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**Report on
a Cohesion Policy for the Mediterranean**

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Committee of the Regions — The EU's Assembly of Regional and Local Representatives

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1. *State of play*

The current process of globalisation is leading to some fundamental changes, with new regions emerging and new challenges to be faced. The Mediterranean is one such region. It stands out because of its potential and opportunities based on existing challenges which will turn it into an influential player on the changing international scene.

We are dealing with an unprecedented period in history. It represents one of the clearest expressions of our new world order and could lead to long-term changes in society and in the governance and administrative structures of the countries in the region. At EU level, the Mediterranean territories, which have been severely affected by the economic and financial crisis, are facing an enormous challenge over the coming years: to implement policies geared towards growth and job creation and boosting competitiveness while introducing severe adjustment measures. Emerging from the crisis is also a key challenge for regions in the south and east of the Mediterranean, as is the democratic transition - following the Arab Spring - and decentralisation. It is an ideal time for local and regional authorities as well as the EU to take advantage of the area's potential, to consolidate existing cooperation mechanisms and to seek to generate new initiatives to increase coordination and concentration of objectives and resources, which are a driving force behind sustainable development (economic, socially inclusive, cohesive and smart development).

In this respect, building an area of peace and security, shared stability and prosperity, intercultural dialogue and solidarity between all countries in the area continues to be an objective shared by the north and south of the Mediterranean. This requires coherent strategies, policies and priorities which are key to the region's sustainable development and overall growth. This objective will be achieved if consideration is given to the diversity of territories as contributors to development, i.e. if there is genuine and effective participation of territorial bodies in the EU's cohesion and neighbourhood policy (ENP)¹. In accordance with these objectives, the regions, cities and territories on both shores of the Mediterranean suggest taking fresh and gradual steps to draw on the EU's sound experience in the area of territorial development, cooperation and cohesion to underpin existing cooperation mechanisms² and to organise these mechanisms on a long-term footing, i.e. with an eye to 2030 (beyond the next two programming periods for the Structural Funds and on the basis of a step-by-step timetable).

Some of the EU's most important programmes and financial instruments are geared towards meeting these objectives and have already been used successfully to set up cooperation frameworks with third countries, especially with candidate countries³. Cross-border cooperation and other elements of the

¹ The territorial dimension has always been key to understanding the process of transformation in the Mediterranean, both in the north and in the south and east of the region, as we pointed out in 2010 in the first ARLEM report on the territorial dimension of the UFM.

² The five main principles of a new strategy. *A renewed Euro-Mediterranean partnership for peace, jobs and sustainable development. Fresh impetus for the Barcelona process based on convergence, Intermediterranean Commission, CPMR (2008).*

³ including some new countries which have broadened or will broaden the geographical area of the EU in the Mediterranean.

ENP have enabled Structural Funds to be invested in projects involving non-EU Mediterranean countries without any prospect of joining the EU. Both European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) and Euro-Mediterranean cooperation (within the framework of the ENP) have the potential to promote true convergence between the two shores of the Mediterranean and to achieve sound cohesion, not only between the Member States, but also between them and their neighbours. This is a key condition for joint development.

On the basis of these scenarios and taking account, first and foremost, of the basic objectives of the European cohesion policy as a key tool for reducing economic, social and territorial disparities between European regions, but also for boosting competitiveness, it would be a good time to take this model, which has yielded many benefits for European territorial development, and to reflect on how this policy - its principles, conditions, methodologies and even resources - could be extended in scope and applied in the south.

In this connection, the cohesion policy has proved to be a key instrument for overcoming the crisis and helping meet the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, having already contributed in the past 20 years to successful outcomes in the EU's cities and regions. At the same time, this policy is an expression of the EU's solidarity with less developed areas and is based on the concentration of funds in areas and sectors where they can be most effective. The Structural Funds, its main instrument, currently represent more than one third of public investment for at least half of the EU's Member States in sectors such as innovation, SME support, social inclusion and employment, which are crucial for the 2020 strategy. In future, however, the EU will need a more ambitious budget so that the policy can continue to become a tool for development and investment, even in neighbouring countries, and does not merely end up being a redistributive policy reserved exclusively for its taxpayers.

This renewed design for Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, geared towards an innovative cohesion policy for the region, could adopt the European cohesion policy as a model, which is based on the partnership principle, and tie in with the ENP's "more for more" principle, where the level of ambition of political relations and of economic integration is closely related to the fact of sharing the common values of democracy and human rights, the rule of law, good governance, the principles of the market economy and sustainable development. This would also involve supporting decentralisation in the South by promoting and cofinancing key projects and initiatives and establishing joint development objectives. It should be reiterated that, in future, it is important for the EU to have adequate human, technical and financial resources to make the "most" of its powers with a view to ensuring the correct development of programmes and projects agreed with the Euro-Mediterranean partners.

In this context and taking a more macro-based view, the introduction of a macro-regional perspective for the Mediterranean should be proposed⁴, enabling current Mediterranean cooperation⁵ within the

⁴ European Parliament (2012). Evolution of EU macro-regional strategies: present practice and future prospects, especially in the Mediterranean. EP resolution 3.7.2012 (2011/2179(INI)).

⁵ CPMR (2011) Turn neighbourhood policy into a genuine cohesion policy at the borders of the European Union, September 2011.

framework of the ENP and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) to be carried out more efficiently, more effectively and in a more focussed and coordinated manner. The new approach should make it possible to deal with the priorities and possibilities of the Mediterranean simultaneously⁶, facilitating consistency, in the framework of the ENP and in accordance with the six priority areas of the UfM⁷. Local and regional authorities (LRA) should also be involved in line with their growing role. Cohesion policy can in fact become an instrument for the successful implementation of a macro-regional strategy.

2. Challenges

The situation is characterised by numerous interdependent ties and challenges (divided into three main groups)⁸ which should now more than ever be dealt with jointly by countries on both shores of the Mediterranean. However, this highlights above all else that the southern ENP should play a strategic role for the EU, since the shared development and growth of the Euro-Mediterranean region is vital for all.

The main political challenge is represented by a series of factors such as: ensuring effective democratic transition, developing the rule of law, ensuring respect for human rights, managing migration flows based on the criteria of prevention, protection and solidarity⁹, promoting decentralisation¹⁰. In particular, we call for the development of democracy at local and regional level as the basis for the new social and governmental system which citizens want to build. This should also involve capacity building at the local and regional level, to improve the administrative capacities of local and regional authorities, so that they may be full partners in the implementation of a cohesion policy Exploring political dialogue should also be a priority, above all for the EU at a time when it is renewing its institutions, policies and financial instruments¹¹.

At socioeconomic and environmental level, in order to reduce the socioeconomic gap between the north and south of the Mediterranean, helping to overcome the economic crisis, the main challenge is to promote smart, inclusive and sustainable growth - a generator of decent jobs - against the backdrop

6 e.g. historical and cultural heritage, the tourism sector, potential of renewable energies, raw materials, strategic position for the transit of goods and energy, etc.

