



NEWSLETTER - January 2012 – 2012, a year full of challenges! - WWW.CRPM.ORG

ARTICLE

2012, ONE OF THE MOST CHALLENGING YEARS EVER AHEAD OF US

2011 has gone, leaving behind a sense of bitterness from the biggest crisis Europe has faced over the last few decades. Our Regions are suffering the strongest crisis on public finances at the time when economic growth and innovation are most needed! The European Project has been under attack as a result of the Eurozone crisis, whereas a collective European approach is definitely what is needed to bring back trust and prosperity to Europe. Trust is what is missing and looking inward is what we should avoid doing! Regions are fundamental in building this trust to Europe's citizens through social safety nets for individuals and recovery plans for businesses, partnership arrangements with a variety of multi-sectoral stakeholders and innovative ways of making use of their natural assets and natural resources...

Today, Europe needs more Europe! And more than ever, Europe needs its Regions. The ongoing discussions on the EU budget must take into account the solidarity principle which has been framing the European project since the Treaty of Rome back in 1957, not in terms of expenditure but in terms of investment!

For the CPMR, this principle is fundamental to build trust in Europe and help boost the economy. It has been at the core of the EU internal market and of EU territorial and cohesion policies, from production to services, from energy to the digital economy, from sustainability to efficiency.

On 10th February, following on from our Political Bureau, we are organising a Seminar at the Committee of the Regions on "European Solidarity as a driving force behind the development of Europe's territories. What are the challenges for EU Cohesion Policy 2014-2020?" The Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Laszlo ANDOR, and Ministers from the Trio of the EU Presidency (Denmark, Poland and Cyprus), have already confirmed their presence for a debate that aims to bring the Institutions and the territories closer together for a more inclusive governance model.

Although there is still much uncertainty as to the size of the next EU budget and therefore of the regional policy framework, I choose to remain optimistic. Cohesion Policy is the Policy that will effectively help implement the EU 2020 Strategy for growth and jobs and EU solidarity will re-establish the fundamental aspects of the European project facing the financial markets.

Europe has more than one Berlin wall to break down throughout 2012. The common currency will continue to be under attack and Member States and Regions will have to cope with the debt crisis and restoring confidence and sound financial management. Europe is what we have, what our children know. The European project shall get stronger after the crisis. The CPMR and its 160 Member Regions wish to contribute to creating this new European dynamism that is needed, based on structural reforms, innovation, basic infrastructures and a European governance based on solidarity and trust.

The European Commission is with us. The financial framework for 2014-2020 proposed last June, maintains the current budget until 2020 and calls for a "partnership contract" fully associating the Regions, to better shape and implement Regional Policy on the ground.

If confirmed by Member States, this shall be an ambitious plan and as our President Jean-Yves Le Drian has said, "it represents a new cause for hope, so we can make the vital investments that our people and businesses need, to ensure their well-being and development, in all areas."

Dear readers, we all know that 2012 will not be an easy year. However, I do hope that this very complex period of negotiations will allow for more Europe and less withdrawal into self-interest.

The only way for the EU to recover is to go forward together in support of growth and prosperity across all sectors of our economy. What is needed is a proper shake-up of the banking and financial sectors and for much-wanted confidence to be built among Europeans, in particular young Europeans, in the European project as a whole. Europe is the most advanced continent, with the most knowledgeable and informed citizens. We have what we need. We must preserve what we have gained.

The road ahead is long, but we can make it. Happy new year to everybody!

ARTICLE

A European Strategy for the Atlantic

The CPMR Atlantic Arc Commission welcomes the European Commission's adoption of the Communication "[Developing a maritime strategy for the Atlantic Ocean area](#)" on 21 November 2011.

This Communication follows the establishment of several European strategies at the level of a sea basin. The first European macro-regional regional strategy was developed for the Baltic Sea in 2009, followed in 2010 by the Strategy for the Danube. It is now the Atlantic's turn to benefit from its own strategic approach.

However, this policy differs from previous approaches, since it is a strategy adopted under the Integrated Maritime Policy and not Regional Policy. It is following a request from the Council in June 2011, and after intense lobbying from the CPMR Atlantic Arc Commission, that the European Commission has drawn up this Communication aiming to rationalise the use of various European policies and programmes at the level of the Atlantic region.

The Atlantic Strategy focuses on five areas of action:

- 1) Promote an ecosystem approach in the Atlantic basin;
- 2) Reduce the carbon footprint;
- 3) Use resources sustainably;
- 4) Address threats and emergencies;
- 5) Generate jobs and sustainable growth.

The underlying objectives aim to protect the environment and biodiversity of the Atlantic coast and to strengthen the key maritime sectors such as tourism, sailing, maritime research and innovation, offshore energies, eco-activities, shipping, fisheries, shipbuilding and port development.

Initially, the Communication analyses the opportunities and threats that loom over the Atlantic coast. As proposed by the Atlantic Arc Commission in its [response](#) to the European Commission's Consultation in May 2011, the Communication of November 2011 proposes the introduction of an Atlantic Forum that would aim to establish an action plan by means of a series of workshops and discussion groups. This action plan will propose priority objectives as well as structuring projects across the Atlantic that could be implemented during the next programming period 2014-2020. One of the specific features of this strategy for the Atlantic is that it comes at a time when the various European programmes are being re-thought and reformed. Thus, the strategic objectives defined by the stakeholders' consultation in the context of this Atlantic Forum could be integrated in the new European legislation governing the use of various European funds (ERDF, ESF, EFF, CAP etc), which, *in fine*, should make it easier to implement the approved "Atlantic Strategy" projects.

