



CPMR INTERMEDITERRANEAN
COMMISSION

Summing-up, conclusions and minutes of the Intermediterranean Commission General Assembly

6/7 July 2017 – Naples (Campania-IT)

I. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE INTERMEDITERRANEAN COMMISSION

The **Intermediterranean Commission's (IMC) Annual General Assembly** (GA) successfully took place at the *Fondazione Mediterraneo* in Naples (Campania, IT) on 6/7 July 2017. It gathered members of the Intermediterranean Commission, together with key partner Institutions (Union for the Mediterranean-UfM, MedCities, UNIMED), and external stakeholders (European Commission, EEAS, Interreg ADRION, MED, ENI CBC Med programs), including the partners of the PANORAMED platform project (Interreg MED Axis 4 on Governance).

The first day was dedicated to side technical events, addressing internal issues and gathering members of the Intermediterranean Commission's '[Economic and Social Cohesion](#)' and '[Integrated Maritime Policy and Transport](#)' [Working Groups](#).

- Discussions focused on the one hand on the advancement of the '**Sustainable and Cultural Tourism**' Task Force works, as well as on its ongoing and future initiatives and projects related to sustainable tourism (eg. Mitomed + , Co-Evolve, Civitas-Destinations, Herit-Data, MD.net).
- On the other hand, they addressed the new [IMC Task Force on the 'Follow up at regional level of the UfM Blue Economy Agenda'](#) and provided updates on the progress of [the Bologna Charter's Joint Action Plan process](#).

Afterwards, the **1st part of the General Assembly was held to discuss internal matters**. The General Assembly discussed in particular the amendments to the Final Declaration, and approved the following documents:

- The conclusion of the last Plenary in the Azores in November 2016;
- The agenda of the 2017 General Assembly in Naples;
- [Global Action Plan of the Intermediterranean Commission 2017-2018](#) (ratification of the decision of the Political Bureau);
- Action Plans of the 4 Intermediterranean Commission Working groups;
- Activity report 2017;
- Financial documents (accounts 2016, updated budget for 2017).

The members of the Intermediterranean Commission Political Bureau also approved the conclusions and summary of the last meeting held in Barcelona on the 1st of February, back to back with the West Med Stakeholder conference and were informed about:

- The current progress on EU projects;
- Intermediterranean Commission Working Groups activities and the CPMR Task force on Migration;
- Cooperation with partner organisations (UfM, Arlem, Med Cities etc.);
- Forthcoming [calendar](#) of activities for 2017-2018 .

CPMR Intermediterranean Commission

6, rue Saint-Martin - 35700 Rennes (FR)

Tel. +33 (0)2 99 35 40 60 // +34 93 554 50 49 - Email: davide.strangis@crpm.org

www.medregions.com

The **second day of General Assembly**, complemented the earlier sessions and was delivered as an [international political seminar](#).

Through the unanimous approval of the [Political Declaration of the General Assembly](#), and several [thematic sessions](#), the seminar addressed the [most pressing challenges for the Mediterranean](#) through debates on cohesion, neighborhood, migration and youth, emerging strategies & initiatives, and the main cooperation programs of the area towards a better governance.

- More specifically, the IMC Regions called for a reinforced and reinvigorated EU post-2020 Cohesion Policy. They maintained that the future Cohesion Policy should cover all regions, addressing the growing social, economic, environmental and territorial disparities, and counterbalancing the negative impacts of the Single Market. They added that it shall also foresee a single set of rules for all European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds.
- Regarding migration and youth, the IMC Regions called the EU and international communities to develop a long-term strategy to more effectively deal with the mounting pressures being faced by Europe's Southern neighborhood. Mediterranean regions should be more involved in EU decision making, receiving adequate assistance and resources to face the challenges of reception and integration of migrants.
- Besides, they recognized that Mediterranean regions are greatly affected by youth unemployment and by the social integration issues that result from it. They stressed that creating opportunities for young people is essential for growth in the Mediterranean territories.
- All Regions also gave their support to emerging initiatives and strategies that can strengthen Mediterranean cooperation and multilevel governance, such as the [West Med Initiative](#), the [EUSAIR](#) and [BLUEMED Initiative](#), along with the long list of Mediterranean cooperation projects where they are actively involved.
- Last but not least, the Members stressed the need to promote the Blue Economy in the Mediterranean together with the UfM, while ensuring the protection of the environment. On climate, environment, and biodiversity, they have reaffirmed the will of Mediterranean regions to contribute to the Paris Climate Agreement, to promote more effective water management systems, and to develop innovative energy renovations in buildings. Finally, in relation to Transport and Accessibility, they urged the European Commission and its Member States to accelerate the implementation of the infrastructures located on the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) corridors affecting the Mediterranean, and the development of connections between them and the Motorways of the Sea (MoS).