7 In terms of consolidation and mutual enhancement of actions and projects, given that the ENP and the UFM represent two faces of a willingness to contribute to development of the Mediterranean area as a whole.

8 Already included in the Barcelona process since 1995.

9 In particular, the mobility of people from southern to northern Mediterranean regions, as has become clear following tragedies such as those in Lampedusa and others in the strait.

10 Promotion of the principle of local autonomy, capacity-building and financing of LRAs, policies linked to legislative and regulatory reforms, modernisation of the civil service (including the local and regional level).

11 In this connection, it should be pointed out that ARLEM was created with this objective: the creation of ARLEM, its coordination with the Euro-Mediterranean institutional framework and its ties with the secretariat of the UfM represented a step forward in the incorporation of regional institutions and local authorities into the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue. ARLEM was created to promote decentralisation, consolidation of local and regional government and the establishment of multilevel governance frameworks in Mediterranean countries. The objectives to be achieved are support for local democracy and sustainable territorial development.

of a globalisation process which is growing and demanding in terms of productivity, and in terms of the pressures on demographic trends, migration and rural areas as well as coastal urbanisation. This requires a better level of training in various key sectors and the creation of jobs above all for young people and the integration of women into the labour market. At the same time, it is essential to support SMEs as a key factor in improving the socio-economic fabric and to improve interconnections¹² between areas. On the other hand, protecting the quality of the environment in the Mediterranean¹³, adapting to and tackling climate change, by promoting renewable energy, energy efficiency and sustainable management of coastal areas, waste and water resources as well as the maritime economy and blue growth¹⁴, with its five priorities (maritime, coastal and cruise tourism, blue energy, marine mineral resources, aquaculture and marine biotechnologies), and the development of the fisheries sector, represent both huge challenges and an enormous opportunity with potential to generate jobs (industry, services, clusters, etc.), wealth and competitiveness.

It is therefore important to lay the foundations for a path towards socio-economic convergence between north and south, based primarily on access to the EU's markets and its structural and perhaps sectoral policies by Mediterranean countries and regions.

Finally, it is important to take account, from a social and cultural perspective, of the challenge to further develop intercultural dialogue and understanding between north and south. The Mediterranean is an area with considerable inequalities between the countries which it comprises, as well as within its societies and cultures. These inequalities have recently been made much worse by the economic and financial crisis. In this connection in particular, it is important to take account of the work being carried out by the Anna Lindh Foundation to promote intercultural dialogue. This is an area in which the role of cultural institutions and civil society at local and regional level could be crucial¹⁵.

The path towards Mediterranean cohesion: the strategy's approach

With a view to tackling the abovementioned challenges, it is proposed that a twin-track approach be taken: on the one hand, adopting the European cohesion policy¹⁶ approach with the intention of promoting the participation of regions and territorial bodies from the South and, on the other hand, adopting a macro-regional approach which allows for a strategic analysis of the Mediterranean region as a whole and a rationalisation of existing programmes, capable of providing a multilevel framework to define and implement key projects.

12 for energy, transport, etc.

13 (fight against pollution, preservation and management of ecosystems and biodiversity, maritime security etc.).

14 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Blue Growth: Opportunities for Marine and Maritime Sustainable Growth, COM(2012) 494 final.

15 Of the other notable experiences of cooperation to be capitalised on, mention should also be made of the work carried out by institutions such as the Instituto Europeo del Mediterráneo (IEMed) and the Casa del Mediterráneo in order to promote mutual knowledge of countries in the region.

16 insofar as circumstances in the Mediterranean allow.

In connection with adopting the cohesion policy approach, special attention will need to be paid to rural areas, areas affected by an industrial transition and regions with serious and permanent natural or demographic handicaps¹⁷. The macro-regional approach, on the other hand, would require coordination between key public and private stakeholders and would generate greater consistency between policies, accompanied by more effective financial instruments which can be applied in the relevant territory on the basis of the principles of partnership, multilevel governance and thematic concentration. This does not mean replacing current policies and instruments but rather a greater effort to coordinate them, which should strengthen the role of LRAs seeking to give policies and programmes for the Mediterranean a territorial dimension.

This strategic approach should follow the path based on the experiences of the above-mentioned bodies with a view to optimising the classic Euro-Mediterranean and ENP cooperation instruments, by proposing an approach to socioeconomic cohesion and convergence which could even entail access by the Mediterranean partner countries (MPC) to policies, programmes and some agencies which until now have operated solely within the EU¹⁸.

This would involve examining how the ENP could incorporate the implementation methodology of the European cohesion policy and possibly, at some point in the future, assessing whether the MPCs could progressively participate in Europe's programmes and structural policies, enabling there to be true and profound structural change with a clear socio-economic impact¹⁹. This is not a new approach, but rather we are continuing with the idea of "*everything but the institutions*" launched in 2002 by the then president of the European Commission Romano Prodi²⁰, which opened the door to closer cooperation with countries now in the EU's neighbourhood. In fact, this idea was later reflected in the adoption of advanced statuses, which, as in the case of Morocco²¹, open the door to Community programmes for ENP partner countries.

In this connection, the ENPI CBCMED programme²² already provides for the use of some ERDF resources in non-EU countries. At the same time, with regard to ETC, there have been examples of

17 Article 174 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union includes in this category more northerly regions with low population density and island, cross-border and mountain regions.

18 An approach to convergence policy would be applied similar to the one successfully adopted in the regions and countries in southern and eastern Europe and candidate countries and which could rapidly increase cooperation with the south and east of the Mediterranean.

19 Provided they change from being mere receivers of subsidies to genuine partners.

20 Romano Prodi, "*A Wider Europe - A Proximity Policy as the Key to Stability*", *Sixth ECSA-World Conference, Jean Monnet Project*, Brussels, 5-6 December 2002, SPEECH/02/619.

21 Morocco-EU: a preliminary legal, political and economic analysis. Towards an advanced status in the framework of the EMP and the ENP, PapersIEMed number 2, July 2007, available on <http://www.iemed.org/publicacions/historic-de-publicacions/papersiemed/paperIEMed2.pdf>.

22 *European Neighbourhood & Partnership Instrument, Cross-Border Cooperation Strategy Paper 2007-2013, Indicative Programme 2007-2010*. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/enpi_cross-border_cooperation_strategy_paper_en.pdf.

cooperation between countries in the north and south of the Mediterranean, as in the case of the current operational programme *Programa de Cooperación Transfronteriza España – Fronteras exteriores* (*Spanish external borders cross-border cooperation programme*) 2008-2013, approved in 2009 and for which the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) provided 75% of the co-funding²³. In this connection, it is important to take account of the European transnational cooperation programme MED²⁴, financed within the framework of ETC to the tune of more than EUR 250m (including EUR 193m from ERDF). In the 2007-2013 period, it earmarked a proportion of co-funding for measures involving stakeholders from the southern Mediterranean²⁵.

