



CONFERENCE DES REGIONS PERIPHERIQUES MARITIMES D'EUROPE
CONFERENCE OF PERIPHERAL MARITIME REGIONS OF EUROPE

6, rue Saint-Martin - 35700 RENNES - F
Tel. : + 33 (0)2 99 35 40 50 - Fax : + 33 (0)2 99 35 09 19
e.mail : secretariat@crpm.org - web : www.crpm.org

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ENQUIRY INTO THE FUTURE OF THE CPMR

Following the presentation of a document on "The future of the CPMR", the Political Bureau which met in Seville in January 2008 agreed that it was useful and timely to hold an enquiry on that theme, and gave mandate to the General Secretariat to do so. This enquiry is to be led by the Islands Commission Executive Secretary Jean-Didier Hache, in collaboration with the Executive Secretaries of the other Geographical Commissions as well as with the General Secretariat. It is due to be concluded by February 2009.

The enquiry's detailed methodology, which has been drafted by the Geographical Commissions' Executive Secretaries, is hereby detailed.

I - Foreword

The enquiry into the future of the CPMR aims to give the organisation a clear vision of the nature of its membership, and of the political goals commonly shared by its Members. It intends to assess the organisation's past strengths and weaknesses, and draw lessons from them. It will outline the main objectives which its Members wish to pursue in the forthcoming years, as well as define the main fields of activities where they wish to see the CPMR involved, be it within or outside the geographical scope of the EU.

The enquiry will not deal with strictly organisational matters, since addressing such matters before clarifying political goals would be getting priorities wrong. Debates and decisions on organisational matters will obviously have to follow, but it seems appropriate that they be handled by the organisation's future Secretary General.

It will be born in mind that this enquiry has to conciliate:

- a rather tight schedule, considering the complexity of the issues at stake, and the size of an organisation which gathers nearly 160 Regions;
- the necessity to leave as much time as reasonably possible for CPMR Members to debate, think about documents, and express their views in the course of CPMR events (Geographical Commissions' Annual Conferences, Political Bureau meetings, General Assembly...) as well as directly to the CPMR.

The enquiry process will involve two stages:

- a) **STAGE I**, which will range from February to the holding of the next Political Bureau in June. It will deal with the very basic questions: "Who are we? What are our strengths, weaknesses and opportunities? What should be the scope of our activities? "
- b) **STAGE II**, which will range from the aftermath of the June Political Bureau onwards. It will address the issue of "What do we want to do from now on, and how should we do it?"

STAGE I: "Who are we? What are our weaknesses, strengths and opportunities? What should be the scope of our activities?"

Stage one will involve four types of actions:

- **Producing a brief background paper** on the general European and world scene, and its development in relation to the evolution of the CPMR.
- **Undertaking an analytical study of CPMR membership**, which has considerably evolved over recent years. Its purpose will be to assess what its nature really is, and what its core interests are. The framework of this study is detailed in *Appendix I*.
- **Interviewing a limited selection of personalities internal and external to the CPMR**. The proposed list of interviewees is detailed in *Appendix II*.
- **Holding open debates** in the course of the annual conferences of the Geographical Commissions.

This process of interviews and debates will be undertaken according to a common framework of questions, to ensure a degree of consistency in the findings. This common framework is detailed in *Appendix III*.

These findings will be summarised and presented to the CPMR Political Bureau due to be held in Rhodes in June 2008. After discussion by the Political Bureau, we will proceed to Stage II.

STAGE II: "What do we want to do from now on, and how should we do it?"

Stage two will involve two types of actions:

- **The drafting of a number of "scenarios"**. These scenarios will be drafted by the Executive Secretaries of the Geographical Commissions on the basis of Stage 1 findings, and the discussion within the June Political Bureau. They will be submitted to Members in the course of the summer 2008, in view of a large debate during the General Assembly in early October.
- The organisation of an **"opinion pool"**, via a short questionnaire which will be distributed to all Member Regions in electronic format (to enable quick processing) the Members will be asked to give their opinion on each scenario proposed and to indicate their individual preference regarding the nature and goals of the CPMR. They will also be given the opportunity to make comments or suggestions.
- These findings will be presented to the 2008 General Assembly in early October, where they will be discussed. According to these conclusions and the outcome of the General Assembly debate, a report will be circulated to CPMR Members and will propose either:
 - To approve a summary document;
 - Or to choose between a number of options.

The Members of the Political Bureau will be presented with a final report at the meeting which will be held in early 2009.

It will be noted that the same Political Bureau will also have to approve a procedure for the recruitment process of the future Secretary General. It will henceforth be possible to include the enquiry's conclusion in the drafting of the "Post description" and "Candidate profile" leading to the recruitment of the future Secretary General.

The Political Bureau decision on the choice of the new Secretary General will be validated by the 2009 General Assembly.

Appendix I: Analytical Study of CPMR Membership

This study will assess the situation of CPMR membership according to a number of indicators.

These indicators will be matched against two criteria:

- the **number of individual Member Regions** belonging to a category;
- the **overall size of population** pertaining to a category, so as to take into account the wide discrepancy which exists between CPMR Members when it comes to population size (with Regional populations varying from a few 10,000s to millions of inhabitants).

The indicators will be:

- **Evolution of CPMR membership** since its inception (number of Member Regions).

As well as the situation of the CPMR Member Regions with regards to:

- **GDP/h** (<75%, <100%, >120%, in relation to their national and the EU average);
- **Unemployment rates** (<75%, <100%, >120%, in relation to their national and the EU average);
- **Level of accessibility** within Europe (<60, <100, >100; using the ESPON map of multimodal accessibility);
- **Maritime** (existence or not of a shoreline);
- **External Borders** (eligibility under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument);
- **Exposure to natural handicaps** (island or part-island nature, mountainous or part-mountainous areas, low density of population (<12h/Km²), outermost regions). The accumulation of geographic or demographic handicaps in a same region (e.g. mountain+ island) will be highlighted;
- **Governance** (with four levels: State-run, Region with no legislative power, Region with some legislative power, Federal system).

Appendix II: Proposed list of interviewees

CPMR Internal

CPMR President + Presidents of Geographical Commissions

Pdt Alberto Jardim, Former CPMR Chairman, President of Madeira

Jean-Yves Le Drian, President of Brittany, CPMR founding and host Region

CPMR Administrative Council

Luis Valente de Oliveira, President of the CPMR Scientific Council, Former CPMR President

Executive Secretaries may also wish to interview in more detail specific Members or former Members of their Geographical Commission.

CPMR External

Pedro Cymbron, Member of Cabinet of President José Manuel Barroso

Kostas Hatzidakis, Greek Minister for Air Transport, and Former Chairman of the Regional Affairs Committee at the European Parliament

Danuta Hübner, Commissioner for Regional Policy, or **Slawomir Tokarski**, Member of her Cabinet

Riccardo Illy, President of Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region, AER President

Eneko Landaburu, Director General of DG External Relations, EU Commission, and Former Director of DG Regio

Jean-Charles Leygues, DG Regio

Yavuz Mildon, President, Chamber of Regions of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Council of Europe

Jean-Pierre Raffarin, Former French Prime Minister and Former President of the Atlantic Arc Commission

Arve Skjerpen, Counsellor, Mission of Norway to the EU

Luc Van den Brande, President of the Committee of the Regions

These interviews will be undertaken by the Executive Secretaries of the Geographical Commissions, according to a common framework (see *Appendix III*).

Appendix III: Common framework for the process of internal and external interviews, and for the debates within the Geographical Commissions

Note

- The Geographical Commissions are invited to debate the future of the CPMR on the basis of this framework. These debates are not expected to lead to any formal position, but essentially to raise comments and ideas which will be used to draft various scenarios.
- The particular conditions and membership of the Balkan and Black Sea Commission may require a different framework or specific questions, which will be proposed by its Executive Secretary. The same may apply, to some extent, to the Baltic Sea because of the issues related to its direct neighbourhood of non-EU countries.

1) Definitions

First of all, the components of the organisation's name "Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe" need to be defined, since this choice of words is not neutral.

Regions

This usually means the democratically elected level of government below the national government. However, this rule has been applied with a large degree of flexibility by the CPMR, which accepts in its ranks Regions whose political leaders are nominated by central government. The CPMR's practice has been not to reject such membership, but to accompany the process of regionalisation which brings some countries to establish gradually democratically elected regional authorities.

It will be noted that this situation leaves CPMR membership exposed to institutional changes when countries delete an existing tier of government, or establish a new one.

Periphery

The definition of periphery can be the subject of endless debates. We will hereby propose the following definition, inspired by the work of Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung:

"A periphery is a territory whose inhabitants are, or feel that they are, distant in space from a centre where the economic, political, or cultural power lies".

As such, the notion of "peripherality" or "periphericity" is:

- **Subjective**, since it may depend on the inhabitant's view of their own condition, and perhaps also on how they are viewed by others;
- **Relative**, since a periphery may depend not on one, but on a number of centres, and also since a periphery may, in turn, be a centre for another periphery;
- **Fluctuating**, since changing political, economic, technological conditions etc. may result in a periphery becoming a centre, or a centre a periphery.

The concept is both simple and complex, and cannot be quantified by mere statistical criteria only. It is nevertheless a political reality, as demonstrates the 35 years existence of the CPMR.

Maritime

Article 1.2 of the CPMR Organisational Charter states that CPMR Members may be: *"Any European region which, because of its geographical, economic or political situation, considers itself to be a part of the maritime periphery of Europe"*.

The obvious definition of a maritime region is a region which has a maritime border.

However, Article 1.2 of the Organisational Charter states that, with the agreement of the organisation's Members, membership may be opened to any region which: "*considers itself to be a part of the Periphery of Europe*" and "*which form part of the large geographical maritime areas of Europe*". This has led to the inclusion within the CPMR of Regions with no maritime borders.

Europe

Article 1.2 of the Organisational Charter states that CPMR membership is open to the Regions of the Member States of the European Union, as well as to: "*Member States of the Council of Europe, as well as other European regions belonging to States that respect the fundamental principles of the Council of Europe.*"

Associated membership is open, under certain conditions to "*Any region of the States belonging to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.*"

2) Questions

Two sets of questions are to be raised during the interviews and in the course of the Geographical Commissions debates:

1) SWOT Analysis

- What do you consider to be the CPMR's biggest achievements during recent years?
- On what occasions, or in what areas, do you consider that the CPMR has failed, or could have done more?
- What do you consider as the most important issues which the CPMR should address in the foreseeable future?

2) CPMR external relationships

- How do you think that the CPMR could get more actively involved with other stakeholders on the European scene, and with which ones?
- How do you think that the CPMR could play a greater role with the territories covered by the EU Neighbourhood Economic Policy?
- How do you think that the CPMR could become increasingly involved with other structures or networks of regional organisations worldwide?

To allow a fruitful debate, the Executive Secretaries will ensure that these questions will be distributed to the Members prior to the annual conference of their Geographical Commission.

CALENDAR

January 2008	CPMR Political Bureau, Seville. Decision to undertake an enquiry into the future of the CPMR.
February 2008	5 - Drafting of enquiry procedure by Executive Secretaries
STAGE 1	
March 2008	- Validation of procedure (by email) by Political Bureau Members - Start of interview process - Start of analytical study & background paper
April 2008	3/4 - NSC Steering Committee, Västra Götaland (SE) 7 - CPMR Administrative Council Meeting 10/11 - Islands Commission Annual Conference, Mallorca (ES)
May 2008	
June 2008	12/13 - BSC & NSC Joint Annual Conference, Herning (DK) 12/13 - Atlantic Arc Commission Annual Conference, Deauville (FR) 24 - Intermediterranean Commission Short Meeting, Marseille (FR) 26 - BBSC Annual Conference, Rhodes (GR) 27 - CPMR Political Bureau Rhodes (GR) Presentation of paper and report of debates and interviews to Political Bureau. Validation of Stage 1.
STAGE 2	
July 2008	Drafting of scenarios and questionnaire
August 2008	Consultation sent to Members by email
September 2008	Mid -September: end of consultation
October 2008	1/3 - CPMR General Assembly, Aquitaine (FR). Presentation of enquiry conclusions. General debate.
November 2008	Drafting of a summary position paper, or of different options Circulation of these papers to Members
December 2008	
January 2009	
February 2009	Decision by CPMR Political Bureau Start of recruitment procedure for future Secretary General
October 2009	Validation by General Assembly