



REPORT ON CPMR ACTIVITIES

(October 2010 – September 2011)



Dear Friends,



At the close of my first year as President of CPMR, I have great pleasure in sharing with you this report on our activities during the period 2010-2011.

In a context underscored by the persistent economic crisis and the implementation of austerity measures that have affected people everywhere, 2010-2011 has been punctuated by fervent debates about solidarity within the euro zone and the ambitions of the European project. In parallel, the Arab Spring revolutions unfurled a wave of hope for the democratic world and raised challenges for the European Union.

Over the course of these months, which have been both difficult and intense in activity, CPMR – thanks to its Member Regions, its six Geographical Commissions, and a highly motivated team – has pursued a long-term political reflection and carried out effective lobbying action on European guidelines.

In line with the choices made by its General Assembly in Aberdeen, CPMR has focused its action on three basic policy areas: cohesion, maritime affairs, and accessibility. On each of these three priorities and the issues involved, CPMR has succeeded in making its proposals heard.

With regard to cohesion, CPMR has maintained its historical role as an organisation spearheading the defence of regional policy and the territorial approach. On a range of essential points, the European Commission's proposals – on the budget and architecture of regional policy, on governance and the idea of a Territorial Pact, and on the macro-regions – integrate the principles advocated by CPMR. In the field of maritime policy, it is thanks to CPMR's continuous support that the Integrated Maritime Policy and a whole range of maritime issues have continued to be developed, both at overall European level as well as at the level of the different sea basins. Lastly, in the area of accessibility, CPMR has continued to make the voice of the peripheries heard in the debate on the Trans-European Transport Networks in particular, as well as on the EU's transport policy in general.

Beyond this, 2010-2011 has represented a major political step forward for CPMR, with the launch of a new reflection on a policy area of vital importance: the principle of solidarity. We need to continue to develop our vision in this policy area, but you will have noticed that since CPMR re-opened the debate on the meaning and expression of European solidarity, this concept seems to have regained a certain prestige. I noted with some satisfaction, for example, that President Barroso made abundant reference to solidarity when he presented the proposed financial perspectives in July. This illustrates once again CPMR's position as a dynamic stimulus of the European project.

Now that the negotiations on the future EU programming period are fully under way, CPMR and its Member Regions are actively promoting their values, and their voice is counting in the European debate.

**Jean-Yves Le Drian, President of CPMR,
President of Brittany Region (FR)**

Dear Friends,



In the course of this year, the peripheries of Europe and the Regions of the CPMR have been subjected to considerable political, economic and social upheaval. In these turbulent times, CPMR has succeeded in tackling the challenges facing the Regions and responding to them by bringing forward strong proposals on cohesion, maritime affairs, and accessibility and well as on the link between the principle of solidarity and the meaning of the European project.

Through its action, CPMR constitutes a platform for exchanges between its Member Regions on policy-related and technical questions. It has upheld the idea that the Regions are one element in the response to the challenges facing Europe, and that their effective and significant involvement in European governance is one of the keys to economic recovery and the renewal of the European political project.

