INTERMEDITERRANEAN COMMISSION
Global Report
2018-2020 Mandate
The solidarity of the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission’s Regions during this period of economic, social and climatic crisis shows our willingness to work together on new solutions for greater resilience in our lifestyles and societies. The lessons learned from this period should encourage us to remain open to new avenues of cooperation and committed to citizens and territories. The Mediterranean regions are more than ever convinced of the need to pursue efforts to propose a more responsible and sustainable local tourism, a blue growth respectful of ecosystems and humans.

Social and solidarity economy as a lever for the economic recovery of territories

At the initiative of the Occitanie Region, the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission has adopted a Political Declaration entitled “For a social and solidarity-based Mediterranean,” also brought to the attention of European and Euro-Mediterranean institutions and networks. It recalls that the social and solidarity-based economy is a real lever for the development of territories, through which local authorities play a privileged role. This message is all the more topical today in the context of relaunching and developing the resilience of territories. In this perspective, several members of the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission will participate in the RESET project (COSME) from 2021 on and led by the Occitanie Region, which focuses on the issue of reviving and safeguarding employment in the territories through social economy models.

The Intermediterranean Youth Council

The “Intermediterranean Commission Youth Council” was created at the end of 2019, on the initiative of Regione Lazio. Its main aim is to transmit the vision of the youth on issues such as the environment, employment, and equality (among others) to the highest political level. Working in better synergy with young people within our network would contribute to increasing their interest in issues related to the Mediterranean basin, while ensuring a process of democratic participation within Mediterranean and European networks.

A relevant cooperation for a true sustainable recovery

Beyond the unprecedented health crisis that has hit Mediterranean regions since Spring 2020, the Members of the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission will continue their work and efforts towards ever greater cooperation and solidarity in the basin. In the context of the elaboration of the 2021-27 EU Programmes, ensuring a better integration of Regions in their governance will be the main objective of the Mediterranean Cooperation Alliance (#MedCoopAlliance). As project carriers and the first building blocks of European cooperation, Regions are essential laboratories for assessing the impact of Cohesion Policy and Community Programmes on territories. Today, Regions are keen to optimise the available resources that can respond to main local and regional challenges, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and the EU Green Deal. They represent key players in the revision and reinvention of EU Programmes, and privileged tools for carrying the recovery forward in a committed and responsible manner, in order to pursue the development of territories towards greater resilience and solidarity, be it in the fields of innovation, health, sustainable tourism and mobility, sustainable food or climate change.
# Table of contents

Word from the Intermediterranean Commission acting Presidency ........................................ 2  
Table of contents .......................................................................................................................... 3  

## SUMMARY OF THE 2018-2020 MANDATE ................................................................. 4  

## PART I: INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF THE IMC .......................................................... 5  

Global Action plan and priorities 2019-2020 ............................................................................ 5  
IMC Working Groups and Task Forces ....................................................................................... 5  

## PART II: MAIN POLICY ADVANCEMENTS ................................................................ 7  

2018 General Assembly: Negotiating the upcoming 2021-2027 Multiannual financial framework .............................................................. 7  
2019 Political Bureau: Sealing the MedCoopAlliance ............................................................. 7  
2019 General Assembly: Expressing Mediterranean territories’ voices before the Summit of the Two Shores ............................................................... 8  
2019 Plenary Meeting: Highlighting the strategic value of Social and Solidarity Economy for the Mediterranean ........................................................... 9  
2020 Political Bureau: Supporting the implementation of a sustainable blue economy ................................................................................................. 9  

## PART III: MAIN WORKING GROUPS ACTIVITIES THROUGH POLICY ACTION & PROJECTS ........................................................................................................ 11  

Territorial Cooperation and Macro-Regional Strategies .......................................................... 11  
Transport & Integrated Maritime Policy .................................................................................. 13  
Water & Energy ....................................................................................................................... 15  
Economic & Social Cohesion .................................................................................................. 15  
Synergies with CPMR Task Forces ......................................................................................... 18  
Inter-commissions activities & synergies ................................................................................. 18  

## PART IV: AGREEMENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS ......................................................... 19  

## FURTHER REFERENCES ................................................................................................. 20  

Our activity reports .................................................................................................................. 20  
Our projects ............................................................................................................................. 20
The Intermediterranean Commission (IMC) is one of the 6 Geographical Commissions of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR). It has been active as think tank, group of interest and platform for technical and political cooperation since 1990 and gathers more than 40 Regions of 9 Mediterranean Countries (Albania, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Morocco, Spain, Tunisia). The IMC enjoys strong ties with many other subnational administrations and public and private actors, universities and centers of research, institutions and organizations all over the Mediterranean basin through its various kinds of activities. Its internal structure foresees a General Assembly, a Political Bureau, thematic Working Groups and a Secretariat that supports and jointly coordinates the functioning and the overall activities, linking with the global action at CPMR level.

