



CRPM CPMR

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COHESION POLICY SHOULD TAKE GREATER ACCOUNT OF THE CRISIS

"It is a big mistake," declared **Claudio Martini** speaking on behalf of the 161 member Regions of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR), *"to leave the possibility of 100% EU funding for projects backed by the Structural Funds in 2009-2010 down to the European Social Fund (ESF) alone. The Commission ought to have applied the same measure for the Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Cohesion Fund."*

This statement by the President of the CPMR and Tuscany Region was in reference to a communication published yesterday by the European Commission that aims to relax rules on the use of the Structural Funds. Claudio Martini regrets that in the measures adopted for 2009 and 2010 to cope with the recession, the Commission has not been ambitious enough to commit itself to 100% funding without asking States to match funds, which is normally mandatory for all structural funds.

"Of course employment is a priority," continued Claudio Martini, *"and I thank the Commission for having shown some flexibility in this area, but the Regions are suffering greatly as a result of the crisis and extending this measure to all structural funds and not just the ESF could have helped to speed up investments and avoid projects grinding to a halt because of a lack of national matched funds to finance them. I hope that from next October, the new members of the Commission will show themselves to be more ambitious with regard to future regional policy for 2014-2020. Cutting back on the European budget would be a bad sign from the Member States in view of tackling the crisis. On the contrary, in order to support investments in the territories, regional policy would need to rely on a bigger budget."* For the moment, he says that he is concerned about the general atmosphere of talks within the Ecofin Council: *"Cutting part of the payment appropriations for 2010 hardly promises an ambitious attitude by Europe to get over the crisis."*

The CPMR has conducted a survey among its members to assess the impact of the crisis in the Regions and has launched a [manifesto](#) adopted during a round table discussion organised in Brussels at the invitation of **Vincente Álvarez Areces**, President of the Principality of Asturias (ES) supporting a "European Territorial Pact", which was addressed last week to the Commission and Member States.

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