Finally, highlighting the debates and in recognition of its useful, humble and collective efforts and actions towards cooperation, cohesion and regional development in the Mediterranean basin work for cohesion, the [IMC was awarded the prestigious Mediterranean Award 2017 in the category "Institutions."](#) Presented by the [Fondazione Mediterraneo](#), this award has since 1996 been given to eminent people or organizations from the worlds of arts and culture, politics and science and social disciplines, whose actions have contributed to reducing tensions, breaking down cultural barriers and developing shared values in the Greater Mediterranean.

II. MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE INTERMEDITERRANEAN COMMISSION

THURSDAY 6 JULY 2017

Serena Angioli, Regional Councillor of Campania in charge of European Funds, Youth and Co-operation, Vice-Presidency of the CPMR's Intermediterranean Commission, opened the internal meeting of the General Assembly of the Intermediterranean Commission, following the technical work of the groups and welcomed the participants. She congratulated the President of the *Fondazione Mediterraneo* for the reception given in this symbolic place and gave apologies for the absence of the President of the Campania Region. She recalled the importance of the dialogue for the Mediterranean and the role of the Intermediterranean Commission in this context.

Apostolos Katsifaras, President of the Dytiki Ellada Region and President of the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission, welcomed Serena Angioli and all colleagues. He recalled the role Naples has played in Mediterranean civilisation. He thanked Campania for its hospitality and the *Fondazione Mediterraneo*, in the person of its President, Michele Capasso. These collaborations perfectly embody our values of collaboration and discussion. Moreover, in this particular stage in Europe's history, it is of symbolic importance to be in Naples today. **Apostolos Katsifaras** gave a reminder of the format of the General Assembly, with technical meetings, an internal session and an international seminar day on themes of political interest for our Regions. The agenda was validated and **Apostolos Katsifaras** opened the meeting and brought the minutes from the Political Bureau of the Intermediterranean Commission in Barcelona to the vote, as well as the conclusions from the last plenary meeting in the Azores. These minutes were approved unanimously.

Apostolos Katsifaras then presented the overall action plan of the Intermediterranean Commission for 2017-2018. This document has already been validated by the members of the Political Bureau. He summarised the main points and recalled that it is in line with the previous action plans. The transversal pillars of the plan focus on emerging strategies and initiatives in the basin, on the participation of the Regions in migration issues, on the promotion of projects in the Mediterranean with a greater participation of the southern shore, as well as on the dialogue with civil society for a Mediterranean citizenship. These priorities are combined with sectoral work areas, via the 4 themed working groups of the Intermediterranean Commission.

Agnès Rampal, for the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region, expressed her appreciation for this very comprehensive draft action plan. She clarified the benefit of the proposals linked to a possible extension of the Erasmus programme across the Mediterranean. Since young people form the basis of Mediterranean citizenship.

President **Katsifaras** and **Davide Strangis** responded positively to this proposal, emphasising that it is in line/complementary with other proposals in the plan such as Vasco de Gama and more generally with the issue of youth employment, training and their inter-university mobility in the Mediterranean. We will be able to study the next steps to be taken together in the coming months, in particular within the framework of the Working Party on "Economic and Social Cohesion".

Serena Angioli also agreed with this proposal, which could be part of the work of the working group on "Economic and social cohesion" if the co-presidency of Occitania also agrees. She recalled, however, the issue of delimiting the Erasmus North-South programme, which does not actually exist, a sensitive point, and explained that care must be taken not to close down possibilities for our students. She believes that instead we should work to make our universities more attractive and then the students will make the decision to come southward. An increase in funds for Erasmus is not enough, it must be carefully managed.

Miguel Ángel Munoz explained that Erasmus is a programme for academics but is also open to vocational training and he wants us to remember this point since it gives our students more opportunities.

Apostolos Katsifaras put the action plan to the vote. It was approved unanimously. He then went on to present the action plans of the Intermediterranean Commission's themed working groups.

Davide Strangis introduced this presentation. He recalled that updates of these draft action plans were presented to the Political Bureau in February 2017 and that the plans had been finalised recently (although

it would still be possible to update them during the mandate, if necessary, upon the proposal of the co-presidencies and the Secretariat).