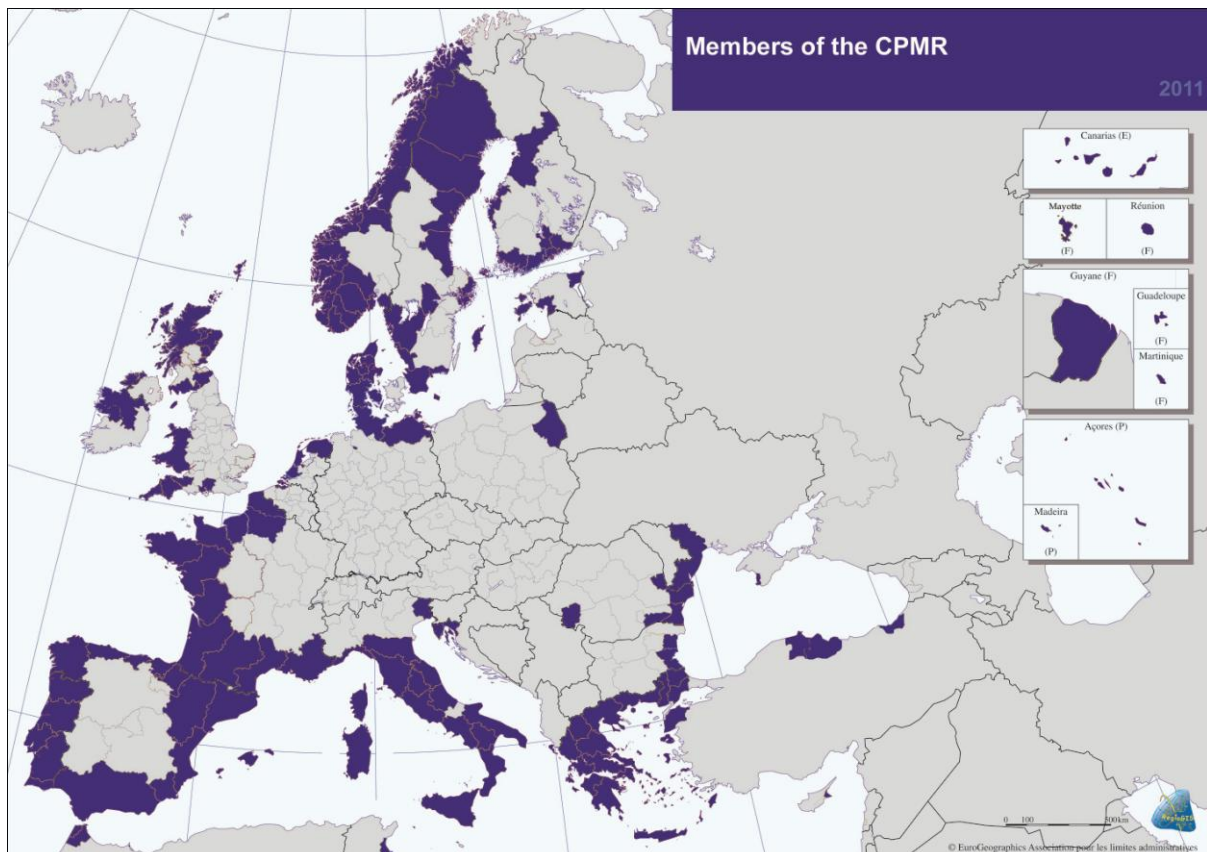
To a large extent, the guidelines adopted by the European institutions have given the CPMR's proposals more than their due. This is the result of CPMR's acknowledged capacity to work with the European institutions, which is also reflected in the regularity of the high level meetings held at in the initiative of CPMR or in which it takes part on a regular basis. For example, CPMR is involved in the Council meetings dealing with regional policy and the territorial agenda. Each year, CPMR has a meeting with the President of the European Commission, and is honoured to welcome at its General Assembly at least two members of the European Commission, influential members of the European Parliament, and high-level representatives of the current Presidency of the European Union. Together with the numerous other high-level meetings in which CPMR takes part throughout the year, these meetings are essential for preparing and promoting its ideas and proposals.

CPMR would not have been able to achieve these results without the support of a competent and devoted team, in Rennes and in Brussels. Together with the Executive Secretaries of the Geographical Commissions, the members of this team are the backbone of the CPMR. In the course of this year, CPMR has lost two of its Directors: François Desrentes, who has retired, and Marie-Ange Orihuela, who has taken up alternative employment opportunities. We wish them both the very best and thank them for their commitment and enthusiasm. In September 2011, Andrew Sors joined the team as Strategy Director.

Today CPMR is fully determined to pursue its action and is grateful to its Member Regions for the trust and support they continue to show. Now more than ever it is essential that the peripheral and maritime Regions of Europe join forces around their common challenges. As has been shown over the many years of its existence, CPMR is an ideal platform for thinking and acting successfully.

Eleni Marianou, Secretary General of CPMR

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EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY AND THE BUDGET

Global context of solidarity



In the difficult economic and political context in which Europe finds itself today, CPMR thought it was important to open up a wide-ranging reflection on European solidarity, including not only the political, budgetary and financial aspects but also the social dimension. The launch of this reflection at the Political Bureau meeting in February 2011 (Basse-Normandie, FR), at the initiative of President Le Drian, signalled an ambitious and important fundamental step forward in the way in which CPMR addresses the European debate.

The framing, objectives and implementation of this initiative were first discussed in detail with the European institutions and various other organisations. This process included a meeting with Commissioner Barnier, in charge of the internal market, in March 2011. On this occasion, the original complementarity between the internal market and cohesion policy was reaffirmed.

