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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Fitto
on behalf of the European Commission
(26.2.2026)

The Commission political guidelines 2024–2029¹ include a commitment to consider the specific economic and social challenges islands are facing. This commitment is reflected in the mission letter² of Executive Vice-President for Cohesion and Reforms and was further reinforced in the cohesion policy mid-term review proposal of 1 April 2025, which set out to launch a consultation on the development of an EU strategy for islands and confirmed in the Commission’s Work Programme for 2026³. This commitment builds on a wide range of EU policies and initiatives covering islands and aims to ensure a more aligned and coordinated approach to addressing their diverse challenges, both directly and indirectly.

The preparation of an EU strategy for islands, including actions at EU and national level, also responds to the European Parliament resolution⁴ the Honourable Member refers to and its call for an islands pact and a European action plan for islands.

Given the diversity of EU islands and the wide variety of their socio-economic profiles, tailor-made approaches are needed. Cohesion policy, which addresses regional, economic, and social disparities and considers specific local needs, gives particular attention to these areas, as set out in Article 174 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. In the 2021–2027 period, at least EUR 19.3 billion are allocated from cohesion policy⁵ to islands, to support investments for competitiveness, green transition, better connectivity, housing, sustainable tourism and inclusive growth.

¹ Political Guidelines 2024–2029: https://commission.europa.eu/document/e6cd4328-673c-4e7a-8683-f63ffb2cf648_en.

² The mission letter of Executive Vice-President for Cohesion and Reforms: https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/1bf50cbe-45a4-4dc5-9922-52c6c2d3959f_en?filename=Mission%20letter%20-%20FITTO.pdf.

³ Commission Work Programme 2026: https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/05d3777d-5d73-456d-bf56-38caa77d53c8_en?filename=2025-CWP_0.pdf.

⁴ European Parliament resolution of on EU islands and cohesion policy: current situation and future challenges: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2022-0225_EN.html.

⁵ The European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Social Fund Plus.