- ❖ **“Territorial cooperation and macro-regional strategies”** working group: **Nuria Bedos**, for Catalonia, recalled the coordination with Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur. She explained that the work plan had been updated on the basis of the transversal activities of the Intermediterranean Commission. And from a more specific point of view on the issue of the maritime initiative for the Western Mediterranean and area 4 of the Med/Project PANORAMED programme. **Guillaume Huet**, of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur Region, recalled that the idea is to work on three areas: involvement and implementation of the macro-regions and basin strategies, work with all the networks working on the Mediterranean, and finally a neighbourhood policy for the promotion of all decentralised cooperation, broadening the scope of the current cooperation. **Davide Strangis** took a brief look at the CPMR Task Force on Migration which he has been following on a technical level since June 2017 and on the work developed in particular on sharing experiences for the integration and welcoming of migrants and to contribute to the reform of the common asylum system in the EU with a view to multi-level governance. This work will be detailed at the next meeting of the Task Force in Brussels on 6 September 2017. This meeting will propose a brainstorming session with all relevant DGs of the EC, the EEAS, the CoR, the United Nations and other key actors. Therefore, the contribution of the Intermediterranean Commission to the work on migration will be done within the framework of this Task Force rather than by the Working Group on “Territorial Cooperation and Macro-Regional Strategy”.
- ❖ **“Water and energy”** working group: **Daríá Fernandez**, for the Generalitat Valenciana, presented the three working areas: responding to the water issues in the Mediterranean, in line with the water directive and taking part in decision-making forums on this subject; sharing best practices and project implementation on water and energy issues; and finally synergies between water and energy. She also announced a meeting of the working group in Seville for January 2018. **Davide Strangis** concluded by highlighting the cooperation themes identified for Seville (for example, administrative water management) in line with the last event of the group in Valencia and the possible synergies on climate with the CPMR’s Task Force.
- ❖ **“Transport and Integrated Maritime Policy”** working group: For the Region of Murcia, **Manuel Pleguezuelo** presented the future priorities, in particular the follow-up of the implementation of the TEN-Ts concerning the Mediterranean and the CEF mechanism, with participation in fora and a rapprochement with related projects. He referred to the need to accelerate infrastructure for the corridors that concern the Mediterranean, as well as for the motorways of the sea and finally participation in the CEF mechanism. He referred to the development of the SSS and the importance of the technical dialogue between all the countries in the basin. He concluded with a final area of interest: sustainable and multimodal maritime transport. He also recalled the benefit and importance of contributing to the work of the CPMR on air transport and the study on the EU strategy relating to air travel. For the Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur Region, **Guillaume Huet** added a few words to the IMP section and the integrated policy objective in favour of blue growth, with many connected themes: EU directives linked to the IMP and the blue economy, participation in the CPMR’s work on “Smart Specialisation”, strengthening the maritime dimension and developing strategic partnerships on these issues. He recalled the three Task Forces created within the framework of the working group: Bologna Charter Task Force, Fisheries and Aquaculture Task Force, UfM Task Force on Blue Growth. And gave three dates to remember: in October in Marseilles and Barcelona for the Innobluegrowth and Panacea capitalisation seminars, and the launch of Panoramed in Seville at the end of September 2017.
- ❖ **“Economic and social cohesion”** working group: The group met in Naples on 6 July 2017. During this meeting the co-presidents presented their lines of action. The working group then focused on the work of the Task Force on Sustainable Tourism and Culture. **Guy Escoplé**, for the Occitanie Region, recalled the commitment to the social economy, which remains one of the group’s main priorities. He announced the next meeting to be held on 19 September in Montpellier, specifically on the Social Economy, with the presentation of the Intermediterranean Commission’s report on the subject and related cooperation projects. **Serena Angioli**, from the Campania Region, concluded with the issue of youth policies and reiterated the specific points on which to focus to support young people on their journey. Two new concrete actions can be developed within the framework of the plan: for example the creation of a school of citizenship for young people in the Mediterranean to develop dialogue and democracy; and action on young people and new agriculture, with requirements for new skills in the context of climate change, for example.

Apostolos Katsifaras put the action plans of the working groups to the vote and these were validated unanimously. The plans are available on the Intermediterranean Commission's [website](#).

Davide Strangis, Executive Secretary of the Intermediterranean Commission, then spoke about internal issues. He presented a [summary of the projects](#) in progress and on the proposals presented/being evaluated within the Intermediterranean Commission. He also gave an update on cooperation with external organisations: ARLEM, Arc Latin, the UfM, Unimed, MedCities, IMC, among others... **Davide Strangis** then presented the financial documents and the updated budget for 2017 and gave an update on the memberships. The financial documents were approved unanimously.

Agnès Rampal spoke to explain that the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region will shortly be welcoming Emmanuel Maniscalco, one of the new members of the Secretariat of the Intermediterranean Commission, to their regional premises. The President and the Secretary of the IMC-CPMR thanked the Region for this wonderful news and its efforts and cooperation.

Davide Strangis spoke briefly on the [activity report](#) and the [calendar for 2017/2018](#). He concluded with a presentation of the [Final Declaration](#) (produced on the basis of the latest work by the Intermediterranean Commission, the CPMR and the working groups), and on the basis of the amendments presented by the Regions which will be discussed during the session and presented for approval on Friday 7 July.

During the discussions, some Regions took the floor to comment on the amendments and to clarify any nuances (for example, Campania, PACA, Corsica, Dytiki Ellada, Melilla, among others).

Jesus García Ayala, from Melilla, presented in particular a discussion point on the possible distortive effects of Brexit in relation to the cohesion policy and structural funds.