The biannual 2019-2020 CPMR Intermediterranean Commission political mandate started in June 2018 with the election of the IMC Political Bureau and the re-election of IMC President, Mr. Apostolos Katsifaras, Regional Governor of the Region Dytiki Ellada (Western Greece). These elections were held during the 2018 IMC General Assembly in the Region of Dytiki Ellada. Mr. Katsifaras held this position until June 2019, when he announced his departure during the IMC General Assembly in Marseille, as an aftermath of the 2019 Greek elections. The IMC acting Presidency was then assumed by the IMC First Vice-Presidency in the name Mr. Patrizio Bianchi, Assessore at the Emilia-Romagna Region until his retirement in January 2020, to be taken over by Mr. Guillaume Cros, Vice-President to the Occitanie Region later on and up until the new elections of October 2020.

The 2019-2020 mandate was a busy period of activities, having to deal with the complex geopolitical, socio-economic situation both in Europe and the Mediterranean context, but also bearing the reflections to bridge both the European 2014-2020 and 2021-2027 programming periods negotiations, as outlined back in the Patras Declaration of June 2018. Coupled with the environmental, migration, and lately the sanitary challenges, the 2019-2020 mandate has been essential to keep working – beyond these challenges – toward a better integration, solidarity and joint actions for the Mediterranean.

With this in mind, the action of the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission – through its advocacy activity and concrete projects – has strongly enlightened the added value that regions can bring to sustainable development, territories and its citizens, and generally speaking to cooperation in the Mediterranean. During the mandate the IMC also fruitfully contributed to the global CPMR works on the future of Europe and negotiations thereof, cohesion, maritime, as well as accessibility issues, among other policy areas.
The Mediterranean is not a boundary but a natural bridge joining the peoples from all sides of the Sea. Proud of this heritage, the Intermediterranean Commission plays an active, substantial and leading role in the wider region, promoting focus and convergence to the Med area through active political dialogue, concrete actions, programmes and synergies in all sectors.

In this sense, the IMC Presidency has been ensured by the Region Western Greece in a first time (June 2018-August 2019), and by an interim mandate by both Emilia-Romagna (September 2019-January 2020) and Occitanie (February 2020-October 2020) in a second time. The IMC has worked through four transversal themes, in coherence and continuity with its guiding orientations since 2017, while adding specific focuses on a series of more pressing needs evolving alongside the European and Mediterranean agendas.

These four transversal themes have supported the definition and implementation of the IMC action plan, outlining a global framework to the more specific sectoral action of the IMC’s Working Groups:

❖ **Encourage the emergence of sea-basin and macro-regional strategies in the Mediterranean towards an integrated strategy:** focus on the promotion of Blue Growth and emerging strategies, while protecting the Med Sea.

❖ **Acknowledge and support, when appropriate, the needs and the involvement of Regions in the decision-making process regarding the management of Migration and Asylum as well as their actions on the ground:** focus on the internal and external dimension of migration and the role of the regions.

❖ **Develop a “Mediterranean of projects” and mobilize partners from the non-EU shores of the Mediterranean and especially the South:** focus on consolidating the high involvement of the organization and promotion of concrete strategic, pilot projects and solid partnerships.

❖ **Foster the emergence of Mediterranean citizenship, valorizing as a priority focus Mediterranean Youth as an asset for the present and the future of the basin.**

### IMC Working Groups and Task Forces

Following the restructuration of its Working Groups back in 2016-2018, the IMC kept developing its activities through the following setting:

❖ **Territorial Cooperation & Macro-regional strategies**, counting on the co-presidencies of Catalonia & Sud Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur, see specific Action Plan. This working group encompasses the “Mediterranean Cooperation Alliance” (Catalonia) task force.

