



# **Cohesion, Competitiveness, Resilience, Security and Maritime Ambition: CPMR Regions at the Heart of Europe's Future**

## **Preamble**

*Meeting in Barcelona on 20-21 November 2025, at the close of the first year of a new EU institutional cycle, the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) - with its wide membership from EU Member States, neighbouring and third countries - calls on the European Union to reaffirm its commitment to a united, sustainable, competitive and resilient Europe, anchored in social, economic and territorial cohesion. It highlights that policies to foster cohesion have not only driven regional development but have also been instrumental in securing lasting peace across the continent. It is paramount to preserve this peace and stability to overcome future challenges and fulfil common objectives*

*The CPMR underlines the strategic role of Europe's maritime and peripheral regions in shaping the Union's future in line with its core values and democratic principles, as supported by the Council of Europe's New Democratic Pact for Europe. Today's context, marked by geopolitical instability and conflicts, is prompting a renewed EU focus on defence, preparedness and security. Transatlantic trade tensions are rising as AI accelerates Europe's digital transition within the EU's triple shift—green, digital, and social. While AI holds transformative promise, its risks for democracy and citizens remain unclear. The EU must act proactively to ensure technological progress aligns with European values and democratic principles. These challenges are unfolding in the structural landscape of climate emergency, environmental and energy crises, demographic imbalances and growing territorial, social and economic disparities. Yet, in face of accumulating challenges, EU regional funding is facing a decline at a time in which targeted regional support for all regions (less developed, transition and more developed regions) is more critical than ever.*

*Many CPMR territories, such as islands, outermost regions, rural, cross-border, industrial transition and northern sparsely populated areas, are explicitly recognised in Articles 174, 175, 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and Article 2 of Protocol 6 to the 1994 Act of Accession for Sweden and Finland. These provisions place clear obligations on the EU and its Member States to promote harmonious development and reduce territorial disparities. However, these commitments are not yet fully developed or effectively implemented. At the same time, the vast majority of CPMR members are peripheral maritime regions, and while not always explicitly mentioned in legal provisions, they do face common structural challenges and share strategic opportunities that must be fully acknowledged. The CPMR therefore calls for a broad political reflection by the EU Institutions to place all these regions at the heart of the EU's strategies for sustainable growth, competitiveness, inclusion and resilience - recognising the added value of their territorial knowledge and expertise, their smart specialisation strategies, and their essential role in fostering balanced, sustainable regional development across Europe. In particular, we ask to consider the strategic role of Europe's maritime and peripheral regions in shaping the future of the EU and take into account the provisions and objectives set out in the Treaty.*

*A new generation of EU policies is emerging from 2025 onward, through the dedicated efforts of the EU institutions in collaboration with territorial stakeholders. These policies must continue to be shaped and delivered based on the principles of subsidiarity and multilevel governance. This requires an enabling regulatory environment and adequate budgetary resources. Territories matter more than ever: they are the foundation of any sustainable vision for Europe's future.*

## CPMR Key Political Messages and Priorities:

### 1. Territorial Cohesion and Competitiveness must be Pillars of the EU's Future

#### The CPMR:

- a) **Considers** that the European Commission's proposal for the Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2034, in particular the proposed National and Regional Partnership Plans, represent a significant reform that warrants careful assessment to ensure it strengthens place-based solutions. While the proposals, including the new single "mega fund", aim to enhance coherence and coordination, they also introduce a significant degree of uncertainty in relation to financial allocations and governance. The new framework should safeguard shared management with genuine multilevel governance for the sake of transparency and to provide EU visibility across territories, while also ensuring that the Union's budgetary support continues to deliver tangible results to citizens and reinforces their trust in the European project. The CPMR therefore underlines that any future reform must pursue genuine administrative simplification that reinforces subsidiarity and proximity, so that EU challenges are effectively addressed through place-based solutions.
- b) **Warns** that centralising the EU's Cohesion Policy and shifting the focus towards competitiveness could risk undermining the core objectives of cohesion itself. This may widen regional disparities and deepen the sense of abandonment among communities left behind — ultimately posing a threat to democratic legitimacy, social stability and the European project as a whole.
- c) **Urges** therefore to place territorial cohesion and regional development firmly at the heart of the 2028–2034 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)'s competitiveness policies. Territorial cohesion and regional development are essential for a socially sustainable and competitive Europe that is resilient to the challenges the European Union faces. The CPMR is concerned that the proposed structure may overlook regional disparities and specific challenges affecting regions. It is important that the future framework adequately addresses these challenges and recognises the crucial role that regions play in ensuring that competitiveness and growth translate into tangible benefits for citizens across all territories.
- d) **Stresses** the importance of refining the proposal to ensure that it effectively delivers on the principles of subsidiarity, partnership and proportionality. Therefore, substantial changes shall be made. It should reinstate regional Operational Programmes with the full participation of the regional authorities, to ensure the maintenance of regional managing authorities with effective participation in monitoring committees and in direct dialogue with the European Commission. This should provide clarity on the financial architecture and allocations at regional and national level and give special consideration to regions with specific territorial typologies and challenges, such as coastal areas, islands, northern sparsely populated areas, cross-border, industrial transition regions and outermost regions, in line with the treaty and legal provisions.
- e) **Calls** for an allocation formula that reflects these realities and protects the regions, and promotes investing in critical EU priorities, such as competitiveness, resilience, security and cohesion. Territorial cohesion is essential to protect the single market. It must reinforce cooperation and synergies, making the most of the regions' innovation potential and actions to support smart specialisation (such as S3 strategies now absent from the proposals), while developing economies of scale by enhancing networks and reinforcing supply and value chains.

### 2. A Modern, Place-Based EU Budget that Delivers on Strategic Priorities and Territorial Needs

#### The CPMR:

- a) **Stresses** that the EU Budget must support EU-wide strategic ambitions, including increasingly critical priorities such as competitiveness, sustainability, innovation, resilience and security. However, this is only possible if the design of policies is sensitive to the needs of each territory. In many areas, those priorities are highly specific to the territories. Therefore, EU investments should also be designed and implemented by regional authorities in line with the subsidiarity principle. Regions deal directly with economic and security pressures, and many peripheral and maritime regions are at the forefront of the challenges ahead.

- b) **Is concerned**<sup>1</sup> by the European Commission's proposal to merge the European Structural and Investment funds (ERDF, EAFRD, EMFAF, ESF+...) into a new "mega fund" entitled Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion, Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Prosperity and Security Fund. The CPMR calls for a final MFF architecture that makes it compulsory to fully involve the regions in the strategic decisions that affect their territory and competences through a strengthened shared management with the European Commission. At the same time, the CPMR stresses the need to guarantee that regional authorities have genuine and equitable access to a broad range of EU Instruments that have an important territorial dimension, by involving them in the design of relevant programmes and ensuring coherence and complementarity between direct and shared management funds.

### 3. A Modernised and Simplified Cohesion Policy for All Regions

#### The CPMR:

- a) **Calls for** a robust and simplified Cohesion Policy based on the principle of subsidiarity and multilevel governance. It is essential that future arrangements do not evolve towards a renationalisation of this important regional policy but preserve the shared management model and maintain a strong Union dimension. They should ensure clear support for all categories of regions, with special consideration for islands, cross border regions, industrial transition regions, outermost regions and northern sparsely populated areas, in full respect of Articles 174, 175, 349 TFEU and Article 2 of Protocol 6 to the 1994 Act of Accession for Sweden and Finland.
- b) **Welcomes** the EC's commitment to update the EU Strategy for the Outermost Regions, while urging to uphold its original commitment to deliver a stand-alone EU Strategy for Islands, as long advocated by the CPMR and its Islands Commission. This Strategy should integrate a cross-cutting insularity approach across all EU policies, including the green and digital transitions, mobility and connectivity, energy, resilience and competitiveness. It is essential that the EU advances towards a truly place-based approach, capable of addressing islands' specificities through targeted policy responses. Moreover, the CPMR considers that the opportunity to advance the integration of island and Outermost Regions' needs into the EU's core policies is being undermined by the MFF proposals.
- c) **Welcomes** the European Commission's commitment to review and update the EU Arctic Policy, as long advocated by the CPMR, the Baltic Sea Commission and its Arctic Working Group. However, the CPMR regrets the absence of dedicated funding envelopes for the Arctic in the MFF proposal. The targeted investments for the Northern Sparsely Populated Areas have been a critical and successful mechanism to tackle the permanent natural handicaps and structural challenges, such as harsh climate, long distances and low population density, as well as improve conditions for industrial transition and competitiveness for the EU.

### 4. Enhanced Sea-Basin and Macro-Regional Strategies and Territorial Cooperation

#### The CPMR:

- a) **Reaffirms support** for existing macro-regional and sea-basin strategies (EUSBSR, EUSAIR, EUSDR, EUSALP) and initiatives (WestMed, Atlantic, Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea, GNSBI) and calls for greater and more structured involvement of its regions in their design, governance and implementation.
- b) **Supports** the launch of new emerging Mediterranean and Atlantic macro-regional strategies that have reached a significant critical mass for implementation. They represent strategic assets for the EU to enhance cooperation in key geographical areas not effectively covered so far. It **calls for** these cooperation frameworks to be better supported by the EU, concerned Member States and regions, coherently embedded in future policies and aligned with the EU Budget and relevant programmes.
- c) **Asks for** INTERREG to be enhanced in the post 2027 programming period. As the INTERREG programmes celebrate their 35 years of existence, the CPMR reaffirms that they embody the EU's added value as they connect people and stakeholders across borders. Facilitating both maritime and

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<sup>1</sup> Malta and Gozo note the European Commission's proposal to merge the European Structural and Investment Funds into a new single framework since centralisation may be used as a means to achieve more efficiency in our small administration, but underlines the importance of ensuring that such consolidation does not lead to reduced visibility of Union action

land cooperation across different levels of government and sectors in multiple Member States, partner states and third countries remains paramount to solve joint problems and enhance territorial development. To improve its effectiveness, INTERREG should be made more flexible and inter-operational with other EU instruments starting in the current period, including other Cohesion Policy funds, NDICI (Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument) and IPA (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance). This would mirror the EC's proposal for the 2028-2034 period that would grant an increased access to the Global Europe funding. In terms of geographical coverage, the EC should increase synergies with the OCTs (Overseas Countries and Territories) and non-EU regions whose participation could benefit INTERREG programmes. In all cases, actions should be in full alignment with the objective "Better Governance" in future programmes.

- d) **Welcomes** the results of the last EU-UK Summit which agreed on a new strategic partnership. The renewed agenda, which includes people-to-people cooperation and UK participation in Erasmus, is positive for supporting long term cooperation between UK and EU regions, although the CPMR would have hoped for a decision from the UK to rejoin INTERREG too.

## 5. Towards a CEF Programme Aligned with the Strategic Ambitions for European Transport Infrastructure

### The CPMR:

- a) **Calls for** a sufficient CEF post-2027 that supports connectivity for all territories and investments in transport infrastructures. This is essential for boosting the EU's economic competitiveness, resilience and territorial cohesion and ensuring that the single market benefits can be a reality for all. Special attention must be given to ensuring the timely completion of the Trans-European Transport Network, including its maritime and peripheral components, as well as urban nodes to ensure accessibility, territorial continuity and the maritime and air connectivity of peripheral regions, which are essential for their social and economic cohesion. The CEF must also align with the forthcoming Sustainable Transport Investment Plan (STIP), ensuring that funding is targeted towards sustainable, smart and resilient mobility priorities.
- b) **Welcomes** the overall increase in the budget proposed for the next Connecting Europe Facility and the designation of ports as cross-border infrastructure that is vital for all peripheral maritime regions. However, the proposal for the CEF Transport component is overly focused on cross-border projects. The CPMR **opposes** the exclusion of national sections of projects of common interest key to the completion of the TEN-T network and the investments needed to ensure accessibility and territorial cohesion. Since National and Regional Partnership Plans will contribute to completing the TEN-T network, the budget should reflect sufficiently the investment costs and ensure continued EU funding for all parts of the network through the CEF and the other EU Programmes.
- c) **Calls** on the EU institutions to reintroduce the principle of territorial accessibility, together with an explicit recognition of the Comprehensive TEN-T network, in the upcoming negotiations on CEF III. It **observes** that the principle of territorial accessibility is neither mentioned in the selection and award criteria, nor among the key indicators for monitoring the achievement of CEF objectives.
- d) **Underlines** that the CEF budget must also respond to the evolving geopolitical and security context by supporting infrastructure that enables dual civilian-military use and enhances the network's adaptability for military mobility needs as well as enabling more sustainable transport. Even with a significant overall increase of the CEF budget reflected in the MFF proposal, sufficient resources must still be dedicated to civilian mobility and infrastructure. Key priorities should still include completing missing transport links, investing in sustainable maritime and rail corridors, and promoting accessibility to create opportunities for socio-economic development across all regions, especially the most peripheral ones. The forthcoming EU Military Mobility Package must align fully with the CEF Transport objectives, ensuring that dual-use investment contributes to all modes of the TEN-T network and its overall performance and completion. Moreover, the CPMR emphasises the need to actively involve regional authorities in the planning of investments in dual-use infrastructures and recommends establishing a shared planning framework between EU, EEA states and regions.

## 6. EU Ports and Maritime Industrial Strategies: Engines of Resilience, Defence & Innovation towards Maritime Industrial Valleys

### The CPMR:

- a) **Welcomes** the Commission's intention to develop a Ports Strategy, which should provide a comprehensive roadmap for port development regardless of their size or area of specialisation, acknowledging their major role in economic and climate resilience, European defence preparedness, and regional ecosystems. It also **calls for** cooperation between ports along the same seacoasts. The new Strategy must consider the local climate conditions and recognise and support the multifunctional role of ports as hubs for the regional economy, for energy, green transition, security, trade, mobility, territorial accessibility, digital, cohesion, industrial development and also respond to the challenges concerning land. It should align with regional infrastructure and industrial plans, support intermodal and digital connectivity, and promote innovation and alternative sustainable fuels supply. The Strategy must also ensure fair funding access, address the dual civil-military use of ports, and involve regional and local authorities in its governance and implementation. In this regard, it is worth recalling that several ports in CPMR regions have dedicated military functions by reserving space for military vessels, developing contingency plans, and improving logistical coordination for arms shipments. In the case of peripheral maritime regions, ports constitute critical infrastructures for daily life, supply and economic diversification, and should therefore receive proportionate attention in the forthcoming Port Strategy.
- b) **Believes** that the future European Industrial Maritime Strategy (EIMS) should foster innovation to accelerate decarbonisation and improve industrial capacity in shipbuilding, offshore renewable energy and port sectors. Maritime regions should play a key role in the design and implementation of the EIMS to link reindustrialisation to broader territorial competitiveness dynamics. The CPMR **supports** the creation of '[Maritime Industrial Valleys](#)' conceived as territorial ecosystems gathering the maritime industry, maritime clusters, incubators, academia, research centres, and regional authorities, with the aim of accelerating maritime industrial activities and thereby becoming drivers of place-based, sustainable, and competitive growth.

## 7. Implementing the EU Oceans Pact: A Territorial Agenda towards a real Blue Deal

### The CPMR:

- a) **Welcomes** the European Ocean Pact and supports the development of a European Ocean Act through a sea-basin, ecosystem-based and Maritime Spatial Planning approach, including a stronger focus on the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), which represents a central area for cooperation and learning between regions across Europe and beyond. Likewise, the CPMR **stresses** that the conception of the future Ocean Act needs to be linked to the revision of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), to simplify its legislative framework and better align its implementation mechanism to National and regional maritime spatial planning tools. This marks a strategic move toward restoring ocean health, empowering coastal, island, outermost and overseas territories, and unlocking the potential of a sustainable and inclusive blue economy, ultimately benefiting citizens by improving their quality of life.
- b) **Underlines** that for the Pact and the future Ocean Act to be effective, they must rely on a robust multilevel governance framework (fisheries co-management model) that ensures formal regional representation, particularly within the Ocean Board, and reinforces the role of regions in delivering on key priorities such as maritime security, decarbonisation, innovation and resilience. Alongside the creation of the Ocean Board, the CPMR **stresses** the need to establish a new agile "platform" to foster dialogue among key maritime stakeholders. It therefore **calls on** the EC to recognise the added value of the "Blue Alliance" - launched in October 2025 in cooperation with the chair of the European Parliament's SEArca Intergrup and 15 partner maritime organisations.
- c) **Recalls** that producing and collecting robust and harmonised data is fundamental to anchor policymaking process to best available scientific evidence. It also recalls that fostering research and innovation is key to enabling the regeneration of marine and coastal ecosystems and promoting their efficient and responsible use, in line with the objectives of the EU mission "Restore our Ocean and

waters” and of the strategy on sustainable blue economy.

- d) **Welcomes** the Pact's reference to the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and calls for its revision to better reflect regional realities, support coastal fisheries, foster ecosystem-based management and drive maritime innovation. In order to ensure the triple sustainability (social, economic and environmental) enshrined in the CFP, it is essential to promote co-management, i.e. the participation of fishermen in the decision-making mechanisms that affect them.
- e) **Points out** that the Ocean Act should also create the necessary conditions to more adequately support the needs and harness the high potential of coastal communities. The CPMR **calls** for the European Commission to develop a dedicated and stand-alone policy approach with specific funding to support coastal communities. It underlines the importance of maintaining an ambitious sustainable blue economy objective in those areas and linking this reflection to broader discussions on environmental, climate and socio-economic drivers, making the 'freedom to stay' a reality for coastal communities.
- f) **Calls<sup>2</sup> for** the Pact and the future Act to be backed by a coherent financial framework in the next MFF, making EU instruments for cohesion, climate, specialisation (including skills), maritime and innovation readily accessible to regions. In this regard, the CPMR **stresses** the importance of maintaining a dedicated fund to support the implementation of the CFP, which should ensure a minimum ring-fenced envelope at least equivalent to the level of the current programming period. Finally, a robust monitoring system, including territorial indicators at NUTS2/3 level, is essential to assess regional impact and guide evidence-based policymaking.

## 8. Regions Driving Climate Ambition: From Carbon Sinks to Adaptation Strategies

### The CPMR:

- a) **Welcomes** the European Commission's legislative proposal to set a target of 90% greenhouse gas emission reductions by 2040 (compared to 1990 levels). It emphasises the crucial role of peripheral maritime regions in supporting EU efforts to protect and enhance blue and green carbon sinks, which are vital for climate resilience and achieving carbon neutrality. It **urges** the EU co-legislators and Member States to actively support regional authorities in developing and implementing ambitious carbon removal strategies, including through ecosystem restoration in line with the EU Nature Restoration Law with a strong focus on nature-based solutions.
- b) While underlining the importance of continued efforts on mitigation, **stresses** the urgent need to strengthen EU action on adaptation. It calls on the EC to present an EU Adaptation Action Plan that supports regional authorities in fully implementing their adaptation strategies, with strong financial backing from both EU and national sources. Furthermore, the CPMR **welcomes** the new EU water resilience strategy approved last June. Specifically, the CPMR looks with high interest to the establishment of some innovative initiatives (e.g. Water Resilience Investment Accelerator; Water Smart Industrial Alliance; etc.) as well as to the enhancement of the EU's real-time early warning and monitoring systems for floods and droughts with strengthened links between the EU, national and local levels.
- c) In line with the EU Nature Restoration Law and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, **underlines** the importance of scaling up efforts to conserve and restore ecosystems, particularly coastal, marine and wetland areas that function as key carbon sinks and natural buffers against climate impacts. Moreover, it **recommends** the integration of biodiversity considerations across sectoral policies and the strengthening of cooperation between regions to ensure ecological connectivity and resilience.
- d) **Calls** for a reinforced multilevel climate governance framework ensuring that regional authorities are fully involved in the design, implementation, and monitoring of climate and adaptation policies. This should include specific mechanisms for a just transition.

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<sup>2</sup> In the case of Malta and Gozo, centralisation may be used as a means to achieve more efficiency in a small administration, whilst ensuring that a territorial focus is in place, applying the principle of proportionality and flexibility

## 9. Promoting Regional Energy Transitions to Achieve Territorial Competitiveness and Climate Neutrality

### The CPMR:

- a) **Underlines** the need to recognise the territorial dimension of the EU's energy and circular transition across the EU, EEA and wider European area and consistently provide Regions with direct support for low-carbon solutions (e.g. clean energy production and, storage, alternative fuels, carbon sinks, hydrogen valleys, ecosystem restoration and nature-based and circular solutions) to achieve climate neutrality. The Clean Industrial Deal (CID) and forthcoming legislation and simplifications (e.g. CBAM revision, Industrial Decarbonisation Accelerator Act) must include adapted mechanisms and tailored funding streams to support territories in transition with flexible support, in line with both the principle of technological neutrality and the Better Regulation Guidelines.
- b) **Stresses** that regions must be empowered in the planning and implementation of energy, circular and climate policies (spanning industrial decarbonisation, grids electrification, hydrogen innovation and uptake, circular and renewables deployment) to reflect diverse territorial realities and ensure that no region is left behind in Europe's green transition. Peripheral and maritime areas, as well as ports, airports and industrial clusters, should be supported in becoming hubs for strategic projects and benefit from simplified funding and permitting procedures to develop manufacturing capacity and circular solutions. A regional dimension for hydrogen valleys should also be recognised by the European Commission.
- c) **Highlights** that accelerating electricity grid investments (e.g., via the CID, APAE, EAP, and Grids Package) and supporting participatory energy models (e.g. Citizens Energy Package) are essential to meet growing energy demands. At the same time, focus should be placed on strengthening grid capacity and digital infrastructure, streamlining permitting processes at regional and local levels, and expanding electrification and socio-economic benefits at regional and local levels across industry, mobility, and households.
- d) **Calls** for support for the co-design of regional skills strategies (with a focus on certified tracks for innovative technology, cleantech, and ports professionals) and their alignment with industrial decarbonisation goals, particularly in regions exposed to industrial transformation, aligning the Union of Skills initiative, the EU Talent Pool, Net-Zero Industry Academies, and regional S3. The CPMR **highlights** that universities and academia ecosystems, and business and education initiatives, are essential for driving innovation, developing skills, and attracting talent in maritime regions. A coordinated network of academic institutions and centres of excellence would strengthen collaboration and smart specialisation, aligned with regional needs.

## 10. Regional Involvement in Migration Governance for a Coordinated and Humane Response

### The CPMR:

- a) **Stresses** the need to establish structured dialogue with regional authorities on migration and asylum at the EU level, to take into account the specific capacities, responsibilities and challenges of territories of first arrival, transit, and reception of migrants and asylum seekers. The CPMR calls for simplified funding access through dedicated EU instruments and for these financial instruments to be directed decisively and as a priority to competent regional administrations to strengthen infrastructures, services and programmes for integration and response in emergency situations, in recognition of their operational and first response role. In this regard, it stresses that many peripheral and maritime regions on the EU's external borders – including islands and outermost regions - play an essential role in managing migration flows due to their geographical position. It is therefore necessary to recognise their specific characteristics and ensure enhanced European support to address the structural challenges arising from migratory pressure and the provision of reception services, especially in contexts of limited territorial capacity like islands.
- b) **Demands** that regional authorities with competences for the reception and care of unaccompanied migrant children must be recognised as strategic partners in order to ensure a coordinated, effective and human rights-based response, and be able to benefit from special measures at EU level to support

this vulnerable group, ensure their welfare and safeguard their best interests. In particular, better and more targeted support is required for long-term care solutions including family placements, and for adapted integration pathways. The CPMR also considers it necessary to extend this care to young people who reach the age of majority after having been unaccompanied migrant minors, so that they can benefit from inclusion and support measures in the transition to adult life and from European programmes targeting youth.

## 11. Defence, Security and Resilience: A Territorial Imperative

### The CPMR:

- a) **Supports** better involvement of regions in Europe's preparedness and resilience agenda. EU programmes must adequately fund critical infrastructure protection, cybersecurity and civil defence, including dual-use solutions and cross-border preparedness. The socio-economic development of territories is also an essential component of a well-endowed and resilient response to security threats. It must not be sidelined in exchange for security investments but should be an integral part of any strategy. Growing regional disparities cause rifts in society and open the door to further instability. Weakening Cohesion Policy - which is already financially very limited - to fund defence-related expenditure is not a sound approach. Instead, Cohesion Policy should align its programmes to help regions become more responsive, aware, agile and secure in times of need.
- b) **Emphasises** that strengthening Europe's strategic autonomy and security requires reducing its dependency on imported critical raw materials, which are indispensable for EU industries and the twin green and digital transitions. This calls for a comprehensive approach that combines accelerating the reuse and recycling of materials through robust circular economy strategies with the sustainable development of Europe's own resources. In this sense, measures such as the systematic mapping of sources and the simplification of permitting processes for extraction are essential, particularly for resources available in CPMR regions. At the same time, activities must be balanced with the protection of biodiversity to ensure a resilient and responsible European supply chain.
- c) **Highlights** the risk of increasing regional disparities due to the changed security situation in Europe. Several regions, especially Eastern border Regions, face social, economic, territorial and security challenges following the Russian aggression against Ukraine and closed borders. The CPMR therefore **welcomes** the upcoming EU Pact for the Eastern Border Regions aiming to increase the resilience of the regions bordering Russia, Belarus and Ukraine and invites the European Commission to expand its scope to support all the Eastern External Regions that border with third countries, in the wide EU security context. Furthermore, as a growing hotspot of climate change, clean industrialisation and geopolitical tensions, the Arctic should be better considered in EU policies and fundings schemes to ensure regional attractiveness and resilience.
- d) **Reaffirms** its unwavering support for Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and European aspirations in the face of ongoing aggression. It stands in solidarity with Ukrainian regions and calls for enhanced interregional cooperation to support Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction and assist its path toward peace, stability, and European membership. The CPMR **urges** the EU to prioritise Ukraine's regional development, resilience, sustainable reconstruction and connectivity in forthcoming cohesion and enlargement policies.

*Unanimously adopted by the CPMR Member Regions meeting in Barcelona on 21 November 2025*

# Annex to the Final Declaration 2025

## - Compendium of supporting papers & policy positions -

The CPMR seeks to expand its policy messages underlined in its Final Declaration 2025 by raising attention to its last relevant specific policy positions and papers that can be consulted by targeted EU, National Institutions and stakeholders, to better comprehend proposals and supporting analyses.

### I. Key CPMR Policy Positions and Papers by policy area

#### EU Budget & Cohesion Policy:

- [Policy Position on Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2034 proposals](#) (Barcelona, November 2025)
- [CPMR questions about the LDR minimum allocations](#) (September 2025)
- [Technical Note – Regional categories and their treatment in the MFF proposal](#) (September 2025)
- [Technical Note – The Commission giveth, and the Commission taketh away – the new allocation formula for the EU Mega fund](#) (August 2025)
- [Fact Sheet – The allocation of INTERREG funds – national envelopes for cooperation](#) (July 2025)
- [Technical Note – Centralising local transformations – the case of the JTF](#) (June 2025)
- [Technical Note – The Berlin Formula – Understanding how the Commission allocates Cohesion funding \(for now\)](#) (June 2025)
- [Reflection paper “Vision on Territorial Competitiveness”](#) (Bari, March 2025)
- [Real Proposals by Practitioners – CPMR recommendations for the post-2027 EU Budget and future Cohesion Policy](#) (May-July 2025)
- [Policy position on the future EU Budget post 2027](#) (Gozo, October 2024)
- [Reflection Paper – A modern EU budget supporting a European economic model based on territorial cohesion](#) (October 2024)
- [Policy position on the future of Cohesion Policy](#) (Patras, March 2024), [Policy position on the future of INTERREG](#) (Patras, March 2024) & [Technical note on the governance of EU Macro-Regions](#) (June 2024)

#### Maritime Affairs and Fisheries:

- [The European Ocean Pact: Opportunities, challenges and future perspectives for the CPMR](#) (June 2025)
- [CPMR Contribution to the Public Consultation on the Functioning of the Common Fisheries Policy](#) (April 2025)
- [Joint Manifesto CPMR-SEAEurope on the EMIS](#) (April 2025) + [Response to call for evidence](#) (July 2025)
- [Policy position on blue dimension of Ris3](#) (June 2025)

#### Climate:

- [Policy position on blue and green carbon sinks](#) (June 2025)
- [Policy position on Climate adaptation](#) (Gozo, October 2024)

#### Transport:

- [Contribution to the Public consultation on Military Mobility Package](#) (October 2025)
- [CPMR paper on EU Ports Strategy/response to call for evidence](#) (July 2025)
- [Contribution to Public consultation on CEFI and II evaluations](#) (May 2025) / [Initial Policy position on CEF III](#) (Gozo, October 2024)

### Energy:

- [Policy position on Green skills](#) (The Hague, July 2025)
- [Policy position on Green Hydrogen and cooperation of Hydrogen Valleys](#) (Gozo, October 2024)

### Migration

- [Policy position on the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum](#) (Patras, March 2024)

## II. Key Policy Positions of CPMR Geographical Commissions

- [Final Declaration of the Islands Commission](#) (La Palma, April 2025) & [Policy note on the future EU Islands Strategy](#)
- [Final Declaration of the Atlantic Arc Commission](#) (Sevilla, June 2025) & [Roadmap for an Atlantic Macro-Region](#)
- [Final Declaration of the Intermediterranean Commission](#) (Nice, June 2025) & [EUSMED draft action plan](#)
- [Final Declaration of the North Sea Commission](#) (June 2025)
- [Final Declaration of the Baltic Sea Commission](#) (Brussels, August 2025), [Position Paper on EU Port Strategy](#) (August 2025) & [Position Paper on Transport](#) (April 2025)
- [Final declaration of the BBSC](#) (November 2025)