This is a strategy which could be adapted to MPCs, opening the path to their participation and matching certain courses of action to the regional needs of these countries. In this respect, consideration should be given to how to coordinate promoting access by local and regional authorities to ENP financing, which is currently restricted mainly to countries. This would involve opening up lines of assistance and support to local and regional authorities with the aim of ensuring they become the beneficiaries of this support. One possible way of achieving this objective could be to involve LRAs in the action plans and indicative plans developed in the framework of the bilateral component of the southern ENP²⁶. This would make it possible to take account of the diversity of territorial situations and promote subsidiarity and local democracy. To this end, the European Commission should create incentive mechanisms for MPCs, which might even involve financial subsidies for initiatives which promote genuine multilevel governance. At the same time, national action plans should promote distribution of assistance based not only on a sectoral approach, but also a territorial approach, so that funds do not end up being concentrated in capital, coastal or tourism regions.

Another way would be to strengthen regional ENP programmes on the basis of a truly territorial approach, which provides LRAs with a genuine space to implement jointly defined programmes and priorities.

In this connection, one of the innovative aspects which could be included and developed in the ENP within the framework of the "more for more" approach would be decentralisation. On the basis of a cohesion policy approach to the ENP, consideration could even be given to extending the co-financing of some southern countries in certain strategic areas with an eye to territorial development. By the same token, steps could also be taken to apply to the southern neighbourhood certain pilot schemes which are producing positive results in eastern neighbourhood countries, such as Pilot Regional Development Programmes (PRDP). In the 2012-2013 period, these programmes have been allocated EUR 62m from the neighbourhood instrument and they amplify the objective of sharing experiences

23 Such as, for example, the *Programa de Cooperación Transfronteriza España-Fronteras exteriores 2008-2013* [2008-2013 Spanish external borders cross-border cooperation programme], www.poctefex.eu.

24 <http://www.programmemed.eu>.

25 although this has not been exploited, not least because of audit and control issues.

26 http://www.enpi-info.eu/main.php?id=88&id_type=3.

and key elements of the European cohesion policy with each partner county, especially regarding ways to reduce socio-economic disparities between regions in the same country.

At the same time, twinning programmes²⁷ would provide a particularly appropriate framework for participation of local and regional authorities. These could be developed in future within the framework of the ENP with a view to promoting exchange, mutual understanding and capacity-building among public administrations. For example, on the basis of the positive experience of these programmes when they were developed for central and eastern Europe, and the more recent experiences in the framework of the ENP, consideration could be given to the possibility of local and regional authorities from the northern and southern Mediterranean working together on a long-term basis. Steps should be taken to ensure in this connection that there is greater participation specifically by local and regional authorities and above all in the south.

In addition, while always taking European experience as a basis, within the framework of the ENP greater financial weight should be given to territorial cooperation than is currently the case. This is essential in order to achieve a step change and to rise to the challenges posed by the Arab Spring. In this connection, it is also important not to overlook the role played by civil society and regional bodies in this type of cooperation which together have the potential to promote spatial planning as well as democracy and freedom of expression.

It should be pointed out that decentralisation and the possibility of a genuine application of a cohesion policy approach in the Mediterranean, inevitably involve building the capacities of LRAs in the south, as well as streamlining the tools which should be geared increasingly towards achieving concrete results and whose impact must be assessed regularly.

In this connection, it would be interesting to study the application in MPCs of initiatives such as CIB (Comprehensive Institution Building), implemented in the countries of the eastern neighbourhood, with almost EUR 170m of ENPI funding in the 2012-2013 two-year period, aimed at helping partner countries strengthen the capacities of the key institutions involved in preparing, negotiating and implementing new association agreements with the EU, creating free trade areas and managing opportunities for greater mobility within an environment of security.

In the medium to long term, certain regional policies and instruments for supporting MPCs, capable of promoting infrastructure²⁸ geared to competitive development, measures to support social policies and promote jobs based on the European Social Fund model, as well as effective financial mechanisms to fund the economic fabric²⁹ (such as for example the Euro-Mediterranean investment bank and/or

²⁷ An idea already expressed by the general assembly of the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission in its final declaration - Barcelona 2013, "Towards a new governance for a more sustainable, cohesive and competitive Mediterranean", 27 June 2013, Barcelona (Catalonia).

²⁸ Infrastructure in particular requires a high level of innovation in connection with the principles and financing of policies, one of which should be public-private cooperation.

²⁹ Policies aimed at promoting a productive economy in particular have a high cost-benefit ratio.

guarantee fund systems, complementing the measures of the European Investment Bank and FEMIP), will make it possible to turn countries and regions into ideal partners with a view to making the Mediterranean and Europe highly competitive once again.

Based on the experience of the first strategies of this type for the Baltic and Danube regions, which are currently being implemented and evaluated in Europe, once adapted to the complex situation in the Mediterranean, the **macro-regional approach** could enable strategies to be implemented which pave the way towards macro-economic convergence and spatial planning development. The establishment of macro-regions would make a considerable contribution to cooperation, with an impact on bottom-up planning leading to better identification of joint priorities and planning of key measures, accompanied by the respective financing instruments in terms of public and private investment. This would result in a capacity to promote economic, social and territorial cohesion in the geographic area of action.

Given the challenges and complexity of the Mediterranean area³⁰, ARLEM proposes exploring both sound past experiences as well as approaches which are introducing more in-depth regional cooperation. The macro-regional approach, which is bearing fruit in the Baltic and the Danube and is already being promoted in some parts of the Mediterranean (Adriatic-Ionian region) and surrounding areas (Alpine strategy) could promote new approaches which should also suit third countries on the basis of a slow and gradual process. The inclusion of these proposals in the ARLEM-UfM approach, and coordination between the various projects to be promoted together with the strategy and projects supported by UfM's secretariat, could ensure that littoral countries continue to come under the cohesion approach within a consistent framework enabling progress to be made towards the shared objectives of promoting democracy and sustainable development, while involving local and regional stakeholders.

More specifically, it is proposed that a **macro-regional approach** be applied on the basis of gradual **variable geometry**, with three macro-regional integrated areas, which in the long term may lead to the establishment of an **integrated supra-regional strategy for the entire Mediterranean**: the first would cover the **western Mediterranean** macro-region, the second the **Adriatic-Ionian region**³¹ and the third the **eastern Mediterranean** macro-region. In the medium term, each of these macro-regions could be more cohesive and more dynamic than a single uniform region for the whole of the Mediterranean. ARLEM has put forward a proposal included in appendix 1 regarding possible countries which have to be included in these strategies, and could shortly examine a more precise

30 which incorporates EU-28 Member States, pre-accession countries and candidate countries, as well as the countries of the southern neighbourhood policy, and a country belonging to the ACP group which benefits from the system of cooperation provided for in the Lomé and Cotonou agreements (Mauritania).

