness and accountability, while fostering innovative approaches and partnerships.

This discussion looked at the circumstances under which decentralised cooperation can contribute to the territorial approach to local development (known as TALD) and to the localisation of SDGs.

Secondly, input for the session “Review of recent trends in decentralised cooperation”.

This session provided the opportunity to introduce the conclusions of the study on a new generation of decentralised cooperation.
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 person: Andrew Kennedy, CPMR Press and Communications Officer
Email: andrew.kennedy@crpm.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@crpm.org; Website: www.cpmr.org