❖ **Transport & Integrated Maritime Policy**, counting on the co-presidencies of Region of Murcia & Sud Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur, see specific Action Plan. This working group encompasses the “Coordination Board of the Bologna Charter” (Emilia-Romagna), “Fisheries and Aquaculture” (Andalusia) and “Follow-up of in the Regions of the Union for the Mediterranean Blue Economy Agenda” (Lazio) task forces.

❖ **Water & Energy**, counting on the co-presidencies of the Generalitat Valenciana & Rabat-Salé-Kénitra, see specific Action Plan. This working group encompasses the “Energy Renovation in Mediterranean Buildings” (Catalonia) task force.
Economic & Social cohesion, counting on the co-presidencies of Occitanie & Lazio, see specific Action Plan. This working group encompasses the “Culture and Tourism” (Crete) and “Vasco da Gama Med” (Veneto) task forces.

Besides, the IMC contributed on a regular basis to the works of the CPMR and its Working Groups on Transports and Accessibility, Cohesion, Maritime issues and Global agendas, in particular the Migration task force and the newly created Gender one.
2018 General Assembly: Negotiating the upcoming 2021-2027 Multiannual financial framework

Following the General Assembly of 2017 in Naples (IT), which had seen the IMC receive the prestigious Mediterranean Award from the Fundazione Mediterraneo, the 2018 General Assembly held in Patras (EL) aimed to contribute to the debates on the definition of the future 2021-2027 programming period. In particular, regarding the Future of Territorial Cooperation, for which a specific paper was produced, as well as the Strategic political agenda for Sustainable Tourism. Both positions were produced in addition to the IMC 2018 Final Declaration, which itself included reflections on emerging strategies and initiatives, migration, neighbourhood, maritime affairs, climate environment, energy, transport and accessibility, amongst other themes in continuity with the previous Declarations of the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission (IMC) (Barcelona 2013, Patras 2014, Venice 2014, Marseilles 2014, Nafplio and Rabat 2015, Venice 2016, Barcelona 2017, Naples 2017). This 2018 Declaration also fuelled the debates and outcomes of the IMC Plenary and 2018 CPMR General Assembly in Funchal (PT).

2019 Political Bureau: Sealing the MedCoopAlliance

In February 2019 in Barcelona, the IMC celebrated its Political Bureau back-to-back to a major international seminar on ‘The Future of the Mediterranean Region after 2020.’
Taking advantage on the current debates then on the prospections for the Mediterranean over 2020, the ‘Mediterranean Cooperation Alliance Joint Declaration’ was signed by political representatives from five Mediterranean organizations made out of local and regional authorities as well. These include the IMC, the Euroregion Pyrénées-Méditerranée (EPM), MedCities, Latin Arc, and the Adriatic-Ionian Euroregion. The initiative received a consequent press coverage and reached out to many relevant stakeholders for the IMC such as the Union for the Mediterranean.

2019 General Assembly: Expressing Mediterranean territories’ voices before the Summit of the Two Shores

At the heart of the negotiations for the 2021-2027 European multi-annual financial framework, the IMC celebrated its General Assembly on June 20-21, 2019 in Marseilles (FR), back-to-back to the celebration of the Summit of the Two Shores. The IMC took the opportunity of this Summit, proposed by the French Government and gathering the States of the 5+5 Dialogue, to address a specific Declaration to Heads of States on key issues for the Mediterranean and the network. Among these were sustainable energy transition, youth, education, mobility, shared economic growth and competitiveness, culture, media, tourism, environment and sustainable development, governance. Besides, the IMC also expressed its hopes and concerns in its 2019 Final Declaration, in particular regarding European territorial cooperation. This Declaration was indeed elaborated as a follow-up of the creation of the Mediterranean Cooperation Alliance, and therefore aimed to highlight once more the key role that local and regional authorities play in the sound reflections and implementation of the European project and cohesion of the Mediterranean.