31 The definition of which has been in use since the publication of the European Commission Communication on A Maritime Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Seas, Brussels, 30.11.2012, COM(2012) 713 final and the EU Council's request of 14 December 2012 that the Commission develop a macro-regional strategy for the area by the end of 2014.

proposal regarding the specific regions which could participate more actively³². A strategy for the western Mediterranean macro-region in particular could potentially be set up in the short to medium term, given that it could be supported first and foremost by the UfM and the 5+5 dialogue, as a platform for cooperation between the western Mediterranean countries with enormous potential for synergies and shared development.

1.1 Priorities for the macro-regional strategies and guiding principles

For this type of approach and strategy, it is important first of all to determine which priorities should be established by the regions and, in accordance with this, what the key initiatives should be. An important point here is that they can draw on the many positive experiences that already exist of European programmes and at local and regional level, especially those being carried out by the European Commission, within the framework of ETC programmes and Interact³³ in particular, which represent a significant asset and a very useful basis for making progress towards defining the possible priorities of future macro-regions. Taking account of the north-south dimension, it is also important to capitalise on the large number of experiences of public decentralised cooperation carried out among stakeholders from the EU and MPCs, especially in the last two decades³⁴.

At the same time, it is essential to take account of ARLEM's reports on the territorial dimension of the UfM, recent observations of the reports of the European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions³⁵, the European Economic and Social Committee³⁶, and networks of local stakeholders such as IMC-CPMR³⁷, Arco-Latino³⁸ or the Mediterranean commission of UCLG and MedCities, among others.

The guiding principles which will inevitably have to govern future Euro-Mediterranean enhanced cooperation include the inclusive social economy based on solidarity, a joint and democratic policy and sustainable environmental development, as well as other principles which can be identified in consultation with the various stakeholders. At the same time, in terms of establishing priorities,

32 It is emphasised that some countries, on the basis of historical reasons and geopolitical interests, clearly correspond to one of the proposed possible macro-regions, while others sit halfway between two strategies such as Italy (western and Adriatic-Ionian; Greece (Adriatic-Ionian and eastern) and in the south Libya (western and eastern).

33 Geographic and thematic capitalisation platform Mediterranean Lab.

34 As evidenced by the activities of the platform or specific projects such as Localnetcoop.

35 Opinion on the added value of macro-regional strategies (COTER-V-042)

36 European Economic and Social Committee (2012): Developing a macro-regional strategy in the Mediterranean – the benefits for island Member States, ECO/332, A macro-regional strategy in the Mediterranean, and opinion currently being prepared ECO/342 Towards a Strategy to develop cohesion in the Mediterranean.

37 CPMR Intermediterranean Commission, Integrated Mediterranean strategy (2012), 2013-2014 action plan, assembly declaration, Barcelona 2013, Towards a new governance for a more sustainable, cohesive and competitive Mediterranean. Technical reports of the macro-regions working group, CPMR 2012 and 2013. Document political Bureau of CPMR 2013 in Malmö: Macro-regional and sea basin strategies: preparing the future of European integration, 2013.

38 Arco Latino (2011) 2015 Strategic Plan, "A structured and innovating Mediterranean"

measures should be based on the experience of existing macro-regions³⁹, which point to the appropriateness of focussing on a limited number of priorities while at the same time going beyond exclusively maritime approaches (the integrated maritime policies and their instruments would have to be given priority but combined with other dimensions linked to integrated territorial development). In this connection, consideration should be given to assessing, on the basis of variable geometry, the priorities for the various areas and methodologies of stakeholder coordination, reflecting on the specific role of the EC, UfM, ARLEM, 5+5 dialogue and local and regional government networks.

Regarding participation of southern countries in these strategies, it is essential to point out, as stressed by the CoR in its opinion on the added value of macro-regional strategies that, "Whilst these may be EU strategies, many of their objectives will be impossible to meet without cooperation or some agreement on priorities with non-EU partners", since, "Cooperation with regions outside the EU is critical to the work of both the Baltic Sea and the Danube strategies, not just for boosting the macro-region's economic competitiveness and cohesion, but also for developing the EU's external links". The CoR also stresses that, "Along the same lines, involving third countries, with the ensuing implications in terms of both neighbourhood policy and enlargement policy, can, right from the start, be a key factor in the success of future macro-regional strategies".

At the same time, it is essential to approach the launch and future co-ownership of these strategies in a gradual way, based on a step-by step approach, which may facilitate the gradual and assisted participation of the EU Member States and MPCs, thus avoiding possible political and institutional obstacles. In this respect, one possibility could be involvement of southern countries and local and regional authorities in an initial phase, above all by capitalising on steps taken and through synergies in specific cooperation projects and on a voluntary and non-binding basis at political level. At the same time, at the level of Member States, agreements on strategies and associated action plans would have to be agreed at the highest possible political and institutional level and have a more structured and binding basis from the outset.

There are no concrete initiatives at the moment, so next year should be devoted to reflecting on the implementation of this macro-regional strategy(ies), including launching consultations with regions and cities of the Member States concerned, as well as regions and cities from countries that are not currently members of the EU. The latter should become part of the strategy, and should promote the idea vis-à-vis their governments.

1.2 **Multilevel coordination of stakeholders and governance of strategies**

Another key aspect is to establish effective multilevel coordination mechanisms between existing stakeholders and initiatives with a view to avoiding fragmentation of efforts and boosting

³⁹

COM(2013) 468 final, Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions concerning the added value of macro-regional strategies, 27 June 2013, available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/communic/baltic/com_added_value_macro_region_strategy_en.pdf.

convergence⁴⁰. To complement the above, consideration should be given to more appropriate mechanisms, especially for coordination between public and private stakeholders for the creation of macro-regional strategies (MR) in the Mediterranean. Consideration should also be given to the experiences of existing strategies which can be capitalised on, without overlooking the process of establishing what possibilities exist to extend instruments such as European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation to the EU's partner countries⁴¹, within the framework of a cohesion policy for the Mediterranean and the implementation of possible macro-regional strategies. Also in connection with the multilevel coordination of stakeholders, it is essential to consider which specific role could be played by the UfM, by ARLEM, as well as the networks of local and regional authorities⁴² and the Euroregions of the Euro-Mediterranean area.

If their size and the need for political support so requires, key initiatives and projects could be coordinated with the priorities of the UfM, and even with multilateral initiatives currently under way such as the UNEP Mediterranean action plan (I and II), and the Blue Plan, thus providing consistency and creating positive synergies with previous projects and experiences.

When pillars and priorities are being established, the EU's transnational cooperation programmes first and foremost should allocate resources to begin to support territorial studies and the creation of debate forums between stakeholders on the future MRs for the Mediterranean. These fora, which should include key institutional and civil society stakeholders, could be developed on the basis of the aforementioned approach of variable geometry at European level and be open to the voluntary participation of key stakeholders from southern regions. At the same time, involvement of the UfM and ARLEM should allow for the voluntary participation, in terms of cooperation, of any European territorial stakeholders from the EU-28. In parallel with the western Mediterranean, Adriatic-Ionian and eastern fora, there should be an annual overview and coordination meeting, in any case on a regular basis, to guarantee the path towards an integrated macro-regional strategy and synergy among existing and potentially new strategies, instruments and cooperation programmes. The coordination of these fora, which could be launched in different phases, could be ensured by the European institutions with a special role for the CoR, ARLEM, the UfM and networks of local and regional stakeholders.

