



Transport and accessibility: the way ahead for CPMR

CPMR continues to analyse developments in and the future prospects of the EU's transport policy, on the basis of its long-standing priorities, which are: contribution to territorial cohesion and accessibility, support for sustainable maritime transport, and the role of the Regions in implementing EU instruments.

The European Commission is currently drafting the legislative and financial framework for its post-2020 transport policy, ahead of the negotiations in which the European Parliament will play a key role under the co-decision procedure.

In the first part of this note, we look at how CPMR is preparing to contribute to the successive phases of these negotiations.

We then detail the actions carried out by the CPMR, its Geographical Commissions and its Transport Working Group on the different themes and transport modes, and look at the prospects for future actions.

1. CEF and TEN-T post-2020: how can the situation of the maritime peripheries be improved?

1.1 CPMR's action dates back, but has been stepped up in 2017

Since 2014 (and since 2012 in the case of the TEN-T), CPMR has repeatedly stated that it regrets:

- the hyper-concentration of the CEF budget on the nine priority corridors, the geographical coverage of which is insufficient
- the criteria defining the TEN-T core network and as a result the maps which are based on these criteria
- the "timidity" of the Motorways of the Sea policy.

In 2016, CPMR was at the origin of a draft [written declaration by the Parliament](#) on the role of the TEN-T in regional accessibility.

In [March](#) and [June](#) 2017, CPMR published and disseminated to the institutions detailed proposals which, if adopted for the post-2020 CEF Regulation (CEF II), would help to remedy the fact that the principle of territorial cohesion has been undermined. As well as addressing the principles, CPMR

also proposed improvements to the alignments of the priority corridors, on the basis of contributions from its Geographical Commissions.

1.2 January to March 2018 – raising the awareness of the Commission and the Parliament about CEF II

On 16 January, the President of CPMR wrote to Commissioner Violeta Bulc and to the President of the European Parliament's Transport Committee detailing the CPMR's priorities ([link to the letter](#)).

These priorities are included in the CPMR's draft [Policy Position on the MFF](#), which will be discussed at the Political Bureau meeting in Patras.

In a context of intense downward pressure on the budgets of many EU policies post-2020, CPMR considers that *"if the renewed CEF regulation respects these principles of territorial and modal balance, climate action and good governance, the CPMR considers that the CEF budget must be at least maintained at its current level in the post-2020 budget perspectives."*

The draft Policy Position also addresses the issue of coordination between the future CEF and ERDF regulations. Currently both these funds co-finance transport infrastructure, notably that of the comprehensive network of the TEN-T, which is particularly important for the peripheral regions. The Commission – justifiably – wishes to clarify the respective interventions of the different funds, and avoid duplication. In this context, CPMR will pay close attention to the level of support granted to the comprehensive network under the future arrangements.

1.3 The CEF II negotiations

1.3.1 The future regulation

The Commission plans to publish a draft CEF II regulation in early summer. The Parliament will then nominate its rapporteurs. CPMR will examine the draft regulation, contact the relevant people, and take appropriate action to ensure that its positions are taken into consideration under the co-decision procedure. The same will apply to the articles on transport in the ERDF regulation.

1.3.2 The annex to the regulation on the corridors and other priority sections

The CPMR Geographical Commissions have put a great deal of effort into drawing up [amendments to this annex](#), which will be negotiated at the same time as the main body of the regulation. Member States have conveyed their own priorities and are discussing these with the Commission. The aim of DG Move is to propose draft modifications to the nine corridors by the end of March.

The CPMR and its Geographical Commissions will monitor this process proactively and intervene where necessary, in particular once the draft annex is published (early summer 2018). The key people to contact will be the rapporteurs designated by the Parliament.

1.3.3 No territorial impact assessment of CEF I

The CPMR has been calling since 2015 for a territorial impact assessment to be carried out on the implementation of the CEF I. Because improving accessibility is not a high priority for the Commission, such an assessment has not been carried out, even though the Commission (and its agency the INEA) are the only bodies in possession of the necessary data. The [mid-term review of the CEF](#) published by the Commission 14 February 2018 sheds no further light on this subject. CPMR's request was also conveyed to the Chair of the European Parliament's Transport Committee.