The 2019 General Assembly also witnessed various changes within the network itself: the appointment of a new Executive Secretary (Elodie Nunes) after the previous Executive secretary (Davide Strangis) was appointed to a CPMR Executive Director position for EU Programs, Partnerships and Geographical Commissions. Furthermore, the then IMC Presidency assumed by the Dytiki Ellada Region in the name of (former) Regional Governor Apostolos Katsifaras had to change, as an outcome of the June 2019 elections in Greece. The first Vice-presidency Emilia-Romagna Region (IT) started assuming the rest of the mandate in the name of Assessore Mr. Patrizio Bianchi (August 2019-January 2020), later taken over by the Occitanie Region (FR) in the name of Vice-President Mr. Guillaume Cros (February-October 2020).
In the framework of the 2019 CPMR General Assembly, celebrated on October 16-18, 2019 in Palermo (IT), the members of the IMC ratified a Political Declaration “For a social and solidarity based Mediterranean.

This Declaration calls for a better harmonization of the definition of the Social and Solidarity Economy principle at European and Mediterranean levels, with the aim to facilitate its development through the channeling of funds and impactful projects.

This IMC Plenary also welcomed the Standing Committee for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership for Local and Regional Authorities (COPPEM) to the Mediterranean Cooperation Alliance, counting therefore on its first official supporter. COPPEM’s main objective revolves around the promotion of both dialogue and cooperation for local development between towns, municipalities, Local Authorities, and Regions of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership member countries. The organisation also supports the active role and concrete participation of the Euro-Med Partnership in achieving the objectives established by the 1995 Barcelona Declaration.

Lastly, sealing this last semester of 2019, the IMC also contributed to the CPMR Manifesto placing “Regions at the heart of a reformed European Union.” This Manifesto had been previously presented and debated in the framework of the CPMR Political Bureau celebrated in Donegal (IE), to which the IMC also brought its valuable inputs.

Kicking off 2020 on a busy note, the IMC celebrated its 2020 Political Bureau on February 04-05, 2020 in Montpellier (FR), back-to-back with the launch of the second phase of the Interreg MED Blue Growth Community.
This event was the opportunity to transition between the first implementation period of Interreg MED projects to the second, therefore taking a step back to appreciate the policy recommendations that the IMC’s key cooperation projects produced after three years of intense activities. In this particular case, the Interreg MED Blue Growth Community celebrated its first “Annual Assembly,” which main aim was to discuss with a broad variety of stakeholders – including various Intermediterranean Commission Member Regions, the ways to implement the Community’s White Paper recommendations on a Sustainable Blue Economy. Various of IMC Members have consequently become part of the Advisory board of the project, committing to working together for the further building and implementation of these recommendations at territorial level.

Logically then, the Political Bureau – alongside sharing the latest news about the advancements of the working groups, European and Mediterranean agendas, and project news – ratified two policy documents. The first of which calling for the implementation of a more sustainable blue economy (Blue Growth Community’s White Paper), while the second underlined the need to develop and implement more sustainable tourism practices in the Mediterranean (MITOMED+’s policy document). The follow-up of these policy documents have been so far taking place through their respective IMC working groups or task forces, via the implementation of the current projects on related topics.
PART III: MAIN WORKING GROUPS ACTIVITIES THROUGH POLICY ACTION & PROJECTS

During this mandate, several actions have been carried out by the Intermediterranean Commission to support and promote the sustainable, inclusive, and smart socio-economic development of the Mediterranean mostly in the policy framework of the global IMC action plan and the IMC Working Groups.

Great efforts have been made also in order to increase the involvement of the organization and the member regions in EU and international cooperation projects which are fully integrated in the IMC global action plan and serve the purpose of implementing several action lines of its working groups with the support of the IMC Secretariat.

All the ongoing projects in which the IMC participates as full or associated partner directly involve 15 IMC member Regions together with dozens of other European, Mediterranean, national and territorial key players (e.g. universities, centres of research, institutes, NGOs, local authorities, thematic networks, national authorities etc.). All the member regions can benefit from these projects through the participation of the IMC, that supports them in canalizing their actions. Through projects the members can effectively interact, consolidate networks and exploit all connections to feed their political and technical reflections and policy action on the ground, at EU and Mediterranean levels alike, and on various themes of interest.

The IMC participates as full or associated partner only in projects that are of strategic relevance with regard to its biannual global action plan and the action plans of its working groups, also in accordance with the CPMR global management and financial capacity. In addition to this, the IMC provides support to its members to build partnerships in other fields of interest. For instance, over a hundred of “partners searches” were circulated among its members and external partners since 2015 in relation to different calls/programmes and opportunities.