At the same time, the Member States should ask the European Commission to develop these strategies in the framework of an EU council. Following or during the establishment of their action plans, these

40 Given that the strategic lines and priorities for the development of projects of the secretariat of the UFM have a clear territorial dimension and that cohesion is at the very heart of projects promoted in the area of transport and urban development, energy, the environment and water management, it makes sense for the Union to seek to put its knowledge, experience and tools into practice to achieve its objectives in the Mediterranean.

41 As instruments to facilitate cooperation and taking account of the complexities associated with creating a new legal entity.

42 One key action which could continue to be promoted by this type of network are strategic urban plans as a tool for the transformation of cities and a guarantee of their empowerment.

should be developed in accordance with the programming of European funds (alignment between legal bases and funding)⁴³.

Once strategies' pillars and priorities have been defined, it would appear useful to assess the possibility of developing more structured, broad-based public-private platforms of coordination and governance (formal and informal, but above all flexible), capable of guiding their implementation on a day-to-day basis. In this respect, there should be a multilevel follow-up committee and cross-cutting action and priority coordinators (granting a special role to LRAs and their networks and to the UfM, when required by moves to open up to the south), as well as national contact points. The European Commission and programmes such as Interact⁴⁴ should grant organisational and communication support.

1.3 Timetable and financing

The timetable and financing relating to the creation and implementation of these initiatives are key aspects in the evaluation of their feasibility.

The specific timetable for drawing up MR strategies in the Mediterranean has started with consultations on the establishment of the action plan of the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region in 2014⁴⁵. Successively and between local and regional authorities, EU Member States, as well as southern countries on a voluntary basis, the EC and other key stakeholders, will have to create the conditions to draw up the strategy for the western Mediterranean macro-region, possibly before 2016, the year in which the midterm review of the EU's multiannual financial framework will be carried out.

This process could be carried out in operational stages and on the basis of the numerous existing cooperation ties, even beginning in pilot sub-zones and with the participation of more proactive key stakeholders. At the same time, parallel steps should be taken to lay the foundations for preparing the strategy for the western Mediterranean, as well as the integrated strategy for the region, before the end of the next programming period and the following one respectively.

At the same time, although macro-regional strategies do not require the creation of new funding instruments, new structures or legislation - the "three no's" principle - , consideration should be given to the possibility of funding and support for their "start-up", as in the case of the Baltic Strategy. In addition, the assessment should also consider the future, with a view to identifying how synergy can be achieved between instruments to finance flagship initiatives, once the strategies have been created. In this connection, it is essential to highlight the role that could be played by national and regional

⁴³ in the case of the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region 2014-2020 programming, for the others and above all the western Mediterranean, possibly on the basis of its review in 2016. Partnership agreements. TN OP, national and regional operational plans, Art. 60 and 87, EGTCs and other instruments.

⁴⁴ Such as perhaps the Med, Adriatic-Ionian and the ENPI CBCMED programmes and their coordination offices or antennas.

⁴⁵ which will have to be carried out in parallel with the 2014-2020 programming period and the establishment of regional operational plans and partnership agreements of the countries and regions involved.

operational programmes in the framework of the EU's cohesion policy. As regards the establishment of strategies, mention should be made first and foremost of the fact that programmes exist which could be particularly appropriate, such as the ENPI CBCMED programme, Transnational MED and Adriatic-Ionian programmes and the European Parliament's *ad hoc* technical assistance funds.

Second, it will be necessary to stipulate which funds are likely to support implementation of strategies in future once they have been created, and the key projects and initiatives associated with them. By way of example and in addition to the abovementioned transnational operational programmes for the Mediterranean region and for cross-border cooperation of the ENI instrument, reference could be made to the funds of the European Investment Bank and FEMIP, possible guarantee funds for SMEs, Common Strategic Framework funds (CSF)⁴⁶ and certain EU sectoral policies such as Horizon 2020, COSME, specific funds of DG MARE, MOVE, EMPRESA etc., as well as other Euro-Mediterranean programmes and funds.

In order to clearly define this final aspect, a comparison will have to be carried out of their key elements and priorities in order to assess their possible complementarity and indirect impact on the development of Mediterranean macro-regional strategies. In such a way as to complement the above, it would also be important to work on a forward-looking approach regarding how to make use (if macro-regional strategies exist) of funds in the 2014-2020 programming period and ensure that the assessment covers the next programming period.

In this connection, appendix II of this report details possible thematic pillars to be developed into priorities (and to develop for each strategy) and some examples of new key initiatives or projects to be defined and capitalised on (existing projects, projects already under way or finalised), together with key stakeholders, with an eye to an integrated macro-regional approach in the Mediterranean. This is a key hypothetical summary table for future assessment on the three proposed macro-regional strategies and on the integrated strategy, which should be developed in the coming years with the participation of all the key stakeholders involved and efforts from ARLEM based on thematic concentration criteria.

Finally, the first evaluations of existing macro-regions at European level allow us to consider the advantages of promoting this strategy, and provide some basis for assessing the opposite scenario, i.e. not creating such strategies in the Mediterranean. In this respect, the report on the added value of existing macro-regional strategies of June 2013⁴⁷ explained the positive effect of macro-regions in centring European and regional programmes around key priorities and projects, the creation of more

⁴⁶ The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF), the Cohesion Fund (CF), the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF).

⁴⁷ COM(2013) 468 final.

stable cooperation networks, as well as their impact at the time of ensuring improvements in policy-making and a better and more efficient use of resources⁴⁸ with an eye to multilevel governance.

3. Recommendations

On the basis of the above and the challenges facing the Mediterranean and despite the current economic crisis, ARLEM believes that beginning to focus the efforts of the EU, the Euro-Mediterranean institutions, as well as those of LRAs on the following areas (in the period leading up to 2030) seems to be both urgent and viable, and a way of creating opportunities:

- The **application of a cohesion policy approach in the Mediterranean**, promoting the extension of methodologies, concepts and instruments of the European cohesion policy to the southern neighbourhood policy and improving their territorial dimension,
- The **extension of macro-regional assessments to the Mediterranean** with the creation and implementation of three regional strategies (Adriatic-Ionian, western and eastern Mediterranean) and an integrated strategy (see appendix I), all based on a gradual approach capable of combining - with an eye to multilevel governance and variable geometry - approaches to balanced polycentric development (bottom-up and top-down), as well as a significant push from the EU-28 and co-ownership, based on a voluntary step-by step approach from southern countries and regions.