The President and the Secretary welcomed the proposal with interest, although it was not possible to incorporate it into the Naples Declaration within the terms and deadlines set out, as further study and discussion with the members would be required. It will probably be debated and taken into consideration for the future positioning of the Intermediterranean Commission and the CPMR before 2020. For example, in the Final Declaration of the CPMR General Assembly in October 2017. Nevertheless, the CPMR is currently reflecting upon these issues (Brexit, the future of cohesion policy) and Melilla is invited to make an active contribution.

A consolidated version of the Declaration was sent to the members prior to the internal session on 6 July, at which the amendments were validated. The Declaration was formally approved at the political seminar on 7 July, in public session, without further amendments.

FRIDAY 7 JULY 2017

Serena Angioli, Regional Councillor of Campania in charge of European Funds, Youth and Co-operation, Vice-Presidency of the CPMR's Intermediterranean Commission, introduced the work by recalling previous meetings and welcoming external partners who joined the Regions of the Intermediterranean Commission for this seminar. She gave apologies for the President of Campania who could not be present.

Michele Capasso, President of the *Fondazione Mediterraneo*, welcomed the participants. He recalled the history of the foundation and its role in promoting the Mediterranean and the Euro-Mediterranean partnership in particular. He referred to the many projects that had been launched at the Foundation and the various events already organised in partnership with the CPMR. Finally, he called for more pragmatism in European policies to better address the challenges in this area, especially for young people, in order to contribute to the peace process in the Mediterranean.

Apostolos Katsifaras, President of the Dytiki Ellada Region and President of the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission, welcomed the participants. He reiterated the values of solidarity, respect and sharing that are so important to our Commission. Theoretical values that we develop in many very concrete projects. **Apostolos Katsifaras** gave a reminder of the geo-political situation in the Mediterranean and in Europe. In terms of cohesion, he reiterated the importance of seeking solutions and responding to the challenges, for example in terms of urbanisation, demographics and security, in order to ensure the pursuit of the EU's values throughout the world. Solidarity and sharing are essential to unite the strengths of the Mediterranean and ensure peace in our area.

Eleni Marianou, Secretary General of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR), thanked all the participants for their presence. She recalled the European context and in particular the terrorist violence to

which we have been exposed recently. She talked about the many challenges related to employment, migration, climate, Brexit, nationalism... And recalled that a response is required. She spoke on the future of the European Union, the activities of the CPMR and the latest statements on the role of the Regions in the different scenarios for the cohesion policy. She stressed the role of the Regions and their place in globalisation and in the new European landscape, particularly on the question of budget in the specific context of Brexit. A new organisation will be undertaken and we will have to monitor budget allocations on the basis of new priorities, without neglecting the traditional EU policies. **Eleni Marianou** concluded with the discussions that the CPMR holds, particularly with Michel Barnier, for the positioning of the Regions in the debates.

SESSION I - Focus on the EU's Cohesion Policy, European Structural and Investment Funds, the Juncker Plan and the European External Investment Plan (EIP)

Nicolas Brookes, Director at the CPMR, gave a [presentation](#) of the current situation and scenarios for the Mediterranean regions on the future of the EU cohesion policy, the Juncker plan and the European investment plan. He explained that the cohesion policy must be a “strong” element of the EU and that there is a need to monitor the categories of Regions listed in the White Paper in order to assess the impact on the CPMR Regions. He added that the timetable for the next EU budget, currently unavailable, will depend on the Brexit negotiations.

Andrea Cozzolino, a member of the European Parliament, highlighted the social chapter, important in the coming years of the European story, especially since election results (like in France) were encouraging. Indeed, the disintegration process has suffered a setback and the EU is now strengthened. However, some challenges remain, including the migratory crisis (What is the EU's response? Identity function or security terms?). He insisted on the EU's previously inadequate response, as it is foreseen that only Italy and Greece can open their ports.

As far as the cohesion policy is concerned, this is currently the most modern policy the EU has, after a 10 year economic and social crisis that has fragmented them. Social disparities have increased, as have disparities between territories that have acquired specific characteristics. The future of the cohesion policy remains a modern challenge to reduce gaps between territories. It will be important to work to protect the cohesion policy by creating alliances between regions, discussing the level of co-financing of this policy, including GDP ... so that it does not lose its importance/impact.

Andrea Cozzolino called into question the type of reforms to be implemented, the usefulness/feasibility of a single fund, the role of cities and municipalities (grouping them would provide a different dynamic and more subjectivity), and finally the various audits (EU, national, regional) that would merit consolidation to achieve uniformity of judgement. He concluded by stressing the social dimension that should be the core value of this new European process. The cohesion policy could provide support for stronger EU action in this regard.

Ángel Luis Sánchez Muñoz, Secretary General for External Affairs of the Junta de Andalucía, recalled that Andalusia is a very extensive region in southern Europe, located in a very interactive area. As a result, the Region promotes integrated territorial development. Nevertheless, the crisis has caused increasing disparities. He pointed out that the Southern regions, despite their doubts, have an appropriate and effective use of European funds. According to him, attention must now be paid to the territorial dimension of the cohesion policy and to coordination with European fund programmes. He returned to the social issue, especially among young people. They are highly trained but what can we offer them for the future? We must take a gamble on more of Europe, but above all on a more social Europe, implemented by the Regions who are the main players.