The initiative was then formalised in a technical paper entitled *“European solidarity after the crisis: from theory to practice”*, which was used as a basis for a debate during the meeting of the Political Bureau in June 2011 (Azores, PT). Dirk Ahner, Director General of DG Regio (European Commission), together with experts in the various aspects of solidarity that were addressed, took part in this debate with the members of CPMR. In the months ahead, CPMR will continue to develop this approach, which will be on the agenda for the General Assembly in Aarhus.

Financial framework of the European Union 2014-2020

The real negotiations on the European financial framework began with the publication in October 2010 of the Commission’s Communication on *“The EU Budget Review”*. CPMR responded rapidly to this in the framework of the official consultation: *“Response from the CPMR to the European Commission’s Communication – The EU Budget Review”*. The principles advanced by CPMR were debated and endorsed by the Political Bureau meeting in February 2011 (Basse-Normandie), in the presence of Hervé Jouanjean, Director General of DG Budget. This phase of the negotiations served to define the basic principles which would underpin the EC’s proposals.

Between February and June 2011, the European Commission worked on its detailed proposals for the financial perspectives post-2013. During this period, marked by an unaccustomed atmosphere of secrecy and the circulation of contradictory information, CPMR worked informally and in anticipation of the EC proposals, arguing notably in favour of maintaining an ambitious budget, at least equivalent to that of the 2007-2013 period, and maintaining a cohesion policy for all European Regions. For example in June a meeting was organised with President Barroso, in cooperation with the Committee of the Regions and the principal Associations representing European regional and local authorities. A joint message was presented to President Barroso at this meeting.

In June 2011, the Commission published its Communication on the financial

perspectives for 2014-2020. Although a number of points remained to be clarified in detail in the legislative proposals for each policy, CPMR in its reaction, *“Financial framework 2014-2020: a proposed level below which it would be unacceptable to go”*, published in July 2011, welcomed the proposals, which for the most part at this stage endorse the broad guidelines it supports.

Following on from its work on the economic and financial crisis in 2009 and 2010, CPMR’s action on the post-2013 budget has been based on a study and specific analyses of the state of European growth and European public finances. A technical paper, *“Reflections on European growth and the Euro crisis”*, will be debated at the General Assembly in Aarhus.



Regional Policy and Territorial Cohesion

In its Fifth Report on Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion, published in October 2010, the European Commission outlined its broad proposals for cohesion policy after 2013. These take on board the guidelines that CPMR has long been promoting, such as the principle of a regional policy covering all the Regions, the outlines of a category of intermediate Regions, multi-level governance in the framework of partnership contracts, integration with the Common Strategic Framework, and the confirmation of the principle of macro-regional strategies. CPMR therefore warmly welcomed these proposals in its reaction, *“CPMR’s response to the Fifth report on the Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion of the EU”*, endorsed by its Political Bureau in February 2011 (Basse-Normandie). In January 2011, CPMR took part in the Cohesion Forum, which gave it an opportunity to reiterate its position in the presence of Commissioner Johannes Hahn, in charge of regional policy.

The debate then focused on the more technical aspects of the implementation of regional policy, but where there are important political issues. These include the debate on conditionality which has been closely followed by CPMR. A policy position, *“Seizing the opportunity of internal conditionality linked to regional policy”*, supporting the principle of conditionality but expressing reservations about its functioning, was approved by the Political Bureau meeting in June 2011 (Azores), following a debate in which Dirk Ahner, Director General of DG Regio, took part. In June 2011, CPMR’s position was also raised with President Barroso.



In these decisive moments in the negotiations, the interaction with the Regions represented on the Political Bureau was strengthened through the creation of a permanent group of focal points (the Executive Board).

In parallel, CPMR has continued to monitor the intergovernmental Territorial Agenda Process, which examines and debates the territorial dimension of EU policies. In this context, CPMR took part in the informal meetings of ministers responsible for spatial planning in Liège in November 2010 and in Budapest in May 2011.

Lastly, CPMR has also continued to work on employment and training issues with the help of the working group led by Aquitaine region. In March 2011, CPMR represented the Regions at the European Parliament hearing organised by Elisabeth Morin-Chartier MEP, Chair of the ESF (European Social Fund) working group and rapporteur on ESF questions.

CPMR’s proposals, drafted on the basis in particular of a study covering the territorial dimension and the simplification of the ESF, were detailed in a technical paper, *“Proposals for a territorialized and simplified implementation of the ESF within the framework of cohesion policy”*, published in April 2011. They were subsequently included in the overall proposals made by CPMR concerning regional policy.

