European Commission

Regional and Urban Policy

A new strategic vision for the EU's outermost regions:

Strengthening the Union's global reach

September 2026

The nine EU outermost regions, which are part of France, Portugal and Spain, are the most remote regions of the EU and home to more than 5 million people. They extend the EU's presence to South America, the Caribbean region and the Indian and Atlantic Oceans, playing a key geostrategic role in an evolving global landscape.

The strategy puts forward an ambitious approach to support these regions, foster their socioeconomic growth and leverage their geostrategic potential. For the first time, the strategy is accompanied by a regulatory package adapting existing EU legislation to their unique challenges and constraints.

Specific constraints and unique assets of the EU's outermost regions

CONSTRAINTS

- Extreme remoteness, insularity and small size
- High vulnerability to global crises, shocks and severe weather events
- Economic dependence on a few sectors and limited connectivity
- Socio-economic constraints, high unemployment and low GDP

ASSETS

- Geostrategic location amidst major trade routes
- Rich biodiversity and renewable energy sources
- Vast maritime zones for blue economy, innovation and sustainable tourism
- High potential for space activities

The Treaty (Art. 349 TFEU) provides for specific measures, including the adaptation of EU legislation, to address the EU outermost regions' permanent constraints

Four objectives to foster sustainable growth in outermost regions:

1. Geo-strategic potential and regional integration:

- Enhance coordination of EU's internal and external policies
- Strengthen funding complementarity within future Interreg Plans
- Boost space, security and defence capabilities

2. Competitiveness and enhanced access to the Single Market:

- Boost smart specialisation and economic diversification (e.g. blue economy)
- Support research and innovation and foster the environmental, climate and digital transitions
- Boost agriculture and food security

3. Resilience and preparedness:

- Support climate adaptation and tackle environmental challenges (e.g. sargassum)
- Build resilience of critical infrastructure (ports, airports and digital)
- Support measures to manage illegal migration

4. Social fairness and support to people:

- Support employment and labour mobility, and expand access to education and skills
- Drive poverty reduction, social inclusion and access to affordable housing
- Support youth and the right to stay (e.g. new project "Youth4OR2")

A stronger partnership

FIRST EVER REGULATORY PACKAGE
Addressing bottlenecks under EU legislation (in the fields of agriculture, fisheries, environment, migration and taxation).

STRONGER OUTERMOST REGIONS PERSPECTIVE
Reflecting their specificities in future EU legislation and initiatives.

DEDICATED PORTAL
Creating a single-entry point to engage and inform outermost regions stakeholders.

STRONGER COOPERATION
Reinforcing dialogue and coordination with the outermost regions.

ENHANCE ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL CAPACITY
Dedicated technical assistance and an improved Advisory Tool.

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Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2026

Print ISBN 978-92-68-43100-9 doi:10.2776/5294992 KN-01-26-030-EN-C
PDF ISBN 978-92-68-43099-6 doi:10.2776/4852599 KN-01-26-030-EN-N