These projects concern mainly: sustainable tourism, coastal management and maritime spatial planning, conservation, blue growth and innovation, biodiversity protection, sustainable mobility, energy efficiency, water management. The higher co-funder of the projects where the IMC is directly involved is the Interreg MED programme. In this sense, IMC Secretariat staff and many regions were involved directly in all the community event launched by the programme during the mandate (e.g. Rome 2018, Athens 2019, and soon “online” 2020).

At budget level, these projects combined represent a total budget of around €55 million for the involved partners. Concerning the projects in which the IMC participates as full partner, all the total budgets combined amount to around €40 million over the 2017-2022 period, including around €1,5 million to be managed directly by the organisation.

Territorial Cooperation and Macro-Regional Strategies

The Working group focused its efforts mainly on reflections on the future of territorial cooperation in the Mediterranean, the monitoring and the support to emerging macro-regional and sea-basin strategies, such as EUSAIR or West MED (taking stock of previous policy work and including the monitoring and interactions with the main projects, programmes and frameworks of cooperation contributing to a better Mediterranean governance, such as PANORAMED). These reflections were always brought including as well the dimension of the Neighbourhood policy, translated through
the IMC’s relations with the main organizations, institutions and networks existing at Euro-Mediterranean level too (Union for the Mediterranean, ARLEM, MedCities, UNIMED, Arco Latino, etc.).

These dynamics also contributed to strengthen the concrete synergies previously activated with the main cooperation programmes of the basin (e.g. Interreg MED, ADRION, ENI CBC MED, MARITTIMO, INTERACT, among others) and other key stakeholders.

The works of the Working group were gradually developed, notably for what regards the activities with the Mediterranean Cooperation Alliance that kept celebrating regular meetings for internal coordination and lobbying since its creation back in February 2019 and throughout the mandate (e.g. ARLEM report on “Euro-Mediterranean integration: The role of regional and local authorities” – January 2020). Besides, the Alliance officially met back-to-back with the IMC General Assembly of June 2019, welcomed its first supporter in October 2019 in Palermo during the IMC Plenary meeting, met with the Union for the Mediterranean in March 2020 to discuss its contribution to the 25th anniversary of the Barcelona Process, as well as with the Interreg MED programme to understand to prospect options for further collaboration in the framework of the Programme over 2021-2027.

The WG met officially again in July 2020 to discuss about the new cooperation programmes potential architecture, as well as their governance. It was the occasion for the participating regions to reflect on how the MedCoopAlliance could play a key role as a platform of regional and local authorities networks for the enhanced mainstreaming of project results across multi-level governance policies, and to represent better regions in the management and governance of territorial cooperation programmes.

All reflections of the WG were also conveyed to the IMC Political Bureaus and General Assemblies, as well as CPMR’s through its Task Force on Macro-regional strategies, works on Cohesion, and its own statutory meetings.
The Working group kept working around initiatives for improving accessibility to the Mediterranean area and connections of its territories through the TEN-T/CEF as well as for supporting the development of an integrated maritime approach for Blue Growth in the Mediterranean, addressing also transversal elements (e.g. monitoring the common impacts to maritime and transport/accessibility policies, promoting land-sea interactions in the sectoral priorities of the Mediterranean area, sustainable maritime transport, working on marine data and regions’ access to funding).

In order to accomplish its mandate, the WG pursued the activities with 3 internal Task Forces which evolved gradually over the mandate:

- for example with the “Bologna Charter” (“coordination board” which focused on the update of the Joint Action Plan of the initiative) and its capitalization via key cooperation projects (CO-EVOLVE, Co-EVOLVE4BG, MedCoast4BG respectively under Interreg MED, ENI CBC MED and UfM) and some key projects
- “Fisheries and Aquaculture,” closely related with the activities on Fisheries at CPMR level (EMFF post-2020 and the exchange of practices and views between the regions concerning the future of Fisheries in the Mediterranean, tackling the COVID-19 impacts on the sector)
- “The follow-up of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Agenda on the Blue Economy (BE) in the Mediterranean Regions” (which monitored and promoted specific initiatives, projects and interactions with WestMED, BLUEMED, the UfMS Blue Economy virtual platform, and the UfM Stakeholder conferences on Blue Economy).