Macro-Regions

The proposals in the European Commission’s Fifth Report on Cohesion signal the Commission’s support for the macro-regional approaches, a key issue for CPMR. This is due largely to the action of CPMR, which has continued to defend the policy positions it defined in 2010 on the macro-regions.



In parallel, the Geographical Commissions of the CPMR have been particularly active at the level of their own sea basins. Thanks to the work of the Atlantic Arc Commission, a European Strategy for the Atlantic will be presented in

November 2011 in Lisbon, in the presence of President Barroso, Commissioner Damanaki, and CPMR. The Baltic Sea Commission, which is involved in the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region through several of its member Regions which are leading flagship projects or horizontal actions, will be represented at the Strategy’s [Annual Forum](#) in Gdansk from 24 to 26 October 2011. The North Sea Commission has continued its work on a strategy for the North Sea, and in June 2011 published a consultation document which will be presented to the General Assembly in Aarhus. The Intermediterranean Commission has also continued to develop proposals, which could be linked in with a specific initiative for the Adriatic and Ionian Seas. The question of a strategy for the Black Sea was debated at the General Assembly of the Balkan and Black Sea Regional Commission, held in Varna in July.

On the basis of an analysis of the developments of the last few months, CPMR is looking into the possibility of setting up a mechanism for a continuous dialogue between the Geographical Commissions on policy and technical matters relating to the macro-regional initiatives.

Research and Innovation



Before the presentation of the European Commission's proposals on the Common Strategic Framework for innovation and research, expected towards the end of 2011, and with the support of the working group led by Midi-Pyrénées region (FR), CPMR was invited to take part in the work of the EC's expert group on the links between regional policy, the FPRTD (Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development), the CIP (Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme) and the EIT (European Institute of Innovation and Technology). The group's final report was debated at the second WIRE conference held in Debrecen (HU) in June 2011, in which CPMR took part.

CPMR subsequently put forward its proposals for the European Commission's Green Paper on the funding of research and innovation in a policy position entitled "*Response to the EC Green Paper on a common strategic framework for EU research and innovation funding*", adopted by its Political Bureau in June 2011. CPMR's position was presented in person to Commissioner Geoghegan-Quinn, in charge of research and innovation, during a conference held in Brussels in July 2011.

CPMR has pursued its activities in the framework of the "smart specialisation platform" set up by the European Commission and in which CPMR has been invited to take part. The Conference is also pursuing its involvement in the ESPON-AMCER project led by Tuscany Region, launched in June 2011, which aims to develop a regional vision of the impact of the FPRTD and the CIP. CPMR also continues its involvement in the IC-MED project, coordinated by Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region.

Energy - Climate

With the support of its Energy-Climate group, led by Navarre Region (ES), CPMR has pursued its work on the territorial dimension of the EU's energy policy. CPMR formalised its proposals in a policy position entitled "*The evolving EU energy policy: taking the territorial dimension into account*", adopted by the Political Bureau in February. This has formed the basis of its ongoing discussions with the EU institutions.

In parallel, CPMR is developing a number of initiatives to coordinate the actions of the Geographical Commissions on energy efficiency and the promotion of renewable energies. These include the involvement of CPMR or its Commissions in various projects, or the setting-up of specific exchanges with them. The projects include Elih-Med for the Mediterranean, Isle-Pact for the Islands Commission, and Build with Care for the North Sea Commission. CPMR has also been involved with a number of Atlantic Arc Commission initiatives on renewable energies.

CPMR has also paid special attention to the proposed Directive on energy efficiency, with a view to possible lobbying of the European Parliament.

Climate-related issues have been the focus of specific action consisting for the time being in CPMR's involvement with the expert and monitoring group on climate change, set up by DG Climate, which discusses key European projects being prepared in particular in the field of energy. CPMR is also still involved in the nrg4SD network, whose activities will be presented at the General Assembly in Aarhus.

Agriculture and rural development

Before the European Commission publishes its proposals, and with the support of the working group led by Andalusia and Pays de la Loire, CPMR has been developing its own proposals on the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy. These were discussed with Commissioner Ciolos, in charge of agriculture and rural development, at a meeting held in January 2011.

Because this is an important policy area from the point of view of territorial cohesion, and given the size of the budget, CPMR will continue to analyse the issues and bring forward proposals, in particular after the publication of the legislative proposals in October 2011, working closely with the Commission and the Parliament. It will continue to argue, as its priorities, that the first pillar of the CAP must take into account the characteristics specific to each of the territories, and that responsibility for the implementation of the second pillar (rural development) must be given to the Regions.

