

Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2020/2120(INI)	Procedure completed
Towards a stronger partnership with the EU outermost regions		
Subject 4.70.06 Outlying and outermost regions, overseas countries and territories		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Regional Development	 BIJOUX Stéphane	01/04/2020
		Shadow rapporteur	
		 KYMPOUROPOULOS Stelios	
		 MEBAREK Nora	
		 ALFONSI François	
		 FITTO Raffaele	
		 ROUGÉ André	
European Commission	Commission DG Regional and Urban Policy	Commissioner FERREIRA Elisa	

Key events			
17/09/2020	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
13/07/2021	Vote in committee		
21/07/2021	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0241/2021	
13/09/2021	Debate in Parliament		
14/09/2021	Results of vote in Parliament		
14/09/2021	Decision by Parliament	T9-0368/2021	Summary

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2020/2120(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	REGI/9/03972

Documentation gateway					
Committee draft report		PE689.837	29/04/2021	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE693.637	02/06/2021	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0241/2021	21/07/2021	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0368/2021	14/09/2021	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2021)709	20/01/2022	EC	

Towards a stronger partnership with the EU outermost regions

The European Parliament adopted by 614 votes to 20, with 59 abstentions, a resolution on the theme towards a stronger partnership with the EU outermost regions.

Perhaps more than anywhere else, the outermost regions (ORs) are on the front line, confronted by major economic, social, climate and cultural issues. Members consider it necessary to consolidate progress, address vulnerabilities and build on assets to place the ORs at the heart of European action.

Systematising a European OR reflex

Parliament would like to see a OR reflex systematised within the European institutions, based on the adoption of a cross-cutting and integrated approach to the reality and challenges of the ORs in all European public policies. It called for the effective application of Article 349 of the TFEU in the various future EU programmes and policies.

The Commission is invited to co-construct a new strategy for and with the ORs, which responds to local realities and needs and is based on respect for specificities, consolidation of achievements and optimisation of existing measures, innovation and the promotion of the ORs as territories offering solutions. Members recommended the definition of a genuine action plan for this new strategic partnership, involving the main stakeholders, and its rapid implementation in order to contribute to economic and social recovery in the ORs.

Investing in decent jobs, consolidating solidarity and focusing on youth

Members recommended making the fight against poverty, unemployment and social exclusion the priorities of European solidarity, while investing in education and training, as well as future projects focusing on innovation, particularly social innovation, reskilling and diversification. They advocate protecting health by learning the lessons of the COVID-19 crisis and taking into account the particular situation of the ORs in the face of future events of this nature.

Reaffirming that the strength of youth is a major asset that is often insufficiently exploited, the resolution called on the Commission to consider education as a key element in the development of the ORs, while stressing the need to create specific schemes, in particular through the youth employment initiative. It also stressed the need to strengthen the participation of the ORs in all the actions of the Erasmus + programme.

Developing sustainable and fair growth, promoting a green and blue economy, and fostering new professions towards climate neutrality by 2050

The resolution stressed the importance of encouraging local initiatives by supporting all production companies in the ORs, with particular attention to SMEs and to the tourism, craft, culture, industry, construction and digital sectors. It stressed the need for innovative, sustainable and resilient investments.

Parliament recommended, inter alia:

- that the particular circumstances and agricultural models of the ORs should be integrated into the strategic plans and the management of the CAP rural development programmes for a more regionalised and flexible approach. The POSEI scheme must be strengthened to promote economic and social cohesion within the EU, maintain the rural environment and combat depopulation in the ORs;

- creating pilot projects in the ORs focusing on the blue economy and training in order to give these regions a leadership position in the governance of the oceans and to strengthen the specific measures under the Common Fisheries Policy via the European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) in order to achieve the objective of food autonomy and to support the blue growth of the ORs

- providing strong support for the tourism sector in the ORs in order to promote recovery and sustainable growth, and to achieve the necessary social, environmental and digital transformation of the sector, particularly in SMEs;
- taking action at all levels to coordinate the investments needed for adaptation, resilience and prevention in the face of the increased frequency and violence of weather phenomena in the ORs that are directly linked to climate change;
- encouraging the emergence of new environment-related professions and support for those working on the ground to protect biodiversity and the environment;
- supporting the ORs in developing a new sustainable economic model, with structuring initiatives to develop the circular economy and promote jobs and new "green" professions.

Adapting to the challenges and opportunities of a globalised world

The ORs have strong potential and distinctive assets that can benefit the EU as a whole. Europe must rely on the ORs and on their cooperation with their neighbouring countries to promote its democratic values and its environmental and social objectives.

The resolution recommended:

- taking account of the specific characteristics of the ORs, in particular their remoteness from the European continent and the small size of their markets, when implementing its competition policy;
- putting in place a transport policy fully adapted to the reality of the ORs in the framework of the ERDF and the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), given the existence of significant constraints penalising the ORs due to their remoteness;
- ensuring digital connectivity in the ORs in line with the EUs digital agenda as a tool for economic development and equal opportunity;
- ensuring that the ORs benefit fully from the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) concluded between the EU and third countries and apply differential treatment in favour of OR production in all EPA and FTA renegotiations in order to ensure a fair balance between protecting sensitive agricultural products and defending the EUs offensive interests;
- mobilising resources under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and additional specific funds to provide greater support to Member States whose ORs are facing strong migratory pressure.