The work on transport has been dealt with in coordination with the CPMR Working Group Meetings and activities on Transport & Accessibility throughout the mandate, following all developments about the TEN-T and CEF reviews, putting forward the needs of the Mediterranean regions with lobbying activities and monitoring the actions and projects of interest for the WG as well as the developments of the R-TAP in the Neighbourhood area.

The WG met again in June 2019 in Marseilles, back-to-back with the IMC General Assembly and international seminar on “Strengthening cooperation efforts for a more cohesive inclusive and sustainable Mediterranean,” while its internal Task Forces met several times over the mandate. All political reflections arising from their activities were integrated in several IMC and CPMR Policy positions or Declarations. Alongside several seminars on specific topics also organized during the mandate, the IMC was represented in many external events dealing with the core business of the WG and its TFs (UfM, BLUEMED, etc.).
The activity of this Working Group has been very rich in the period 2018-2020 and it is extremely difficult to shortly summarize its outputs. Some that had previously issues arisen and were addressed through various kinds of proxies (projects, external events…) for the interest of the IMC and its members, feeding thoughts for future actions (e.g. marine renewable energies, marine litter, maritime sustainable transport/LNG).

In parallel, following the example of the positive experience of COM & CAP MarInA-Med, the horizontal projects the IMC engaged in back in 2016 as a full partner – PANACeA, setting up a Biodiversity Mediterranean Community aimed at streamlining management efforts in Protected Areas for enhanced nature conservation and InnoBlueGrowth addressing Innovation and Blue Growth (e.g. marine renewable energies, professional yachting, maritime surveillance, clustering etc.) (Interreg MED) came to the end of their first implementation period. They were maintained for three more years, respectively as the Mediterranean Biodiversity Protection Community and the Blue Growth Community, to ensure the impacts of their previous results and their mainstreaming into regional and EU policies (i.e. assist thematic projects in their communication and capitalization activities towards the key stakeholders, including EU and territorial players, as well as lobbying activities).

The IMC is also participating in various other thematic projects a full or as an associate partner (list available in our dedicated report) several of which dealing with sustainable tourism and linked to the IMC WG on Economic and Social Cohesion, to CPMR works (Blue Growth, marine protected areas…), or other geographical commissions (Islands, Balkans and Black Sea).
The Working group focused its efforts on responding to the strategic challenges of water management in the Mediterranean and the promotion of energy efficiency in Mediterranean buildings, tackling water and energy as transversal elements (e.g. promoting the synergies between actions that involve a joint water-energy approach).

Its Task Force on Energy Renovation was particularly animated through the works of the SHERPA project (Interreg MED), capitalizing on previous ones (ELIHMED, MARIE, PROFORBIOMED etc.). SHERPA project’s overall objective was to reinforce the capacities of public administrations at regional and sub-regional level within the territories covered by SHERPA (Catalunya, Crete, Croatia, France, Italy, Malta Valenciana) to improve Energy Efficiency in their Public Buildings’ stock and address difficulties related to energy efficiency in buildings projects in the Mediterranean area. The project developed around 165 ERB projects proposals at regional and local scale.

All results and tools elaborated (Joint Action Plan, market place…) by the project are available in its dedicated summary, while synergies are currently been sought to support the implementation and use of the tools it developed, notably with the Union for the Mediterranean.

Concerning its water strand, the Working group kept developing exchanges of best practices, a series of policy messages included in positions on water management, several project proposals (e.g. H2020, ENI CBC MED) and relations with the main frameworks of cooperation on water at EU and Mediterranean level. More precisely over 2019, the IMC participated to the joint development of the SolaQua project (H2020 CSA), alongside the Generalitat Valenciana (Spain) and the Călărași City Council (Romania), to start working with raising awareness on innovative technologies for photovoltaic irrigation towards EARDF Managing authorities of the Mediterranean. This project will open perspectives to deal more concretely with the relation between water and energy, while opening up thoughts on agriculture and the impact of climate change in this area as well, and across CPMR Geographical commissions as the Balkans and Black Sea.

The working group last met online back in July 2020 to outline these new developments and take them for presentation to the IMC General Assembly of October 2020 (online too). All the political reflections of the WG have also been included in the IMC policy papers during the mandate and contributed to the works of other key stakeholders (Interreg MED Communities, CoR’s ARLEM…).