Given that 96% of the CEF transport budget has already been allocated, only three years into the programming period, it is crucially important to have accurate information about the types of territories which have not received adequate support. This will enable the CEF II to avoid reproducing such “unfairness” by building appropriate safeguards into the regulation and its annexes.

1.4 TEN-T review: anticipating the deadlines

The current TEN-T is based on a methodology developed in a [Commission staff working document](#) produced in January 2011. This methodology was implemented without a great deal of flexibility and as a result the network is highly imbalanced, to the detriment of the islands and the peripheral regions. Very few of these territories fall within the core network, which receives more than 95% of CEF I funding.

The TEN-T regulation provides for a review of the implementation of the core network “before the end of 2023”. In light of the developments in transport flows over the decade, and above all with a view to Brexit, it is clearly necessary for this review to take place well ahead of the deadline date. As far as Brexit is concerned, it is too soon to accurately forecast the impact it will have on the TEN-T in the United Kingdom, but there is no doubt that it will have an impact, and this will be reflected in the maps.

CPMR has on several occasions asked the Commission to bring forward the TEN-T review ahead of 2023, and it would appear that this message has been positively received. CPMR believes the review should go further than just “tidying-up” the maps; it should also address the criteria and the methodology. It should also enable Article 21 of the TEN-T, which defines the Motorways of the Sea, to be broadened to include the ports of the comprehensive network.

The Regions and the Geographical Commissions were very active regarding the TEN-T review in 2011 and 2012. This area of work needs to be revived, under the coordination of the General Secretariat and the Transport working group. Some of the Geographical Commissions have already included it in their work programme on transport.

To sum up ...

The CPMR’s proposals on EU funding for infrastructure will be incorporated into its overall Position Paper on the MFF to be adopted by the Political Bureau meeting on 8 March in Patras.

These proposals will be based on the positions adopted in 2017, which were restated on 16 January by the President of CPMR to Commissioner Bulc and Karima Delli, Chair of the European Parliament’s Transport Committee.

They will be promoted during the negotiations on the CEF II regulation, from July 2018 onwards, in particular to the Parliament’s rapporteurs.

The Regions and the Geographical Commissions are invited to proactively monitor the negotiations on the priority corridors.

It would appear that the review of the current TEN-T will begin well before 2023, particularly in light of the impact of Brexit. Under the coordination of the General Secretariat and the CPMR Transport working group, the Geographical Commissions are invited to initiate their own reviews of the TEN-T core network.

2 Preparation of the third generation of action plans for the current corridors

The European Commission and the Corridor Coordinators are preparing the third generation of action plans for the **current** corridors (*this exercise is not directly related to the review of the corridor alignments mentioned above*). The Commission's aim is to finalise the plans by the end of March and to present them at the TEN-T Days in Ljubljana, from 25 to 27 April 2018.

The Corridor Forums will then meet during the weeks of 18 June and 15 October.

The CPMR Geographical Commissions are invited to monitor the progress of the programming of the current corridors and to encourage their member Regions to play an active role in the Forum meetings.

3 Promotion of sustainable maritime transport

3.1 Context

CPMR promotes maritime transport for several reasons:

- It is obviously a priority for the maritime Regions which depend on this transport mode for their accessibility and therefore for their economic growth and the mobility of their populations.
- Even if emissions continue to grow and efforts to decarbonise the sector need to be developed, maritime transport still emits fewer greenhouse gases than road transport. For this reason, it should be promoted as an alternative to road transport for short and medium distances (Short Sea Shipping). It also helps to relieve road congestion, and this has positive effects in terms of pollution and road safety.

The European Union is actively promoting the greening of maritime transport, especially but not exclusively via:

- the Valletta Declaration of 27 March 2017 which sets out the EU's maritime transport priorities until 2020, and which has a significant strand on decarbonisation
- the use of the CEF to fund investment in alternative fuels and refuelling infrastructure
- the publication by the Commission, on 16 January 2018, of a proposal for a Directive amending the 2000 Directive on port facilities for ship-generated waste (plastic waste in particular).

On the other hand, the Commission still does not encourage financial incentives for shifting traffic from road to more sustainable modes such as maritime transport. It would be perfectly possible under the current CEF regulation to test different ways of supporting such a modal shift – Ecobonus systems for example – without hindering competition between shipowners. However, in spite of the interest shown by European shipowners (ECSA) and other industry stakeholders brought together by the Commission in the framework of the ESSF, and despite the launch of the Medatlantic Ecobonus project – which is funded by the CEF – the Commission itself has taken no initiative.