Serena Angioli focused on two important points in relation to the work of the CPMR's Intermediterranean Commission. In particular, cooperation with the Regions is a daily management challenge, but also the migration issue, which is inevitable for the most exposed regions.

Maria Somma, Director General A.d.G. ESF Regione Campania, reiterated the importance of the cohesion policy for the development of the Regions. Social policies are important for development. And the ESF is a beneficial instrument for future global development. In particular, if there are synergies with the European Strategic Investment Fund. There are complementarities to be exploited. And the combination of the two funds will attract more private investors, on financial engineering projects for example.

Patrizio Bianchi, Regional Adviser of the Emilia Romagna Region, responsible for European policies on development, education and vocational training, universities, research and employment, recalled the

tensions that exist in the Mediterranean, despite the notion of peace associated with this space. He referred to the difficulties of the EC, to the political role of the EU: the problem is not the cohesion policy, but the role of Europe in the world. He recalled that the growth of peripheral areas is a fundamental element for the growth of Europe. The CPMR must always be mindful of this, and the Mediterranean must be put back at the centre. These are the messages that must be at the centre of the CPMR's demands, as this is a political subject for our "post-Brexit" Europe. He referred to the problems of the Mediterranean and the lack of synergy between the financial instruments. The new Europe is not the "Juncker Plan". The cohesion policy must be linked to external policy. The post-2020 period starts now, and it is time to speak out to influence the debates. The cohesion policy must be ensured and consolidated in the future. The CPMR must also stress the need for a stronger integration of Europe. Similarly, on the social side, we should not just talk about more solidarity. This is not sufficient: work must be done on the basic conditions of the state of well-being.

In the debate, several Regions spoke (Crete, Ionian Islands, Catalonia, Murcia...).

George Alexakis, Vice-President of the CPMR in charge of maritime affairs, Deputy Governor of the Kriti Region in charge of European affairs, asked how Regions can contribute to the future of the EU and in what role? **Ioannis Fontanas**, Vice-Governor of the Ionian Islands, reiterated that the Regions have demonstrated that they can be actors in this process to reform Europe, even in Greece. He also referred to the question of Mediterranean identity and questions of citizenship and equality in society.

Nuria Bedós recalled the position of Catalonia on the future of the cohesion policy, which gives importance to multilevel territories and governance, and to the definition of thematic concentration at regional level. She stressed the importance of territorial cooperation, competitiveness, and opposition to the principle of macroeconomic conditionality.

Manual **Pleguezuelo**, Director-General EU, External Action and Cooperation - Region of Murcia, supported the position of Catalonia and reiterated the importance of the messages included in the Final Declaration of the Intermediterranean Commission, in particular those concerning a reinforced cohesion policy for all European Regions. He also recalled the importance of simplification and the dialogue and communication that his Region has developed across the territory in relation to the cohesion policy and Europe. He then mentioned the climatic issues that will also have to be taken into account in the future cohesion policy.

President **Katsifaras** came back to the central position of the citizen in the future of the cohesion policy and European integration.

SESSION II - Focus on the southern neighbourhood policy, link to migration and challenges and prospects for younger generations

Leonello Gabrici, Head of Migration and Human Security Unit - European Service for External Action, gave a frank assessment of migration and security in the Mediterranean. According to him, there is no way migration issues can be resolved without a minimum of European foreign policy, and not only at national level. He supported Patrizio Bianchi's remarks, but pointed out that it was the Member States and the interior ministers who were primarily responsible for certain situations. He insisted on greater transparency for the citizens and more dialogue with the towns of origin, since the Mogherini/Juncker agreement could, for example, be limited to the sole intention of sending migrants back to their countries of origin. Too many gaps exist in the communication. According to him, foreign policy in the Mediterranean must not be reinvented. Good things are happening. But we have missed out a few steps. So some of the rules need to be redefined. And this new stage not omitted.

Federico Martire, CPMR Expert for the Southern Neighbourhood and the Platforma Action, gave a [presentation](#) on the Neighbourhood Policy from the point of view of regional and local authorities, as well as on a training module that the Intermediterranean Commission is working on. He recalled that the ENP was born after the enlargement during the 2000s to ensure the stability of the European territory, especially in the east and south. He recalled the main areas of this policy and explained that it still lacks a strong local and regional dimension and that it should be territorialised, as previously requested by the Intermediterranean Commission or ARLEM. He then focused on capacity-building in the area of integrated territorial development, an action supported by the CPMR and Platforma with the European Union. He concluded with the two areas of the manual and the module, which focus on Tunisia and Morocco: the need to analyse needs within the framework of the DTI and to develop the training of human resources in local and regional authorities. The training will take place in early 2018 in a location to be arranged.