Economic & Social Cohesion

Further to its regular contributions to global CPMR reflections on Cohesion in the post-2020 period and the IMC reflections on the socio-economic elements liked to emerging Mediterranean strategies, the working group focused its attention to the support and promotion of initiatives for a sustainable, inclusive and smart socio-economic development in the Mediterranean. In this context, a strong attention was given to Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) as a follow-up of its previous study and consequent policy declaration (2019).
The WG also kept implementing the works of its 2 Internal Task Forces:

- “Sustainable Tourism and Culture” counting will all activities encompassed in the implementation of the IMC Sustainable Tourism political agenda of 2018, and the cooperation projects on the matter.
- “Vasco da Gama” regarding education and mobility in the maritime sector.

The WG met back in November 2019 in Rome, while numerous other meetings took place concerning the projects on sustainable tourism and the synergies with external partners. All the policy relevant messages arising from the WG were conveyed in the IMC declarations as well as to CPMR works, in particular in the framework of the SEARICA Intergroup activities on the topic of tourism.

Concerning SEE, the WG kept promoting exchanges of best practices among the regions and as a result of the publication of its specific prospective report on Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) in the Mediterranean, including a summary of the legislation, experiences and the vision of the regions on the topic. This report has fueled debates among regional authorities, institutes, networks and key players of the sector, and also served as a basis to develop a specific Policy Declaration ratified during the IMC Plenary of October 2019 in Palermo.

It also produced synergies that led to the presentation of several projects (e.g. under ENI CBC MED calls or specifically led by regions). The group also kept monitoring the policy developments in the area and contributed to the reflections of the UfM.

Regarding its works on Sustainable tourism entering in the framework of its Task Force on Culture and Sustainable Tourism, the IMC kept working through its numerous cooperation projects on the topic: MedCoast4BG (UfM labeled), MITOMED+ (Interreg MED) on sustainable maritime and coastal tourism, indicators and green beach model, HERIT DATA (Interreg MED) on sustainable mass tourism and open data, BLEUTOURED (Interreg MED) horizontal project for the Sustainable Tourism Community, DESTIMED+ (Interreg MED) on eco-tourism in Med destinations, CO-EVOLVE (Interreg MED) on the “co-evolution” of human activities and natural systems in coastal zones based on the principles of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP), CO-Evolve4BG (ENI CBC MED) including southern Mediterranean partners, WINTERMED (Interreg
MED) on seasonality solutions for Med islands, but also SMARTMED and BESTMED (Interreg MED) on the governance of tourism in the Mediterranean and as part of the activities developed in the framework of PANORAMED, CIVITAS DESTINATIONS on sustainable mobility and tourism, MD.net on the promotion of the Mediterranean Diet, while several projects were also supported for the call of the ENI CBC MED programme.

More recently, the IMC has also deepened its works with external partners such as NECSTouR and the Travel Foundation in order to bring its experience to the latest debates on sustainable tourism and EU and Mediterranean levels. Especially, in the framework of 2020 and with the aim to ensure a true representation of Regions to discuss solutions to tackle the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. The IMC has also developed a dedicated study on “The Impacts of COVID-19 and adaptation measures on the tourism sector” in Europe and the Mediterranean (Members’ contributions consultable in Annex III), updated through the Spring and after the Summer of 2020, which will be presented to its General Assembly of October 2020. This study addresses key recommendations to all multi-level governance stakeholders working in this sector.

Lastly, concerning youth, citizenship and intercultural dialogue the WG focused on training and integration for youth employability as a continuation of the previous works organized in the framework of its “Vasco da Gama” Task Force. Notably, to capitalize on the Summer school “Vasco da Gama 2018” on Safety and Navigation (MoU with the University of Bari, Taranto, July 2018), by organizing other manifestations of interest for the Youth, skills and the promotion of the blue economy (e.g. Interreg MED Blue Growth Community Summer School back in July 2019).