3.2 CPMR's proposals and actions

3.2.1 Revival of the support for modal shift

CPMR has restated this call to revive support for modal shift in the context of the preparation of the CEF II (letters and position papers mentioned above). It will ask not only the Commission but also the Spanish transport ministry (lead partner) and the French, Italian and Portuguese transport ministries (partners in the project) for information on the results of the Medatlantic Ecobonus project.

CPMR invites the European Parliament to propose testing a system on one of the seaboard or sea basins, using the "[pilot project](#)" or "[preparatory action](#)" provisions. This request has already been conveyed to the European Parliament's Transport Committee and will be followed up. It has been favourably received by Commissioner Bulc's cabinet.

CPMR also calls for the 2011 Transport White Paper to be updated to reinstate modal shift and effective promotion of Short Sea Shipping among the priorities of the transport policy, in view of their contribution to the EU's climate change objectives¹.

3.2.2 Motorways of the Sea (MoS): our expectations of the Detailed Implementation Plan and next call for projects

CPMR's priorities are detailed in the [technical note of February 2017](#): "Motorways of the Sea (MoS): contribution to the review of their priorities and implementation". They have been included in the Policy Position on the post-2020 MFF.

In the short term, the European Coordinator, Brian Simpson, is due to reveal early in March 2018 an updated version of the Detailed Implementation Plan of June 2016. It will be interesting to see to what extent the modifications proposed by CPMR have been taken into account. DG Move is due to publish a MoS/CEF call for projects in spring 2018. This will be the last call of the current programming period. We will need to examine the terms of the call to see whether they do in fact allow the islands and the peripheral regions to compete with any real chance of success.

3.2.3 Recognise the ports as cross-border entities

CPMR's priorities on financial support for ports are also included in the policy position on the post-2020 MFF.

CPMR considers that ports are **by their very nature** cross-border entities. Cross-border projects are, quite rightly, a high priority of the CEF, and benefit from a preferential co-financing rate of 40%. In contrast however, port infrastructure work only benefits from a rate of 20%. These rates should be aligned for the post-2020 period (CEF II).

3.2.4 Facilitate discussions between Regions, Geographical Commissions, ONGs and DG Move on developments in sustainable maritime transport

One of the sessions of the CPMR Transport Working Group's meeting on 28 November 2017 in Brussels, was devoted to sustainable transport. The group heard the views of a benchmark ONG (T&E, Transport and Environment) on transport and environment policy and current developments at EU level. There was also a presentation of regional policies and initiatives at the level of the

¹ The 2011 White Paper did not consider maritime transport to be a valid alternative to road transport for distances of less than 300 km.

CPMR's North Sea Commission. (The presentations can be viewed at: <http://cpmr.org/event/cpmr-intercommission-working-group-on-transport-2/>)

It is essential that we continue to organise such discussions, because they allow us to enhance the collective expertise of the CPMR on a subject which will be at the core of the EU transport agenda in the coming years.

The next meeting of the CPMR Transport Working Group could once again devote a session to this theme and facilitate discussion between the Geographical Commissions on the issues involved. The following are some of the current issues which would be appropriate topics for presentations and discussions:

- regions in SECAs (Sulphur Emission Control Areas) or regions affected by the 0.5% cap on sulphur content in marine fuel on 1 January 2020
- the North Sea and the Baltic Sea: NECAs (NOx Emission Control Areas) as from 1 January 2021
- development of shore-side electricity in ports
- new fuelling solutions for vessels: hydrogen, battery technology, etc.

To sum up ...

CPMR calls for a revival of the EU policy of support for modal shift, and therefore of support for short sea shipping. This should be reflected in an update of the 2011 Transport White Paper and be based on pilot test projects supported by the European Parliament.

The post-2020 period should see an updated Motorways of the Seas policy and greater financial support for ports, which should be considered as cross-border entities.

The CPMR Transport Working Group will organise discussions between the Geographical Commissions on best practice in the greening of maritime transport and on preparing for changes to regulations and legislation.