CPMR has also pursued its involvement in Agiregio, a platform of 11 interregional organisations, set up and coordinated by CPMR.

Neighbourhood policy

CPMR has taken part in the reflections on the EU's relations with its neighbouring countries since these were launched, supported by its External Cooperation working group, led by Catalunya. In recent months, CPMR has initiated or supported a number of initiatives concerning various regional areas in the North (Arctic, Russia), the South (the Mediterranean) and the East (Black Sea) of Europe. These are summarised in the technical paper published in July 2011, "*CPMR activities linked to external cooperation 2010-2011*". A technical paper dealing specifically with the Nordic dimension of the EU and links with the Baltic area and Russia, "*Cooperation in the Northern Area of Europe: Actors and Proposals for Actions*", was prepared in April 2011. Concerning the Mediterranean area, CPMR continues to be involved in the MedGovernance project. The President of CPMR's Balkans & Black Sea Commission, Pavlos Damianidis, Vice-President of East Macedonia and Thrace (GR) outlined CPMR's priorities for the Black Sea at the first meeting of the Conference of the Regional and Local Authorities for the Eastern Partnership, which took place on 8 September 2011 in Poznań. CPMR's actions in this policy are summarised in its policy position "*Turn Neighbourhood Policy into a Genuine Cohesion Policy at the Borders of the European Union*", to which the Geographical Commissions concerned have contributed and which will be debated at the General Assembly in Aarhus.

Development

With the support of CPMR, the role played by the Regions in development has achieved greater recognition both within the EU and in international bodies. Alongside this, the tools available to the Regions for participating in development aid have also been examined. An important element here is the European Commission's proposal to substantially increase the EU's external action budget in the next programming period.

In November 2010, a meeting was organised with Commissioner Piebalgs, in charge of development, and a policy position entitled "*For active Regions within a new, more inclusive and partnership-based EU development policy*", in response to the European Commission's Green Paper on Development, was adopted by the Political Bureau in February 2011.



CPMR has also taken part in a number of other activities organised by PLATFORMA (European Platform of Regional and Local Authorities for Development), taking part in a number of technical initiatives as well as having a more political involvement. Represented by Catalunya, CPMR took part for example in the European Parliament hearing on the role of RLAs in development, organised in October 2010. A meeting with Commissioner Piebalgs was also organised in July 2011.

CPMR has also continued to be involved in the activities of the ORU-FOGAR network, whose work has focused on food security and the notion of a territorial approach to development. The activities of ORU-FOGAR will be presented at the General Assembly in Aarhus.

MARITIME AFFAIRS

Integrated Maritime Policy

Before the European Commission published its proposals for the EU budget, the forward-looking scenarios drawn up by CPMR in January 2011 formed the basis of a number of discussions with the EU institutions and CPMR member Regions, for example at a brainstorming meeting held in Brussels in January 2011 and at the Political Bureau meeting in February 2011 in which Lowri Evans, Director General of DG Mare, took part. CPMR has since actively supported – in particular vis-à-vis the European Parliament – the EC's proposals for the IMP programme for the current period up until 2013, and the themes proposed for the development of the IMP after 2014. CPMR's point of view on the IMP and maritime affairs in general is contained in a paper entitled "*The future of the Integrated Maritime Policy and the CPMR maritime agenda*", which will be debated at the General Assembly in Aarhus.

In parallel, another line of action has been to look closely at how the various priorities of the IMP, and their governance, can be developed at the level of the different sea basins. This work has been carried out to a large extent by the Geographical Commissions. They are in general very active in relation to maritime issues, which are very important in the context of the macro-regional strategies.

- Vasco da Gama -

Youth mobility in maritime careers

The action launched by a group of Regions led by Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (DE), aiming to strengthen youth mobility in maritime careers, has been pursued through approaches to the European institutions and a phase of building links between the Regions involved in the initiative. A number of themes have been identified, and exchanges are now being developed around these. CPMR also had an opportunity to put forward its proposals concerning the Vasco da Gama project at the European Maritime Days, organised in Gdansk in May 2011, the main theme of which was maritime employment.



Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)/Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP)



Following the opening of a public consultation by the European Commission on a possible European directive, CPMR has strengthened its expertise on this topic with the support of several member Regions involved in cooperation projects implemented at the level of the sea basins and linked with its Geographical Commissions. CPMR adopted a policy position on this issue, entitled "*Response to the EC consultation on Maritime Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Zone Management*", which was endorsed by its Political Bureau in June 2011. It was also closely involved with the launch of a political debate in the European Parliament, through a debate organised in June 2011 by its Seas and Coastal Areas Intergroup at which it was represented by Noord-Holland Region. In parallel, CPMR is involved in the EC expert group on monitoring the 2002 Recommendation on ICZM. Lastly, the specific question of marine data was the subject of a seminar hosted by Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region. To structure its future action, CPMR has set up a working group, led by Noord-Holland Region. ICZM/MSP will be on the agenda for debate at the 2011 General Assembly. CPMR has also been contacted by a number of international networks with a view to sharing its expertise and building possible partnerships. The question of what follow-up should be given to these requests will be discussed over the coming months.

Marine and Maritime Research

CPMR has primarily been promoting the voice of the Regions in the debates on the purpose, governance and funding, notably via the Structural Funds, of major European infrastructures for marine research, by taking part and inviting certain of its member Regions to take part in the discussions of the European Commission's expert group on this subject. CPMR was also closely involved in the organisation in March 2011 of a debate on this subject at the Seas and Coastal Areas Intergroup. Lastly, it played an active part in the ESFRI (European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures) Symposium organised in Brest (Brittany, FR) in June 2011 on marine research infrastructures.

CPMR also supports the maritime dimension in the future European programmes for research and innovation, and has, for example, taken part in an appeal launched by several organisations concerning the European Institute of Technology.

Shipbuilding

Thought is being given to specific initiatives that CPMR could take in this area. A number of ideas are being studied.

Fisheries

With the support of the CPMR "Fisheries" group, led by Shetland Region, CPMR has taken an active part in the debate on the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). Lobbying of the European institutions has been based on the key points set out in its policy position, "A Sustainable future for fisheries in Europe", approved by the Political Bureau in February 2011.

Maritime safety

Following on from the wish expressed to revive its action on maritime safety around the idea of an "Erika 4" package, CPMR's first steps have been to renew its links with the different European institutions and other organisations, and to identify specific areas for action. Following the publication of the Transport White Paper, CPMR was actively involved, with the European Parliament's Seas and Coastal Areas Intergroup, in organising a debate which took place in June 2011 on maritime safety, maritime surveillance and the question of coastguards. Galicia represented CPMR on this occasion. In order to structure and broaden its action, CPMR has started to work with the Swedish Regions of Skåne and Blekinge on the preparation of an Erika 4 seminar, to be held at the European Parliament in December 2011, in collaboration with the Seas and Coastal Areas Intergroup. Through its action, CPMR is making a major contribution to taking forward the European agenda on maritime safety.



TEN-T

In the framework of the CPMR transport group, led by Aragon Region (ES), and through an initiative that closely involves the Geographical Commissions, CPMR has drawn up proposals on the ports and corridors to be included in the core network of the future TEN-T. Its work in this area has also been based on intensive discussions with the European institutions, including a meeting with Commissioner Kallas in January 2011, at which the Commissioner proposed the idea of a special programme for the peripheries in the future TEN-T. In February 2011, CPMR's priorities were presented in Marseille in the framework of the MedGovernance project, which involves a number of member Regions of the Intermediterranean Commission.



CPMR has also invested considerable effort in other issues covered by the White Paper, and is developing a long-term reflection on the new transport and logistics paradigms. Draft CPMR policy positions on the TEN-T Review and other aspects of the Transport White Paper ("*TEN-T: priorities for CPMR*" and "*The European Transport Policy White Paper: some observations and potential areas of work for CPMR*") will be debated at the General Assembly in Aarhus.

ACCESSIBILITY

Maritime transport

The focal point for CPMR's action in the area of maritime transport was the seminar organised in Gijón (Asturias) in April 2011. This saw a strong convergence of views between the Regions, the European Parliament, and port directors in favour of changing the criteria proposed by the European Commission for the inclusion of ports in the TEN-T core network. In a declaration entitled "*The future of maritime transport in the lead-up to 2020*", published in Gijón, CPMR reacted, from the point of view of maritime transport, to the European Commission's White Paper on the strategy "Transport 2050", and reiterated its key messages with regard to the TEN-T review.

The seminar in Gijón also provided an opportunity to launch an innovative initiative setting up a European grouping on short- and middle-distance European transport, aiming to produce studies and proposals for the European institutions in a context in which the principle stakeholders show more interest in long-distance transport. This grouping aims to bring together representatives of the Regions, cities, regional ship-owners, ports and experts. A first meeting of this think-tank/lobby group will take place at the end of 2011 or beginning of 2012.