In order to achieve these objectives, ARLEM calls on:

- the **Commission, the European Parliament and the EU Member States to:**
 - put the Mediterranean back at the centre of the European agenda and to support local and regional authorities (LRAs) in launching, drawing up and supporting these strategies and approaches;
 - assess in detail how the EU neighbourhood policy (ENP) could incorporate the implementation methodology of the European cohesion policy and in particular whether the MPCs could participate in particular in European structural policies and programmes on a progressive basis;
 - study tools to strengthen the role of LRAs in the action plans and indicative plans developed in the framework of the bilateral component of the southern ENP and which promote, within national action plans, the distribution of assistance on the basis not only of a sectoral approach, but also a territorial approach;
 - strengthen regional ENP programmes on the basis of a territorial approach, which provides LRAs with genuine space to implement jointly defined programmes and priorities;

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This last statement opens the door to the assessment on the consequences of not creating a Mediterranean macro-region: in other words, the cost of a fragmented Mediterranean as opposed to the benefits which could arise from strategies and properly planned measures and programmes at macro-regional level. To this end, the drafting of a report should be promoted, supported by relevant data illustrating the beneficial effect of the Mediterranean macro-regional strategy.

- further explore the best ways of including the concept of decentralisation in the neighbourhood policy's "more for more" approach;
 - promote application of the experiences of the eastern ENP which could be successful in the Mediterranean (e.g. Regional Development Pilot Programmes, Comprehensive Institution Building);
 - encourage participation of the LRAs of Mediterranean partner countries (MPC) in twinning programmes;
 - boost the capacities of LRAs in providing good quality public services in key sectors for development, and strengthen administrative simplification;
 - support territorial assistance instruments for MPCs to promote social development infrastructure and infrastructure to develop competitiveness, as well as appropriate tools to finance the economic fabric.
- In addition, ARLEM calls for special attention and synergy on the part of the **European Commission and its directorates-general** (DG REGIO, MARE, EMPL, EMPRESA, ENER and DEVCO) and the future **Greek and Italian presidencies of the Council of the EU**:
- regarding the possible launch, by 2016, of other macro-regional strategies in the Mediterranean, complementing the Adriatic-Ionian strategy currently being drawn up and its respective stakeholder fora. In this connection, ARLEM calls for a specific request concerning the study, preparation and launch of these strategies - and in particular a strategy for the western Mediterranean - to be included in the decisions of one of the European Councils to be held during the Italian presidency of the Council of the EU;
 - and for account to be taken, with a view to establishing possible thematic pillars - to be developed into priorities and organised for each strategy - of avenues of reflection and examples of new key initiatives or projects to be drawn up and capitalised on, set out in appendix II of this document.
- the **Mediterranean partner countries** to support the creation of macro-regional strategies, becoming involved in the assessments together with regions and local authorities - on a voluntary, gradual, operational basis geared towards future co-ownership - evaluating the possibility of setting aside in future, on a voluntary basis, a proportion of the bilateral funds of the ENP (in the framework of national action plans) with a view to implementing priorities set at macro-regional level.
- the **European MED and Adriatic-Ionian transnational programmes and the cross-border cooperation programme IEVA CBC Med**:
- to select, from among the principal objectives for the new programme, thematic objective 11 of the Common Strategic Framework on governance, or include a cross-cutting priority to support governance in their new operational programmes, enabling concrete support to be offered for the launch of new emerging macro-regional strategies and in particular coordination of stakeholders;

- regarding the Adriatic-Ionian programme, to align the definition of its specific priorities with the Adriatic-Ionian strategy currently being prepared and with its territorial scope (Art. 3 and 7 of the ETC regulation), complementing the national and regional operational programmes of the EU area and the pre-accession programmes;
 - to introduce synergy among themselves, above all in terms of capitalising on projects relevant to macro-regional cooperation, even with other ETC programmes in the respective areas of competence;
 - regarding cross-border programmes, that they provide for flexibility mechanisms to facilitate participation of southern stakeholders in projects and on specific themes of macro-regional importance.
- **representatives of the private sector, the social and productive economy, civil society and from research** to become involved in future assessments on the pillars, priorities, key initiatives and financial mechanisms.

In this connection, ARLEM commits itself to:

- involving its own members actively in the assessment of these strategies, involving regional stakeholders, including civil society, and putting in place measures having an impact and raising awareness at national level;
- examining a more precise proposal regarding specific territories which could take part in each macro-regional strategy;
- considering future scenarios and financial and geographical development of the tools and principal cooperation programmes of the EU in the Mediterranean.

In addition, ARLEM notes:

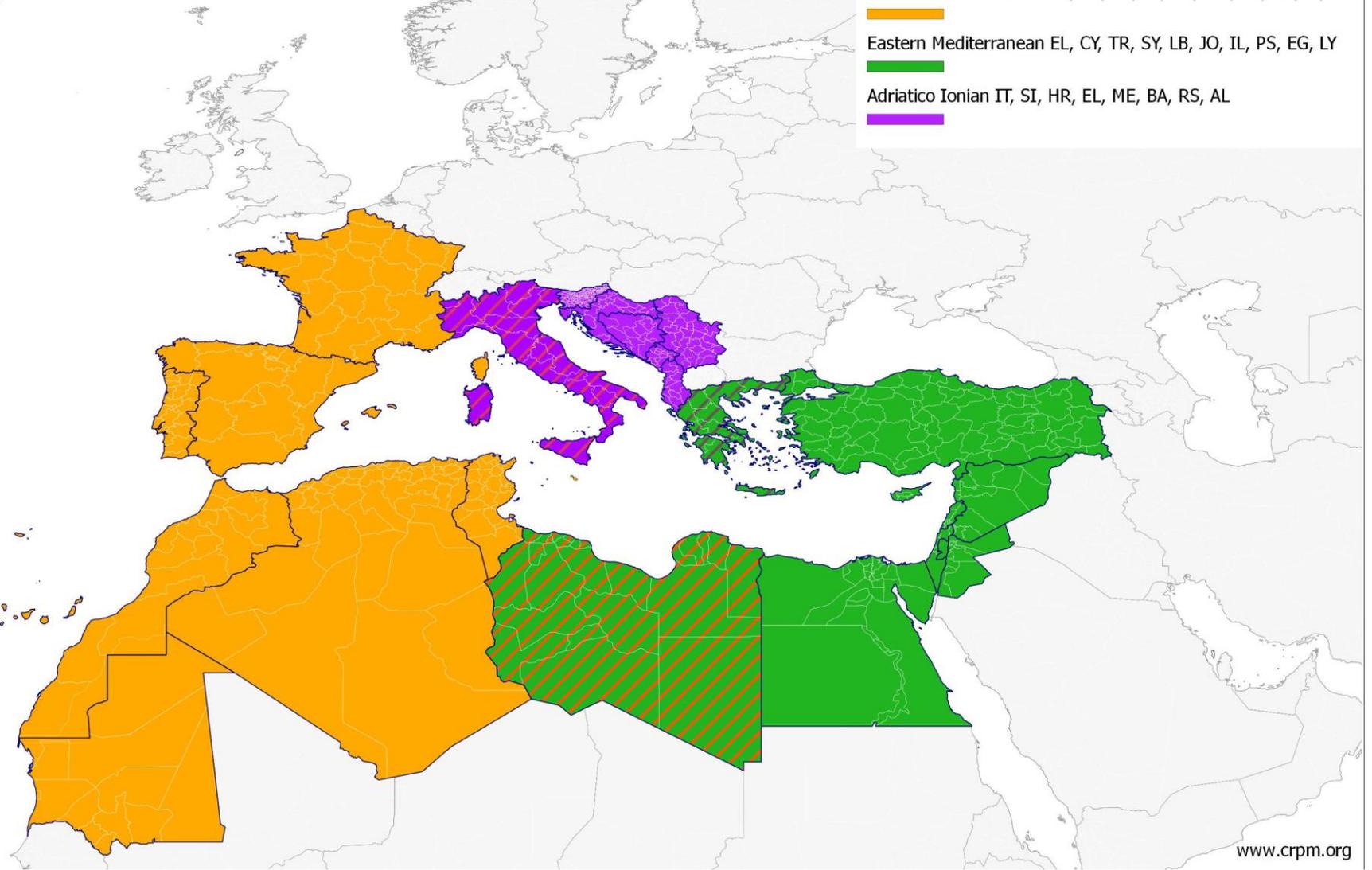
- the importance of carrying out by 2016 a careful assessment of the absorption of the funds of cohesion and neighbourhood policies with an eye to the review of the multiannual financial framework, which could provide a useful basis for policy guidance as well as for the implementation of strategies and approaches proposed by this assembly.