4 Improving air accessibility

4.1 A new “transport” priority for CPMR

Improving air accessibility has a high priority for CPMR. This topic has been discussed, both within the organisation and with the European Commission, at the June and November 2017 meetings of the CPMR Transport Working Group and at the General Assembly in Helsinki.

Two technical notes have provided input for these discussions:

- “ [CPMR and aviation: avenues to explore in the EU context](#)” – May 2017. This paper described the EU context and presented a “menu” of specific topics which could be addressed by CPMR. Member Regions were asked to take part in a survey in order to target the CPMR's action on the identified priorities.
- – “[CPMR and aviation: summary of the member Regions' priorities and next steps on Aviation](#)” – September 2017.

4.2 Growing interest in “air connectivity” at EU level

The European Parliament and Council have encouraged the Commission to develop its work on air connectivity. DG MOVE is working together with the intergovernmental organisation Eurocontrol to develop an air connectivity indicator which would serve as a basis for a European air transport policy. It is likely that such an indicator would be used as guidance for the following European instruments:

- guidelines on state aid for airports and airlines
- legislation on Public Service Obligations
- regulation on the allocation of slots in airports
- implementation of the EU emissions trading system for the aviation sector
- regulations of the European funds which can potentially support air transport infrastructure and services: CEF, ERDF, Cohesion Fund, etc.

CPMR has of course stated that it is interested in this medium-term approach, which should make it possible to take account of the least accessible territories and should improve travel times, for both passengers and goods, to the peripheral and outermost regions. CPMR has therefore established a working relationship with Eurocontrol, and was pleased to welcome David Marsh, who is in charge of the development of the air connectivity indicator, to the meeting on 28 November 2017, where he gave a [presentation](#). In the debate that followed it was clear that the Regions were very interested in this instrument, and also that DG MOVE and Eurocontrol would welcome any contributions from CPMR and its Regions at this stage when the indicator is still “under development”.

It is important therefore that we pursue this partnership. It will give the CPMR Regions access to top-level information concerning the initiatives the Commission is likely to take on the basis of this indicator, and therefore to be able to react in time so that their concerns are taken into account.

4.3 Draft CPMR action plan: proposals

4.3.1 Mobilisation around three main themes

In light of the responses from the CPMR Regions to the questionnaire on air transport and the discussions at the transport working group meeting on 28 November, three themes have emerged as priorities for an action plan:

- connectivity, to include the issues of state aid, Public Service Obligations and allocation of slots
- European financing for air transport infrastructure
- air transport and sustainable development: emissions, “clean fuels”, noise and other sources of pollution.

Each of these themes could be monitored by two “lead” Regions, preferably with different geographical characteristics so as to cover as many territorial situations as possible. These Regions will be indicated to the Political Bureau at its meeting on 8 March 2018.

4.3.2 A joint, but flexible, calendar

The lead Regions will present the results of their initial approaches to the next meeting of the CPMR Transport Working Group (May/June 2018).

The transport working groups of the CPMR Geographical Commissions will be invited to liaise with the lead Regions before and after the CPMR transport group meeting.

Meetings planned with the General Secretariat will put the lead Regions in contact – as and when necessary – with relevant key contacts at DG Move and Eurocontrol.

One of the roles of the lead Regions will be to monitor EU developments in their area of responsibility, and to help the General Secretariat prepare appropriate actions.

4.3.3 A CPMR air transport event in 2018?

The level of interest currently shown on the one hand by DG MOVE concerning the CPMR's involvement in the policy area of air transport, and on the other hand by the member Regions themselves, lead us to consider whether the time is right to organise a CPMR event on these issues.

This can only be envisaged if we have a sound basis comprising positions and proposals, shared by the CPMR network. Depending on the progress made within the organisation on the work under way, particularly during the second quarter of 2018, and on whether a member Region would be willing and able to host such an event, a conference could be organised in the second half of 2018.

To sum up ...

CPMR will follow up on its mobilisation on air transport by reinforcing the partnership established with DG MOVE and Eurocontrol concerning the development of an air connectivity indicator.

Actions will be organised in relation with the Geographical Commissions and lead Regions, focusing on three main issues: connectivity, infrastructure financing, and sustainable development.

If sufficient progress is made in drafting proposals, an event focusing on CPMR and air transport, hosted by a member Region, will be organised in the second half of 2018.



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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.

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