Guy Escoplé, Regional Councillor of the Occitania Region, reiterated the importance of the neighbourhood policy in the European balance. He mentioned the involvement of his Region within the Intermediterranean Commission, with Tunisian and Moroccan partnerships, for the training of executives and elected officials in Morocco for example. He also referred to the migration challenges and actions already carried out, such as aid programmes for Syrian students. He recalled the importance of making the Mediterranean a future area for our young people. The expertise of the Regions is therefore essential in relation to these subjects. He concluded with a reminder about the next meeting of the working group on “Economic and social cohesion” in Montpellier on 19 September.

Kosma Papachrysovergis, Secretary General of the Attiki Region, stressed the need to recycle ideas, but that it was impossible to do so without practical action. The future of local societies is essential because the Mediterranean is likely to become a marine cemetery rather than an anchor point and source of well-being for its populations. A collective response must be brought to the migration issue. This is a finding common to the Regions concerned.

These regions face major challenges that create real problems for Member States that have to deal with the acceptance and integration of refugees and migrants in employment markets, social services but from a linguistic point of view. This requires political will and co-operation at all national and European levels, and especially by all local and regional authorities. Indeed, transforming the Mediterranean Regions into havens of stability to welcome migrants has always represented a source of wealth throughout history.

The Attiki Region has requested, along with Lazio and Sicily, direct access to the existing financing instruments of the MFF. For example, the establishment of logistics centres has worked well (catering, reception centres, etc.). We currently have 45 of these. In addition, mobilising local authorities and citizens for their hospitality is also part of the strategy. This is the key to a neighbourhood policy for the reallocation of the weight of hospitality, in particular because the Regions have a level of governance closer to the citizens. The Mediterranean should be transformed into a crossroads of civilisations.

Manuel Pleguezuelo Alonso, recalled that migration was a major issue for Spain. Our credibility on this issue is at stake. Regions should be more involved in the decision-making processes because we are at the forefront of managing this issue. He called for a closer partnership with the countries of origin and offered some examples of actions carried out within the framework of development by the Region of Murcia. He added that the Intermediterranean Commission must offer its cooperation to the EU, in particular via the regional dimension of the neighbourhood policy. He mentioned the Nicosia initiative (ARLEM/Committee of the Regions), in which local and regional authorities interact. For example, the region of Murcia trains engineers for irrigation and water management in Libya. **Manuel Pleguezuelo Alonso** put several elements into perspective, such as food security: how, in conjunction with water management, can these elements be factors of development in the Mediterranean? How can this be linked to the integration of migrants? He concluded by stressing that getting more knowledge about funding mechanisms is paramount.

Xavier Tiana, Secretary-General of MedCities, presented synergies with more than sixty Mediterranean cities, added values and expectations of local governments. He noted that MedCités was very pleased with its year of collaboration with the CPMR’s Intermediterranean Commission and that the association would continue its collaboration to strengthen local and regional authorities, particularly on the south shore. He recalled the programmes that exist to invest in local and regional authorities, but that these authorities are not very familiar with. It is therefore necessary to inform and raise awareness about the opportunities offered by the EU. Finally, he considers it essential to strengthen the links between Interreg Med and IEV CT Med, in particular because Interreg Med has no direct impact on the south/east shore of the basin.

Marcello Scalisi, Director of UNIMED, presented the synergies with the universities of the Mediterranean and the various projects in which UNIMED participates. He called for greater cooperation between the institutions in order to guide European policy and ensure that our demands are heard. He recalled the benefit of Erasmus and Erasmus+ because mobility is the key word, although it seems difficult to imagine obtaining an Erasmus for the Mediterranean.

The neighbourhood policy is one of the actions that the collaboration between universities and bodies such as the CPMR must influence, as it is a key tool, particularly for making the EU a driver of peace. The neighbourhood policy needs to be reformed in order to function better. Political discussions, although bureaucratic, must be at the heart of our considerations. For example, if a country does not agree with certain EU proposals, the financial aid may be withdrawn. What can be done in this case? Institutions can offer their

skills and network capacities to take action and work on education systems, to work together particularly between the north and the south, or to launch shared policies, etc. (Erasmus Med, etc.). He pointed out that overall financial resources were inadequate.

In the debate, **Agnès Rampal** raised the issue of financing decentralised cooperation projects and hoped that more countries would invest in the neighbourhood. She explained that solutions are needed to develop decentralised cooperation projects, particularly when a country is not a signatory to an EU cooperation programme agreement. She also stressed that too few scholarships are available for young people in general and especially in proportion to the number of young people living on the southern shore of the Mediterranean in comparison with the rest of Europe.

In his conclusion on these morning sessions, the President of the Intermediterranean Commission said that cooperation should not only translate into funding. Human beings must respect their neighbours.

APPROVAL OF THE FINAL DECLARATION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Davide Strangis, Executive Secretary of the Intermediterranean Commission, introduced the [final version of the document](#) of the declaration as well as the process for validating the amendments. President **Katsifaras** put the Final Declaration to the vote. It was approved unanimously by the members of the General Assembly of the Intermediterranean Commission.

