



European Commission

THE OUTERMOST REGIONS



CANARY ISLAND



2.1 million inhabitants

7 447 km²

● Situated in the Atlantic, 1 000 km away from the Iberian Peninsula, the Canary Islands have 2.1 million inhabitants living on 8 main islands.

● They are strategically placed between Europe, America and Africa, offering a privileged position for **cultural and economic exchange**.

● The Canary Islands host **world-class research centres** and universities, making the region a front runner in fields such as **astrophysics, oceanography, renewable energies and biotechnologies**.

● However, there are still some challenges: the region's GDP per head is still much lower than pre-financial crisis levels and the unemployment rate is very high, especially among young people.

WHAT DOES THE STRATEGY BRING TO THE CANARY ISLANDS?

By encouraging the outermost regions to capitalise on their unique assets, the strategy seeks to support these regions in creating new opportunities, boosting innovation and jobs in sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, climate change and circular economy, and deepening cooperation with neighbour countries.

Two years on, the main developments in the Canary Islands are:

- ✓ Creation of a taskforce – together with the European Commission – to address the challenges related to waste management involving European, national, regional and local stakeholders; Strategy for plastics and the implementation of projects for its transformation and for a biogas plant;
- ✓ Participation in the Clean Energy for EU Islands Initiatives; organisation of the second Clean Energy Forum for the EU islands in Lanzarote and the installation of two innovative prototypes for the use of marine wind energy within the PLOCAN platform;
- ✓ Comprehensive analysis on all blue economy sectors to seek new opportunities and prepare a future blue economy strategy;
- ✓ Support for researchers by leading the Horizon 2020 «FORWARD» project aimed at strengthening the presence of outermost regions' researchers in European and international innovation networks and their ability to participate in research projects;
- ✓ Mutual learning on creating innovative enterprises in the blue and green economy with Martinique, Reunion Island, Madeira, and the Azores under the GROW RUP project.



WHAT DOES THE EUROPEAN UNION DO FOR THE CANARY ISLANDS?

EU funding 2014-2020



- ▶ The European Regional Development Fund: €552.9 million + €484.1 million (specific allocation)
- ▶ The European Social Fund: €355.4 million
- ▶ The Youth Employment Initiative: €41.5 million
- ▶ The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: €157.5 million

IN ADDITION

A share of **€126.5 million** under the **European cooperation programme** for Azores, Madeira and Canary Islands

€82.9 million under the **European Maritime and Fisheries Fund**

Up to **€268 million per year** under **POSEI**, the specific agriculture programme for the outermost regions.

Specificities of other EU policies

The outermost regions benefit from specific or derogating measures, in areas such as regional development, agriculture, fisheries, State aid and taxation, in order to mitigate the impact of their specific constraints and boost economic growth. The Canary Islands in particular, benefit from a special taxation regime, authorising the Spanish authorities to apply reductions from the “Arbitrio sobre las importaciones y entregas de mercancías” (Tax on imports and deliveries to the Canary Islands) tax scheme.

EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY THE EU IN THE CANARY ISLANDS



HEXAGONE, cooperating for improving joint projects conception

EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND / INTERREG EUROPE

EU funding: €1 million

The HEXAGONE project aims at facilitating the cooperation between the Canary Islands, Madeira and the Azores with Cape Verde, Senegal and Mauritania, strengthening mutual knowledge and networking between public and private sectors to identify and develop joint projects. The Canary Islands are the coordinator of this strategic instrument: the first call resulted in 56 projects in the areas of innovation, competitiveness, internationalisation, sustainable development and efficiency of public administration.



REACT, supporting energy self-sufficiency through renewable energy

HORIZON 2020

EU funding: €203 125

The project REACT deployed across eight EU islands, with a total EU funding of €9 million, aims to support energy self-sufficiency through renewable energy sources and storage platform, and promoting user engagement. In the Canary Islands, REACT is implemented in La Graciosa Island through a pilot project, involving preselected buildings and households to demonstrate the possibility of setting up large-scale renewable energy generation and storage.