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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Fitto
on behalf of the European Commission
(30.7.2026)

The Commission adopted its first Islands Strategy¹ on 10 June 2006, recognising the distinct characteristics of these territories.

The Commission considers that existing legal and statistical frameworks already provide definitions and classifications that cover islands and are tailored to the objectives of the relevant policy areas.

For example, Eurostat applies a statistical definition of island regions. The Commission will continue to assess whether existing definitions remain fit for purpose in their respective policy areas. Any future proposals would need to be considered in the context of the relevant sectoral legislation and impact assessments.

The Commission applies an integrated approach to Better Regulation² when preparing new initiatives. The Better Regulation Guidelines³ and Toolbox⁴ provide for the assessment of territorial impacts, including those affecting islands, where these are relevant and proportionate to the initiative concerned. Such analysis can help identify place-based risks, distributional effects and possible mitigation measures where impacts may affect islands differently from other territories.

Under the new Multiannual Financial Framework (2028-2034) islands will continue to receive EU support. The Commission considers that territorial impacts affecting islands can be addressed through existing Better Regulation tools and procedures. In this context, it does not consider introducing further island specific mandatory impact assessments.

¹ COM(2026) 520 final.

² COM/2021/219 final.

³ SWD(2021) 305 final.

⁴ https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/9c8d2189-8abd-4f29-84e9-abc843cc68e0_en?filename=BR%20toolbox%20-%20December%202025.pdf.