The members of ARLEM call for this report to be submitted to the institutions of the EU, the Union for the Mediterranean, as well as the Member States and the competent authorities and to be taken into account in the drafting of their respective policies with an impact in the Mediterranean.

Mediterranean Macro-regional Strategies

Integrated Strategy

- Western Mediterranean IT, FR, ES, PT, MT, MO, TS, DZ, LY, MR
- Eastern Mediterranean EL, CY, TR, SY, LB, JO, IL, PS, EG, LY
- Adriatico Ionian IT, SI, HR, EL, ME, BA, RS, AL



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APPENDIX II Possible thematic areas to be developed as priorities (and to be shaped by strategies) and examples of new “key initiatives or projects” to be drawn up and used (existing projects) with leading stakeholders for an integrated macroregional focus in the Mediterranean (summary table for the three proposed macroregional strategies).

THEMATIC AREAS	KEY INITIATIVES or PROJECTS (examples of initiatives to be harnessed and/or implemented in the future)	REFERENCE FUNDS AND INSTRUMENTS	KEY STAKEHOLDERS (non-exhaustive)
1.ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY	Macro-project proposed by the Bologna Charter 2012 (Eurimcode, MSP-ICZM cooperation, CC adaptation and sustainable coastal development, reducing risk of floods, erosion, etc.)	ENI CBC Med, EIB, ETC programmes, UNEP, DG MARE, CSF funds, regional instruments	Intermediate regions and governments, LRA networks. UNEP MAP, PAP RAC, Plan Bleu. EC. UfM. States
	Projects for disaster prevention, combating pollution of the Mediterranean Sea, preserving biodiversity, sustainable forestry development and peri-urban areas	Life +, UN, CSF funds, ENI, ETC programmes, regional instruments	LRAs and their networks. Research institutes. UNEP MAP. States. IUCN, Mediterranean Forest Association.
	Extension of the Covenant of Mayors in the Mediterranean (IBE development, SEAP, initiatives), and sustainable urban mobility projects	Horizon 2020, DG ENER, EIB (ELENA etc.), ENI CBC Med, ETC programmes, regional instruments	LRAs and their networks. EC. CoMO. EIB. ESCOs. NGOs and civil society. States.
	Initiatives to support the establishment of a new multi-level governance model for the implementation of energy-related renovation policies and the promotion of renewable energies in buildings (Ljubljana declaration)	ENI CBC Med, CSF programmes, IPA, regional instruments, financial instruments	EC. LRA networks. ESCOs, private stakeholders and civil society. Euro-Regions. EGTCs. UfM. Banks.
	Regional agenda for energy efficiency and promoting renewables, macro-initiatives such as the Mediterranean Solar Plan and other energy efficiency and sustainable agriculture projects.	ETC programmes, state instruments, EIB, EBRD.	LRA networks. Private stakeholders. Euro-Regions. EGTCs. UfM. States. Med Solutions
	Initiatives to improve management of waste and water resources (including projects such as the Gaza desalination plant, etc.), mobilisation of financial resources for the sector and application of the Water Framework Directive in the Mediterranean	ENI CBC Med, ETC, IPA, Horizon 2020. EIB. UfM, state and regional instruments. DCI. EIB, EBRD, UN.	LRA networks. Euro-Regions. EGTCs. UfM. GWP-Med, OECD. UNEP MAP. EP. EC. Foundations, private sector. Horizon 2020. EIB. States
2.SMEs, TRAINING, RESEARCH AND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT	Initiatives for Euro-Mediterranean university education (Euromed Universities: EMUNI, Euromed-MU Mistrals) and strengthening cooperation platforms between universities, research institutes and other key public-private stakeholders, projects to enhance exchanges between students, teachers and young entrepreneurs.	Erasmus plus (Mediterranean sector), Tempus, state programmes, UfM programmes, UN programmes, Horizon 2020.	EC. Universities and research institutes. Businesses. LRA networks. UfM. Civil society. Med Solutions network. UNEP. States. ETF.
	Initiatives to promote female entrepreneurship	CSF, DCI, ALF, COSME, EBRD funds	UfM. AFAEMME. Chambers of commerce and networks of chambers
	Benchmarking initiatives and improvement of youth employment policies. Youth Guarantee, creation of platforms for exchange between young leaders and entrepreneurs, other macro-initiatives such as Med for Jobs for pooling and making use of best practice to create jobs.	ALF, ENI CBC Med, IPA, Euro-Mediterranean initiative for Youth Employment Promotion, Youth Employment Initiative, regional instruments, CSF funds.	Regions. LRA networks. States. Euro-Regions, EGTCs, EC. ETF. UfM.
	Euro-Mediterranean SME guarantee system, pilot guarantee funds and other financial instruments	UfM, state instruments, bank instruments, EIB, FEMIP, COSME. Regional instruments and funds, EBRD	UfM. Regions
	Initiatives to promote technical and vocational training, specific initiatives such as Vasco da Gama for training and mobility in maritime occupations in the Mediterranean and training projects in the area of public audiovisual systems	ENI CBC Med, DG EAC, MOVE, COSME, Leonardo, Euromed Audiovisual, ALF, regional instruments	Regions. LRA networks. EC. ETC.ALF. States. UfM.
	Initiatives to promote the social and solidarity economy in the Euro-Mediterranean region.	ETC, ENI, CBC Med programmes. Local, national and European financial instruments. DEVCO instruments.	iesMED, MedESS, UfM, LRAs and LRA networks. Banks and saving institutions. Civil society. SMEs. Chambers of commerce. Euroregions.
	Initiatives to promote trade, internationalisation of SMEs, etc.	ETC programmes, DG Enterprise, COSME, regional instruments	Chambers of commerce and networks of chambers. Businesses. EC.
	Innovation and research projects in the agrifood sector	Horizon 2000, regional instruments, tbd	Research institutes. Regions