THE FONDAZIONE MEDITERRANEO'S "MEDITERRANEAN AWARD" PRESENTATION

Michele Capasso presented the Foundation's Mediterranean award in the "Institutions" category to the CPMR's Intermediterranean Commission for its important contribution and collective action in favour of co-operation, cohesion and regional development in the Mediterranean.

SESSION III - Emerging strategies/initiatives and major cooperation programmes in the Mediterranean: synergies, territorial expectations and prospects for better governance

Davide Strangis, Executive Secretary of the Intermediterranean Commission, introduced and moderated the two parts of the session, recalling the key [questions](#) for the debate, the action of the Intermediterranean Commission within the framework of the emerging strategies and initiatives, as well as the ongoing collaboration with the institutions, organisations and cooperation programmes concerned.

Christos Theophilou, DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of the European Commission, gave an update of the EUSAIR strategy and on the maritime initiative for the Western Mediterranean in his [presentation](#): WestMED. The EUSAIR, comprising 4 EU countries and 4 non-member countries, is a springboard strategy enabling EUSAIR members to join the Union. EUSAIR is made up of 4 pillars (blue growth, connecting the region, environmental quality and sustainable tourism). Its 2nd Ioannina Forum on Blue Growth has allowed for an evaluation of the progress of the strategy since its first forum in 2016 and to clarify its policy lines. A declaration has also been adopted to that end and to strengthen the political commitments of the States concerned. It states that EUSAIR does not have dedicated funds and relies solely on IPA and ISF funds. The Communication and the WestMED Frame for Action were approved by the EC in April and the initiative was mentioned and supported in June by the Council in its conclusions on blue growth. The working group for the initiative will meet in October to discuss governance; the CPMR's Intermediterranean Commission will participate as an observer.

Raffaele Mancini, Expert on the Blue Economy - Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean, gave an assessment of [the future of the UfM's work on the blue economy](#). He mentioned the collaboration with the CPMR's Intermediterranean Commission, a key partner in the work to promote the blue economy and observer of the UfM's working group on the subject. He also presented the Virtual Knowledge Centre on the blue economy recently taken up by the UfM, as well as the call for workshops published online for the next Conference of Stakeholders on the Blue Economy to be held in November in Italy. The CPMR and its Regions are invited to participate.

Fabio Fava, Chairman - Strategic Committee of the BLUEMED Initiative, gave a BLUEMED ([presentation](#)) on research and innovation in the context of blue growth, and its potential for synergies with the Mediterranean Regions. Research and innovation are two very important themes in the Mediterranean. He talked about the great benefit of welcoming different actors for greater efficiency and wants to develop initiatives to achieve

a joint strategy in order to increase efficiency. The initiative is now open to the whole of the Mediterranean. He also emphasised the importance of synergies between the programmes, an orientation of funds and strategies for better governance in the Mediterranean. He invited the CPMR's Intermediterranean Commission to become an observer in the "*Strategic board*" of the initiative and to participate in the policy dialogue platform ("*Policy pillar*").

Agnès Rampal, Regional Councillor of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, President of the Euro-Mediterranean Commission, spoke about issues of governance, territorial cooperation and capitalisation, *mainstreaming* and synergies. She wanted to highlight all that Europe brings to our territories. By using the results of the projects, we can influence the management of European funding. She emphasised axis 4 of the Med programme for taking into account the results of Med projects in the next programming period. She stressed the governance dimension within the PANORAMED project and referred to the neighbourhood policy which needs more funds in the future and to ensure the genuine participation of the Regions.

She clarified the relationship between the PANORAMED "instrument" and the existing initiatives in the Mediterranean, the CPMR and the contribution, for example, to the priorities of the West MED initiative. West MED is very important for coordination between the States of the two shores involved (5+5), but also for the participation of the Regions and territories. She explained that the ENP should be mobilised for the implementation of the WestMED Initiative through several programmes, especially territorial cooperation.

Agnès Rampal wants us to insist upon the Regions being present in the decision-making bodies of WestMED because the territories are best able to manage the projects in relation to their territories. She concluded with a confirmation of the commitment of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region to make the Mediterranean an area of cooperation, peace and growth of economies for the development of all.

In his [presentation](#), **Lodovico Gherardi**, MA Coordinator for the Interreg ADRION project, talked about the implementation of the programme, *facility point* and the prospects for improving governance in the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region. He explained the difficulties encountered for the EUSAIR area, particularly for integrating a programme's strategy. Clearer rules and simplification are required. Adrion is a small programme, with few resources and high expectations. With a strong representation from Italy and Greece in concrete terms, but not enough from the other countries in the basin. New points of contact must therefore be found in other territories. He concluded with the approval of the projects in the first call and made a suggestion concerning the labelling of projects which should be more useful *ex post* in order to assess and demonstrate the real impacts or not of a project on the territory, thus making it possible to define the next calls in a more pertinent way.

Luca Palazzo, MA for the ENI CBC MED programme, gave an update ([presentation](#)) on the implementation of the programme and on the contribution to Mediterranean governance: what has been done/not done, the current situation in relation to future calls. He also talked about the type of projects co-financed by the programme between "standards" and "strategic", explaining that these programmes are often recognised after their implementation periods (and therefore call for further capitalization).

Tarja Richard, Coordinator of the Interreg MED Joint Secretariat gave a [presentation](#) assessing the development of the programme and the links with emerging strategies.

President **Apostolos Katsifaras** commented on the oral presentations, reiterating above all the importance of the synergies and the multi-level cooperation that our Regions and our organisation must continue to deploy. He had to leave because of an emergency in his region, so he thanked the members, the Campania Region and the *Fondazione Mediterraneo*, and handed the coordination over to the Executive Secretary and the Vice-President of the Campania Region.

Various speakers then gave an update on the [PANORAMED](#) platform project on governance in the Mediterranean (Axis 4 Interreg Med)

Antonio Del Pino, Coordinator of PANORAMED-Spain, explained that the project falls within the framework of the EU cohesion policy and the Interreg MED programme. This project has a transversal reach given its size, with 12 countries and 17 partners. It aims to highlight the fragilities of the Mediterranean in terms of tourism and maritime surveillance, using experiences and conclusions for joint action through the project itself. He explained that this project is a top-down project and that the members it has in its partnership are made up of actors playing a role in the basin (CPMR, BLUEMED, etc.). Their involvement will ensure a more holistic approach on the part of the project, with a key role for the Regions. He concluded by saying that this initiative will have five years to be implemented.

Michele Colavito, from the coordination unit for Italy, intends to create a link-up of subjects specific to the Mediterranean. He recalled the role of the States in cooperation policies and programmes and the need to use resources optimally. To this end, the network is a fundamental added value. He advised that the initiatives should be based on the work of DG MARE, NEAR and GROW in order to ensure an effective partnership and define post-2020 strategies. Finally, he explained that a social impact is also envisaged and expected.

Stavroula Pelekasi, national coordinator for Greece, suggested creating working groups to recognise the strategic work as reported on the different themes. Participation is important as well as the action of the coordinators, since they have to ensure there is communication and coordination between the different countries and the regions. He added that it was essential to promote PANORAMED to the regions in order to involve them. Indeed, certain actions sometimes have weak points and overlap. The aim of PANORAMED is to better contribute to EU attempts on a broader scale so that the project can become a focal point for multi-level participation, particularly on its identified themes.

Jean-Luc Frès, national coordinator for France, stated that it was necessary to start from the results of the projects and what they had proved to feed the work and methodologies of PANORAMED. This will allow for deeper political support. PANORAMED's partnership is open, especially with regard to experts. The people involved will be the "right" people and this will allow an optimisation of the resources allocated for their participation.

Davide Strangis emphasised the possible synergies between PANORAMED and the working groups of the Intermediterranean Commission and its Political Bureau. He recalled the important role of the project which fills a gap in the governance in the Mediterranean and really influences policies at all levels. He also emphasised the need for more synergies between programmes and initiatives in the basin.

George Alexakis recalled that the Mediterranean is the No. 1 tourist destination in the world. In fact, he recalled the strong environmental pressures on our territories which imply a quest for balance in the promotion of the blue economy by protecting the environment and biodiversity. He talked about EUSAIR, an important instrument for cooperation, also for pre-membership countries, WestMED, multi-governance as a model for cross-border cooperation and the importance of Strategies of Smart Specialisation for the Regions and for the work of the Intermediterranean Commission and of the CPMR on this theme. He then recalled the role and contribution of Crete in all ongoing initiatives (BLUEMED, PANORAMED project, etc.) and the most important points about blue growth in the Mediterranean.

Guido Fabiani, Regional councillor for economic development and productive activities in the Lazio Region, highlighted the importance of the sea economy sector, as well as the work of the Intermediterranean Commission in this area, in connection with the Union for the Mediterranean, and in particular through the launch of a Task Force on this theme coordinated by the Lazio Region. He once again invited the Regions of the Intermediterranean Commission to take part in this work. He referred to the messages in the Political Declaration, and to the work on maritime investment and the circular economy. He highlighted the specific experiences of his region, as well as specific topics such as "Geohazards" in the Mediterranean, an important topic for maritime spatial planning and the prospects for collaboration in the UfM's blue economy stakeholder forum, to be held at the end of the year.

Davide Strangis and **Serena Angioli** concluded the session by thanking the participants. They welcomed the excellent political and technical debates, applauded the "Mediterranean Award", as well as the prospects for collaboration, particularly with the UfM, WestMED, BlueMed, other networks and the launch of PANORAMED. **Serena Angioli** insisted upon the human dimension and the networks of the Intermediterranean Commission and the importance of working together to strengthen the cohesion policy and cooperation in the Mediterranean in the post-2020 period.