

# For a Better Mobilisation of EU Programmes under Direct and Indirect Management in the French Outermost Regions



# Introduction

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The French Ministry of the Interior and Overseas, with the support of the European Commission's DG REFORM, has entrusted the OECD with the two-year project “**For a better mobilisation of EU programmes under direct and indirect management in the French Outermost Regions**”.

This project aims to increase the participation of the six French outermost regions (ORs) - **Réunion, Mayotte, Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique and Saint-Martin** - in European Union (EU) programmes under direct and indirect management.

These programmes are different from shared management programmes, particularly those under the Structural Funds or the Common Agricultural Policy. They are managed either directly by the European Commission, or indirectly by European executive agencies, bodies such as the EIB, and/or national agencies and ministries. The projects are implemented within a competitive framework through calls for proposals, which most often require the search for European partners and the mobilisation of strong technical skills, particularly in European project engineering.

## Project scope

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Despite significant needs and real assets to make a significant contribution to directly and indirectly managed European programmes, the French ORs make only modest use of them compared with other French and European regions, including the Spanish and Portuguese outermost regions.

There are three main reasons for this low level of participation:

1

A lack of knowledge on the part of French agencies and ministries of the specific territorial characteristics and needs of the ORs. Yet these bodies are often responsible for liaising between these European programmes and potential project leaders and partners, particularly at the regional level (businesses, research and innovation players, local authorities, clusters and sectors).

2

A lack of knowledge among the various stakeholder communities in the ORs about the opportunities offered by these programmes and the application procedures, and sometimes also a lack of capacity to respond to them.

3

A lack of coordination between the different levels of governance (European, national, regional and local).

Better access to EU programmes under direct and indirect management is nevertheless a major lever for promoting economic development, improving the well-being of the population, supporting the green and digital transition, increasing the European visibility of the ORs and, in general, strengthening the potential for cooperation and the attractiveness of the various communities of actors in the ORs at regional, European and international level.

# The six regions

The six French ORs, along with the two Portuguese ORs (Madeira and the Azores) and the Spanish OR of the Canary Islands, are an integral part of the EU. They are subject to European Union law in the same way as other European regions and are especially eligible for European funds. Since 1999, the ORs have also benefited from a special status that allows for differentiated treatment on account of their specific territorial characteristics.



Source : Ministère de l'Intérieur et des Outre-mer - DICOM

The constraints of the ORs are linked to their remoteness, insularity and small size (except for Guiana), difficult topography and climate, an inadequate infrastructure network, and economic dependence on a limited number of products or sectors of activity such as tourism. These characteristics often translate into additional costs or obstacles compared to other continental regions. However, these territorial specificities can also be important and unique assets in areas such as environmental protection and biodiversity, the blue economy, research and innovation activities, the digital economy, cultural creation, and proximity to other continents. These specific make a large number of directly and indirectly managed programmes relevant, such as:



# Target audience

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The project aims to improve coordination between European, national, regional and local players and between the ministries and agencies involved. More specifically, the project is aimed at two main types of stakeholders, at the national and regional levels.

At the regional level, the project aims to interact with project leaders and potential partners from the various communities (business, education and research, local authorities, associations, etc.) as well as with the regional bodies responsible for monitoring European programmes. The aim will be to help these players to identify better the opportunities offered by the various programmes, mobilise resources and strengthen the engineering capacity of the ORs to access and respond to calls for proposals.

At the national level, the project aims to raise awareness among the various ministries and agencies in charge of managing European programmes of the specific characteristics and needs of the outermost regions, so that these are better taken into account in their ministerial action plans.



# Project activities

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The OECD will draw up a diagnostic report for all the ORs and for each of the regions on the current use of programmes under direct and indirect management, the mapping of actors, strengths and weaknesses, and the model to be achieved. On this basis, a report of recommendations will be prepared, with proposals for improvements to be implemented at the national and regional levels.

This will be translated into an action plan for the DGOM and the ORs, with concrete measures and implementation support. The project will also include the development of a toolbox, which will be tested in a pilot region selected during the second phase of the project. Several capacity-building initiatives are also planned, at DGOM and OR levels, through training workshops and webinars. An international webinar with all the European ORs will also be organised to encourage the exchange of best practices.

Finally, the results, recommendations and lessons learned from the project will be presented at a final event.

## More information

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## About the OECD

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The **OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities (CFE)** provides comparative statistics, analysis and capacity building for local and national actors to work together to unleash the potential of entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized enterprises, promote inclusive and sustainable regions and cities, boost local job creation, and support sound tourism policies.



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