Stemming from all these initiatives, the IMC also recently created its Youth Council in collaboration with the Lazio Region, back in December 2019 in Santa Severa. The idea of the Youth Council is to foster the integration of the Youth perspective onto the issues dealt with by the Intermediterranean Commission. Following a specific Survey on Youth Mechanisms in Mediterranean regions (Annexes) compiled over the Spring of 2020 to identify how regions addressed the issue of Youth on their territories, and to outline which themes of interest could engage the Youth, the IMC drafted the Youth Council’s Regulations in view of establishing a regular dynamic of its interactions with the Youth to be continued over the coming years and in synergy with its Member regions’ own mechanisms.
Synergies with CPMR Task Forces

Over the mandate, the IMC contributed to several meetings and conferences, projects proposals, synergies with networks and in particular in the framework of other CPMR Task Forces. For example, with the TF on Migration as regards the follow-up and capitalization of the “Survey and mapping work on migration and asylum” that produced the first Issue paper “Migration & Asylum in the EU Regions: towards a multilevel governance approach” (2018) to nourish later on a Second Issue Paper on “The External dimension of EU migration Policy; the Regional Strategy” (2019). Following these various initiatives, it is worth mentioning the approval of the REGIN project (AMIF) addressing migrants’ integration at regional level.

Furthermore, with the relaunch of the Task Force on Macro-regions, the IMC has been regularly participating to the TF meetings to represent Mediterranean views on the subject, in particular for what regards the implementation of EUSAIR and WestMED.

Lastly, the IMC has also been contributing and nourishing the works of the CPMR Climate Task Force, this topic having become of utmost importance in the strategic orientation of CPMR, and being all the most relevant for the Mediterranean so as to fulfill the objectives of the EU Green Deal and Agenda 2030’s.

The IMC participated to several debates on these various topics over the mandates, sometimes from the Secretariat or through its Members, whether it be on the levels of the TFs, its own Political Bureaus and General Assemblies, CPMR Political Bureaus and General Assemblies, or external events such as the EU Week of Regions and Cities.

Inter-commissions activities & synergies

Several dynamics within CPMR have grown, in particular to start strengthening inter-commissions works that are specific to some geographical commissions without being of general interest to all CPMR members. In this sense, the IMC has been exploring options to work in synergy with the North Sea Commission on Youth issues, but also with the Balkans and Black Sea Commission through the Al-NURECC project (DG REGIO) or the SolaQua project (H2020). Lastly, synergies have also been sought with the Islands Commission to strengthen activities around Mediterranean islands issues, while already collaborating for the WINTERMED project (Interreg MED).
During the 2018-2020 Mandate, the IMC kept its good tradition of collaboration with external organizations and partners. It sought the reinforcement and implementation of a series of agreements and partnerships that have been fundamental for triggering synergies and improving cooperation and governance at Mediterranean scale.

For example, one can mention the lasting relations with the UfM Secretariat on Blue Economy as a result of the previous Memorandum of Understanding that was signed back in 2013, but also the MoU signed with MedCities that has consolidated the cooperation between both our networks. Further to that, the IMC has also signed back in 2019 the Mediterranean Cooperation Alliance #MedCoopAlliance, which has since then allowed a regular collaboration with other networks of local and regional authorities as the Euro-Regions Pyrénées-Méditerranée and Adriatic-Ionian, Arco Latino, and indeed MedCities. COPPEM having signed the Alliance as well, will be a key partners whom to strengthen links with in the future. This Alliance partnership has allowed the IMC to lobby to a better extent EU and Euro-Mediterranean stakeholders to underline the key role local and regional authorities can and should play in the governance of the Mediterranean.

Furthermore, a structured collaboration is in place with the BLUEMED and the WestMED initiatives (were the IMC is formally involved as observer) as well as the long series of partnerships that were strengthened with networks like UNIMED (Mediterranean Universities), CoNISMa, NECSTouR, Agency for Territorial Cohesion (Italy), MedPAN, the Travel Foundation, among others.

The IMC also boosted the endorsements and the direct signatories of the Bologna Charter for sustainable development of Mediterranean Coasts which is a strategic initiative for the Med regions.

It is finally worth mentioning that the IMC notably boosted its network of contacts during the mandate through the EU projects where it is involved, in particular with centers of research, chambers of commerce, universities, NGOs, local and national Authorities, Institutions, clusters, etc.
Our activity reports

To explore the detailed reports of the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission for the 2018-2020 mandate, please see:

- Activity report (October 2018)
- Activity report (February 2019)
- Activity report (June 2019)
- Activity report (February 2020)

Our projects

To learn more about our projects, have a look at our dedicated webpage and detailed report.