The Atlantic Arc Commission, through its Coordination Committee, will now concentrate on developing specific proposals to define the most relevant strategic areas across the Atlantic territory, in collaboration with its various partner networks (Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities, Atlantic Transnational Network of Economic and Social Councils, Atlantic University Network etc) and thus once again put forward the expectations of the stakeholders within the Atlantic regions to the European Commission. The Atlantic Arc Commission is also expected to directly participate in the Atlantic Forum as well as in the various work of the European Commission that will be implemented throughout 2012.

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ARTICLE

A BUSY MONTH AHEAD FOR CPMR

Next month will be a particularly busy one for CPMR, not only in terms of its political activities with regard to the current negotiations on the financial perspectives 2014-2020, but also in view of the number of seminars and public hearings planned.

First of all there is the seminar on 1st February, organised by CPMR in collaboration with **Alain Cadec**, Vice-

President of the European Parliament's Fisheries Committee, and the MAREMED project, on "[The future of the European fisheries sector](#)". Taking place at the European Parliament, this event will bring together MEPs, regional authorities and the European fishing industry to look at the new prospects for EU action in fisheries and aquaculture in relation to the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy after 2012.

The following day, still at the European Parliament, there is the public hearing, "[Think different: new horizons for the maritime industries](#)", which we are organising in conjunction with the Sea and Coastal Areas Intergroup, chaired by **Corinne Lepage**, and Pays de la Loire Region. This hearing will provide an opportunity to debate the innovative diversification of shipyards in Europe and ways to strengthen industrial competitiveness and European leadership in the maritime industries. These are of course topics which are of particular importance in the Europe 2020 Strategy and in the Integrated Maritime Policy, in particular "Blue Growth".

The Islands Commission, chaired by **Ugo Cappellacci**, President of the Region of Sardegna, is organising a conference which will take place at the Committee of the Regions on 8 February on: "[How can the EU 2014-2020 Cohesion Policy integrate the EU's island dimension?](#)" The conference will debate the relevance and effectiveness of ERDF and Cohesion Fund support to Regions with specific geographic features, and the way in which the island issue will be raised in the Council and in the European Parliament in view of the budget negotiations under way.

Then, on 9 February, the [CPMR Political Bureau](#) will meet for the first time in Brussels. A number of MEPs will take part in the discussions, including **Constance Krehl**, Member of the REGI Committee and Co-rapporteur on the "General Regulation on Regional Policy", **Inés Ayala Sender**, Member of the TRAN Committee and Co-Rapporteur sur "Connecting Europe Facility", and **Alain Cadec**, Vice-President of the Fisheries Commission. The European Commission will be represented by **Nicholas Martyn**, Deputy Director General, DG REGIO, **Jean-Eric Paquet**, Director, DG Move , and **Slawomir Tokarski**, Head of Unit, DG Mare. This meeting is also taking place at the Committee of the Regions.

Lastly, "[European solidarity as a driving force behind the development of Europe's territories: what are the challenges for EU cohesion policy 2014-2020?](#)" is the subject of the seminar which will take place on 10 February, organised once again at the Committee of the Regions, with the participation of COR President **Mercedes Bresso**. Speakers will include **Laszlo Andor**, European Commissioner in charge of Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, **Elzbieta Bienkowska**, Polish Minister for Regional Development, and **Andreas Mavroyiannis**, Deputy Minister for EU Affairs of Cyprus. The European Parliament will also be represented, by **Lambert Van Nistelrooij**, Member of the REGI Committee and Co-rapporteur on the general regulation on Regional Policy and by **Danuta Hübner**, President of the REGI Committee.

If you are interested in attending any of these meetings, please go to our website www.crpm.org where you will find all the relevant information including meeting times, or contact our office.

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SOCIAL NETWORKS

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EVENTS

1 February

Seminar on "The Future of the European Fisheries Sector, European Parliament, Brussels (BE)

<http://www.crpm.org/en/index.php?act=6,1,2,256>

2 February

Public Hearing on "Think different: new horizons for the maritime industries", European Parliament, Brussels (BE)

<http://www.crpm.org/en/index.php?act=6,1,2,257>

8 February

Meeting on cohesion organised by the CPMR Islands Commission, CoR Brussels (BE)

<http://www.crpm.org/index.php?act=6,1,2,258>

9 February

Meeting of the CPMR Political Bureau, CoR, Brussels (BE)

<http://www.crpm.org/en/index.php?act=6,1,2,254>

10 February

Seminar "European Solidarity as a driving force behind the development of Europe's territories - What are the challenges for EU Cohesion Policy 2014-2020?" CoR, Brussels (BE)

<http://www.crpm.org/en/index.php?act=6,1,2,253>

13 February - 16 February

European Parliament Plenary Session", Brussels (BE)

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/plenary/home.do?language=EN>

14 February - 16 February

Plenary session 93rd plenary session of the Committee of the Regions, CoR, Brussels (BE)

<http://www.cor.europa.eu/pages/EventTemplate.aspx?view=detail&id=9ab2dcbb-8cb8-4594-a883-34d139d9b339>

LEGAL NOTICE

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