



A new strategic vision for the outermost regions, strengthening the EU's global reach

Brussels, 10 September 2026

Today, the European Commission adopted a Communication setting out a new strategic vision for the EU's outermost regions - French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Mayotte, Réunion, Saint-Martin (France), the Azores, Madeira (Portugal), and the Canary Islands (Spain). From the Atlantic to the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean and South America, the outermost regions are a unique part of the EU: rich in biodiversity, innovation, culture and of strategic importance, embodying Europe's global presence, maritime strength and diversity.

President **von der Leyen** said: *"Our outermost regions have strong identities and unique assets and geographical positions that project Europe to the four corners of the world. But their local realities and specific constraints need to be better taken into account. That is the essence of the strategy and regulatory package that we are presenting today. We are adapting our rules to unleash the potential of these regions and make their uniqueness a strength for them and for all of Europe."*

The new strategy underlines the Commission's strong and lasting commitment to ensure that the outermost regions can fully realise their potential, with stronger support, greater resilience and fairer opportunities for their people.

The Communication is accompanied by a **regulatory package** proposing targeted adaptations to EU legislation to better reflect the outermost regions' unique realities and constraints. The proposals are tailored to the needs of the regions concerned and cover areas such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, migration, and taxation. The regulatory package is intended as a first step in a continuous process, and the Commission will keep working across policy areas to ensure that the specific constraints of the outermost regions are taken into account more systematically in EU legislation and policies.

Addressing the outermost regions' challenges and unlocking their opportunities

The new strategy sets out an ambitious approach across EU policies to support these regions, boost their socio-economic development and help their citizens make the most of their regions' unique strengths and geostrategic importance. It is built around four key objectives:

- **Harness geostrategic potential and strengthen regional integration:** Better align EU internal and external policies to deepen cooperation with neighbouring countries while boosting trade, connectivity, security, defence and maritime security.
- **Increase competitiveness and access to the single market:** Support smart specialisation in areas where the outermost regions have clear competitive advantages such as the blue economy, renewable energy, biotechnology, research and space. The strategy will also help improve connectivity through stronger air and sea networks.
- **Improve resilience and preparedness:** Improve climate adaptation and tackle environmental challenges including the influx of sargassum while better protecting biodiversity. The strategy will also strengthen disaster response, support energy autonomy, protect critical infrastructure like ports and submarine cables, and reinforce food security and self-sufficiency through agriculture and fisheries.
- **Promote social fairness and support people:** Foster employment, access to education and social inclusion, reduce poverty, improve access to affordable housing, clean water and healthcare, while supporting people's right to stay in the place they call home – particularly for young people.

Alongside the targeted measures included in the regulatory package, work will continue to make EU support more responsive to the needs of the outermost regions and more coherent overall. For

instance, the [Commission's proposal to review the EU Emissions Trading System](#) includes several important provisions for these regions, taking account of their geographical constraints and the need to preserve territorial continuity, connectivity and access to essential services.

The Commission's proposed [Public Procurement Act](#) will also allow for the tailoring of certain procurement rules to the outermost regions' specificities. Likewise, the forthcoming European Product Act is expected to allow targeted adjustments to product requirements where these are necessary, proportionate and justified by local conditions, in line with EU primary law. Further work on EU sectoral legislation relevant to the outermost regions will provide additional opportunities to identify, assess and, where necessary, address issues affecting these regions.

A continued strategic engagement with outermost regions

The Commission will more systematically take the specific situation of the outermost regions into account when preparing future initiatives. The strategy aims to foster a robust partnership between these regions, their Member States and the Commission, including through a yearly structured dialogue and a dedicated portal. In addition, a new youth project will continue empowering local young people as active actors for change.

The strategy also intends to strengthen the administrative and technical capacity of outermost regions, so that they can make full use of EU policies, funds and programmes. A revamped advisory tool will continue to provide tailored services and support to local stakeholders on EU programmes, funding instruments and other tools.

Next steps

The strategy will be implemented through EU sectoral policies. In parallel, the regulatory package will be submitted to the Council for agreement by the Member States after the consultation of the European Parliament.

Background

The EU's nine outermost regions are its most remote territories. Located in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, in the Caribbean basin and in South America, they extend the EU's presence across three continents and play a key geostrategic role in a rapidly changing global context. At the same time, they face specific and permanent constraints. Their unique assets can be powerful drivers of competitiveness and prosperity, for the benefit of their citizens.

The outermost regions have a special status under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (article 349). This article allows for specific measures to support them, including the tailored application of EU laws and policies, adapted access to EU funds and programmes. It provides the legal basis for the regulatory package.

The Commission's proposal for the 2028-2034 Multiannual Financial Framework establishes new National and Regional Partnership Plans for the management of EU funds. France, Portugal and Spain are required to include specific measures for their outermost regions in their Plans.

For more information

[Factsheet](#)

[Communication](#)

[Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION](#)

[Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION](#)

[New outermost regions portal](#)

[Staff working document](#)

Quote(s):

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"The outermost regions may be far from continental Europe, but they are at the heart of our European project. Today's package is about overcoming the challenges created by distance, but above all about seizing the opportunities created by geography. Our Strategy is built around four clear objectives and is backed by concrete measures to deliver on them. This is where the first-ever regulatory package comes in: adapting EU rules where necessary to the specific realities of these territories. By turning their strategic potential into opportunities, growth and better living conditions, we strengthen not only the outermost regions and their 5 million people, but Europe as a whole."

Raffaele Fitto, Executive Vice-President for Cohesion and Reforms - 10/09/2026

"Our outermost regions have strong identities and unique assets and geographical positions that project Europe to the four corners of the world. But their local realities and specific constraints need to be better taken into account. That is the essence of the strategy and regulatory package that we are presenting today. We are adapting our rules to unleash the potential of these regions and make their uniqueness a strength for them and for all of Europe."

Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission - 10/09/2026

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