3.BLUE GROWTH AND INTEGRATED MARITIME POLICIES	Initiatives in the areas of Blue growth (maritime and coastal tourism, renewable marine energies, marine resources, Blue biotech) and fisheries	DG MARE, DG Enterprise, COSME, EMFF, ETC programmes, CSF funds, regional instruments, IPA	Regions, LRA networks. EC. Businesses.
	Projects to promote maritime industries and clusters (shipyards etc.)	DG Enterprise, COSME, CSF funds	Regions, LRA networks. EC. Enterprises
	Maritime safety projects	DG MARE. ETC programmes, CSF funds, IPA.	Regions, LRA networks. EC. Businesses
	Bologna Charter 2012 macro-project (Eurimcode, MSP-ICZM cooperation, CC adaptation and sustainable coastal development, reducing risk of floods, erosion, etc.)	ENI CBC Med, EIB, ETC programmes, UNEP, DG MARE, CSF funds. Regional instruments, IPA.	Intermediate regions and governments, LRA networks. PAP RAC, Plan Bleu. EC. UfM. UNEP MAP. States
	Projects and initiatives to reduce pollution in the Mediterranean and protect ecosystems.	Life +, ETC programmes, UfM, CSF funds.	LRAs and their networks. PAP RAC, Plan Bleu. EC. UfM. UNEP MAP. Med Solutions. States.
	Initiatives to improve access to maritime data and their interoperability	ETC programmes, DG MARE, CSF funds, regional instruments	Regions. EC. UfM. States. Businesses.
4. IMPROVING INTER-TERRITORIAL INTERCONNECTIONS, ACCESSIBILITY AND MIGRATION FLOWS	LOGISMEDTA, Trans Maghreb Motorway, Jordanian National Railway project	State instruments, EIB, UfM	UfM. States. Businesses. CETMO.
	Projects for developing the TEN-T network, with particular attention to the Mediterranean corridor, Motorways of the Sea, sustainable and multimodal transport, and governance aspects	TEN-T, ETC programmes, post-Marco Polo programmes, CEF, CSF funds	EC. States. Regions. Networks. Businesses. UfM.
	Projects to improve freight flows in the Mediterranean, the efficiency of logistics centres and their connections with Motorways of the Sea and sea corridors.	ETC programmes, DG Move, ENI CBC Med, CSF funds, regional instruments	EC. States. Regions. Networks. Businesses. UfM.
	Initiatives to improve monitoring and coordinated and multi-level management of migration flows, based on prevention, protection and mutual support (e.g. the Mediterranean Migration Observatory, new avenues for legal migration, strengthening of measures combating illegal migration, coordinated monitoring along coasts and assistance at sea, initiatives for cooperation with countries of origin and transit countries, development aid, etc.).	ETC programmes, CSF funds, national and regional instruments	EC. Member States. UfM. LRAs and LRA networks.
5. DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE, SUPPORT FOR DECENTRALISATION AND HIGH-QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES	Projects to facilitate analysis and observation of territorial trends in the Euro-Mediterranean region (ESPON, Otramid-Sdimed) to serve policy makers	ESPON, ETC programmes, ENI CBC Med.	LRAs. EC.
	Twinning programmes between local and regional authorities	ENI, IPA, DG EAC regional instruments, tbd	LRAs, EC.
	Training for Mediterranean local and regional officials and administrators in order to provide high-quality public services to municipalities and the public (urban development, efficient public administration, cultural policies, etc.) and other initiatives to support decentralisation.	ENI, IPA, UfM, DCI, ALF, regional instruments, UNDP ART, others tbd.	UfM. LRAs and their networks. EC. ALF. UNDP ART
	Urban development strategies as a capacity-building instrument for cities and for identifying/implementing priority sustainable urban development projects	ENI, regional instruments. UNDP ART, UfM, DCI, tbd.	LRAs and their networks. UfM. EC. UNDP ART
	Strengthening existing decentralised cooperation platforms and forums for dialogue between LRAs (including the intercultural level), civil society and between these two.	Civil society and local actors in development programme (CDI), ALF, regional instruments, UNDP ART	Inter-LRA cooperation networks. Anna Lindh Foundation, Casa Mediterráneo, NGO coordinators and platforms. EC. UNDP ART
CROSS-CUTTING ELEMENT:	INNOVATION: in processes and networking, in projects, initiatives and cooperation partnerships, in developing new technologies, in using existing technologies..		

N.B.: this (non-exhaustive) summary table is based on information, working documents, reports and declarations from: ARLEM, Union for the Mediterranean, the CPMR's Intermediterranean Commission, Adriatic-Ionic strategy, Arco Latino, the UCLG's Mediterranean Committee, European Commission, European Economic and Social Committee, European Parliament, the MED and ENI CBC Med programmes, Interact, and the various contributions to the present report received by the rapporteur.

* * *

Abbreviations:

EGTC: European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation	ESPON: European Spatial Planning Observation Network	Med Solutions: United Nations Med Solutions Network (SDSN)
AFAEMME: Association of Organisations of Mediterranean Businesswomen	ETF: European Training Foundation	Mistrals: Med Integrated Studies at Regional and Local Scale
LRAs: local and regional authorities	ALF: Anna Lindh Foundation	MSP: Maritime Spatial Planning
EIB: European Investment Bank	FEMIP: Facility for Euro-Med investment and partnership	UN: United Nations
EBRD: European Bank for Reconstruction and Development	ICZM: Integrated Coastal Zone Management	NGOs: non-governmental organisations
CC: climate change	CDI: Cooperation Development Instrument	Otremed/ Sidmed: Tool for the Territorial Strategy of the MED Space
EC: European Commission	ENI: European Neighbourhood Instrument	Tbd: to be defined
CETMO: Western Mediterranean transport study centre	IPA: Instrument for Pre-Accession assistance	UfM: Union for the Mediterranean
ETC: European Territorial Cooperation (cross-border, transnational, Med, South East Gateway; interregional)	MAP: Mediterranean Action Plan; PAP RAC: Priority Action Programs – Regional Activity Centre	UNDP ART: UN Development Programme initiative - Articulation of Thematic and Territorial Cooperation Networks of Cooperation for Human Development
ESCOs: energy service companies	CSF: Common Strategic Framework	UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme