

| Basic information | |
|--|---------------------|
| 2018/0244(CNS) | Procedure completed |
| CNS - Consultation procedure | |
| Decision | |
| Association of the overseas countries and territories with the EU including EU/Greenland/Denmark relations 2021–2027 | |
| Repealing Decision 2013/755/EU 2012/0195(CNS) | |
| Subject | |
| 4.70.06 Outlying and outermost regions, overseas countries and territories | |

| Key players | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|---|------------|
| European Parliament | Committee responsible | Rapporteur | Appointed |
| | DEVE Development | TOBÉ Tomas (EPP) | 14/06/2021 |
| | Former committee responsible | Former rapporteur | Appointed |
| | DEVE Development | PONGA Maurice (PPE) | 10/08/2018 |
| | Former committee for opinion | Former rapporteur for opinion | Appointed |
| | BUDG Budgets | The committee decided not to give an opinion. | |
| Council of the European Union | EMPL Employment and Social Affairs | The committee decided not to give an opinion. | |
| | ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety | The committee decided not to give an opinion. | |
| | PECH Fisheries | The committee decided not to give an opinion. | |
| | Council configuration | Meetings | Date |
| | Economic and Financial Affairs ECOFIN | 3814 | 2021-10-05 |

Key events

| Date | Event | Reference | Summary |
|------------|---|--|---------|
| 14/06/2018 | Legislative proposal published | COM(2018)0461  | Summary |
| 10/09/2018 | Committee referral announced in Parliament | | |
| 13/12/2018 | Vote in committee | | |
| 20/12/2018 | Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading | A8-0480/2018 | Summary |
| 31/01/2019 | Decision by Parliament | T8-0053/2019 | Summary |
| 31/01/2019 | Results of vote in Parliament |  | |
| 17/05/2021 | Formal reconsultation of Parliament | | |
| 17/05/2021 | Amended legislative proposal for reconsultation published | 08656/2021 | |
| 13/07/2021 | Vote in committee | | |
| 21/07/2021 | Committee report tabled for plenary, reconsultation | A9-0244/2021 | |
| 13/09/2021 | Results of vote in Parliament |  | |
| 14/09/2021 | Decision by Parliament | T9-0365/2021 | Summary |
| 05/10/2021 | Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament | | |
| 07/10/2021 | Final act published in Official Journal | | |

Technical information

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Procedure reference | 2018/0244(CNS) |
| Procedure type | CNS - Consultation procedure |
| Procedure subtype | Legislation |
| Legislative instrument | Decision |
| Amendments and repeals | Repealing Decision 2013/755/EU 2012/0195(CNS) |
| Legal basis | Treaty on the Functioning of the EU TFEU 203 |
| Other legal basis | Rules of Procedure EP 165 |
| Stage reached in procedure | Procedure completed |
| Committee dossier | DEVE/9/06215 DEVE/8/13744 |

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

| Document type | Committee | Reference | Date | Summary |
|---|-----------|--------------|------------|---------|
| Committee draft report | | PE629.642 | 06/11/2018 | |
| Amendments tabled in committee | | PE630.663 | 23/11/2018 | |
| Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading | | A8-0480/2018 | 20/12/2018 | Summary |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--------------|------------|-------------------------|
| Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading | | T8-0053/2019 | 31/01/2019 | Summary |
| Committee draft report | | PE695.212 | 06/07/2021 | |
| Committee final report tabled for plenary, reconsultation | | A9-0244/2021 | 21/07/2021 | |
| Text adopted by Parliament after reconsultation | | T9-0365/2021 | 14/09/2021 | Summary |

Council of the EU

| Document type | Reference | Date | Summary |
|---|------------|------------|-------------------------|
| Amended legislative proposal for reconsultation | 08656/2021 | 17/05/2021 | Summary |

European Commission

| Document type | Reference | Date | Summary |
|--|--|------------|-------------------------|
| Legislative proposal | COM(2018)0461  | 14/06/2018 | Summary |
| Document attached to the procedure | SWD(2018)0337  | 14/06/2018 | |
| Commission response to text adopted in plenary | SP(2019)150 | 27/02/2019 | |
| Commission response to text adopted in plenary | SP(2021)637 | 03/11/2021 | |
| Follow-up document | COM(2023)0474  | 02/08/2023 | |
| Follow-up document | COM(2024)0437  | 04/10/2024 | |

Other institutions and bodies

| Institution/body | Document type | Reference | Date | Summary |
|------------------|--|--------------|------------|-------------------------|
| EESC | Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report | CES4576/2018 | 17/10/2018 | |
| CofR | Committee of the Regions: opinion | CDR4008/2018 | 06/12/2018 | |

| Additional information | | |
|------------------------|----------|------|
| Source | Document | Date |
| EP Research Service | Briefing | |

| Final act |
|--|
| Decision 2021/1764 OJ L 355 07.10.2021, p. 0006 |

Association of the overseas countries and territories with the EU including EU/Greenland/Denmark relations 2021–2027

2018/0244(CNS) - 14/06/2018 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to establish the the rules and procedures governing the EU's association with the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs), including Greenland (Overseas Association Decision) for the period 2021-2027.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the Council adopts the act after consulting the European Parliament but without being obliged to follow its opinion.

BACKGROUND: Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) have been associated with the European Union since the entry into force of the Treaty of Rome. These 25 islands located in the Atlantic, Antarctic, Arctic, Caribbean, Indian Ocean and Pacific regions are not sovereign countries, but depend on four EU Member States: Denmark, France, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands.

The OCTs are not part of the Union's customs territory and are outside the internal market. In addition, most OCTs face specific challenges due to their size and remoteness. In this context, the EU has financed territorial and regional European Development Fund (EDF) programmes in the OCTs in previous decades.

The main source of funding for the current '[Overseas Association Decision](#)' is the 11th EDF which covers programming and financing of territorial and regional programmes for OCTs other than Greenland, which is the subject of a specific decision financed from the EU budget (the [Greenland Decision](#)).

Under the next multiannual financial framework of the Union for the period 2021-2027, it is proposed to regroup a number of external financing instruments into a comprehensive instrument called the neighbourhood, development and international cooperation instrument ([NDICI](#)) and to integrate the EDF into the EU budget. **Thus, from 1 January 2021, the Union assistance to OCTs previously financed by the European Development Fund (EDF) shall be financed from the general budget of the Union.**

In order to streamline the number of external financing instruments and their performance, the relations with all OCTs, including Greenland, shall be regrouped by replacing the Overseas Association Decision and the Greenland Decision by a **single Decision**.

CONTENT: this proposal for a Decision aims to establish, for the period 2021-207, an **association of the overseas countries and territories (OCTs) with the Union**, which shall constitute a partnership aimed at fostering the sustainable development of the OCTs and promote the values and standards of the Union in the wider world.

The proposed instrument takes account of the exit of the United Kingdom from the European Union on 29 March 2019 effective with the expiration of the transition period on 1 January 2021 and thus **does not apply to British OCTs**.

Cooperation with the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs), including Greenland, shall aim to **support and strengthen economic, political and cultural relations** between the EU and the Overseas Countries and Territories linked to the EU Member States.

Priority shall be given to cooperation in areas of mutual interest, such as:

- the economic diversification of OCTs' economies, including their further integration in world and regional economies;
- in the specific case of Greenland, the need to increase the skills of its labour force;
- the promotion of green and blue economy;
- the sustainable management of natural resources, including the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services;
- climate change mitigation and adaptation to the impacts of climate change;
- the promotion of disaster risk reduction;
- the promotion of research, innovation and scientific cooperation activities;
- the promotion of social, cultural and economic exchanges between the OCTs, their neighbours and other partners;
- Arctic issues.

The association is the framework for policy dialogue and cooperation on issues of mutual interest. It shall continue to be based on the **three key pillars** of enhancing competitiveness, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability, and promoting cooperation and integration between the OCTs and other partners and neighbouring regions.

Without prejudice to the Commission's prerogatives, the OCT authorities shall have **primary responsibility** for implementing the operations agreed on under the cooperation strategy. The Commission shall be responsible for establishing the general rules and conditions for these programmes and projects.

Actions under this programme are expected to contribute **20 %** of the overall financial envelope of the programme to **climate objectives**.

In principle, the OCTs shall remain eligible, under the next multiannual financial framework, to participate in Union programmes. They shall participate in the thematic programmes and rapid response actions of the neighbourhood, development and international cooperation instrument.

Proposed budget: the proposed decision earmarks **EUR 500 million** (in current prices) to the association with the OCTs under the heading 'Neighbourhood and the world' of the multiannual financial framework for the period 2021-2027.

Of this amount, EUR 225 million shall be allocated to Greenland and EUR 225 million to the other OCTs, including EUR 159 million for territorial programmes and EUR 66 million for regional programmes.

In addition an intra-regional financial envelope of **EUR 15 million** is open to all the OCTs, including Greenland.

Moreover an amount of **EUR 22 million** for technical assistance is foreseen in accordance with the new Decision as well as a non-allocated amount of **EUR 13 million**.

The financial resources for Greenland shall come from heading 6 of the EU budget: 'Neighbourhood and the world'. As regards the other OCTs, their financial allocations shall be **transferred from the EDF** to the 'Neighbourhood and the World' heading of the budget.

Association of the overseas countries and territories with the EU including EU/Greenland/Denmark relations 2021–2027

2018/0244(CNS) - 20/12/2018 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Development adopted, in accordance with the consultation procedure, the report by Maurice PONGA (EPP, FR) on the proposal for a Council Decision on the association of the overseas countries and territories with the European Union, including relations between the European Union, on the one hand, and Greenland and the Kingdom of Denmark, on the other (Overseas Association Decision – ODA).

The committee recommended that the European Parliament approve the Commission's proposal subject to the following amendments:

Objectives

Members said that the association between the EU and the OCTs should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development goals as defined in Agenda 2030 and to the implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement.

The specific objectives would be as follows:

- assist the OCTs in addressing the major challenges they face, including the level of education for Greenland;
- strengthen the resilience of the OCTs, reducing their economic and environmental vulnerability;
- improve the competitiveness of the OCTs, including social standards;
- promote OCT cooperation with other partners.

Members proposed that specific treatment be defined for the least developed OCTs in order to enable them to catch up and to address their permanent structural constraints.

The association should:

- promote the principles of democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms on which it is based, through dialogue and cooperation between the Union and the OCTs;
- promote equality and equity between men and women in the OCTs, as well as the empowerment of women and equal political and economic opportunities for women. All initiatives shall incorporate the gender dimension.

Budget

Members proposed that the financial envelope for the programme for the period 2021-2027 be set at **EUR 669 million in current prices** instead of the EUR 500 million proposed by the Commission.

The general distribution proposed by the Members is as follows:

- 81% for territorial cooperation;
- 12% for regional cooperation, including EUR 30 million for intra-regional operations;
- 3.5% for technical assistance;
- 3.5% of non-allocated funds.

The envelopes allocated to each OCT have been specified.

Programming

Members proposed to include the programming rules directly in the new ODA by taking over the rules proposed in the **NDICI** applicable to the OCTs and recalling the principle that the Financial Regulation applies, except where specifically provided in the OAD.

Association of the overseas countries and territories with the EU including EU/Greenland/Denmark relations 2021–2027

2018/0244(CNS) - 31/01/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 566 votes to 40, with 41 abstentions, following the consultation procedure, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a Council decision on the association of the overseas countries and territories with the European Union, including relations between the European Union, on the one hand, and Greenland and the Kingdom of Denmark, on the other (Overseas Association Decision or OAD).

The European Parliament approved the Commission's proposal subject to the following amendments:

Objectives

Parliament specified that the association between the Union and the OCTs should contribute to the achievement of the sustainable development objectives as defined in Agenda 2030 and in the implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement.

Those specific objectives would be as follows:

- to assist the OCTs in addressing the major challenges they face, including the level of education for Greenland;
- to strengthen the resilience of the OCTs, reducing their economic and environmental vulnerability;
- to improve the competitiveness of the OCTs, including as regards social standards;
- to promote cooperation between the OCTs and other partners.

Members proposed that specific treatment be accorded to the least developed OCTs so as to enable them to catch up and address their permanent structural constraints.

The association should:

- promote the principles of democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms on which it is based, through dialogue and cooperation between the Union and the OCTs;
- promote equality and equity between men and women in the OCTs, as well as the empowerment of women and equal political and economic opportunities for women. All initiatives should incorporate a gender dimension.

The Union and the OCTs should cooperate to ensure the active participation of young people in the labour market in order to combat youth unemployment.

With regard to environmental issues, cooperation should also focus on addressing issues linked to land degradation, including rising sea levels and soil contamination, as well as combating illegal logging.

Budget

Parliament has proposed that the financial allocation for the programme for the period 2021-2027 be set at **EUR 669 million** in current prices instead of the EUR 500 million proposed by the Commission.

The general distribution proposed is as follows:

- 81% for territorial cooperation;
- 12% for regional cooperation, including EUR 30 million for intra-regional operations;
- 3.5% for technical assistance;
- 3.5% for an unallocated fund for all OCTs, which would include Greenland.

The envelopes allocated to each OCT have been specified.

Dialogue with the OCTs

This dialogue should enable the OCTs to play a full part in implementing the association and also in defining and implementing the Union's regional strategies in the areas in which the OCTs are located.

The dialogue with the Caribbean OCTs should in particular serve to strengthen the European strategy in the Caribbean region and to foster cooperation on issues relating to biodiversity, climate change, sustainable resource management, disaster risk prevention and management, the social dimension, as well as on promoting good governance, including in the field of taxation and the fight against organised crime.

Programming

Members proposed including rules on programming directly in the new OAD, taking over the rules proposed for the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument ([NDICI](#)). These would apply to the OCTs, while recalling the principle that the Financial Regulation is applicable, unless otherwise provided for in the OAD.

Association of the overseas countries and territories with the EU including EU/Greenland/Denmark relations 2021–2027

2018/0244(CNS) - 14/09/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament after reconsultation

The European Parliament adopted by 603 votes to 27, with 57 abstentions, under a special legislative procedure (Parliament's consultation), a legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the Association of the Overseas Countries and Territories with the European Union including relations between the European Union on the one hand, and Greenland and the Kingdom of Denmark on the other (Decision on the Overseas Association, including Greenland).

Parliament approved the revised version of the draft Council decision to establish the rules and procedures governing the EU's association with the overseas countries and territories (OCTs), including Greenland, for the period 2021-2027.

Objective

The overall objective of the proposed decision is to:

- enhance the OCTs' competitiveness, strengthening the OCTs' resilience, reducing their economic and environmental vulnerability and the promoting of cooperation between them and other partners;
- preserve the existing ties between the EU on the one hand, and Greenland and Denmark on the other, acknowledging the geostrategic position of Greenland in the Arctic, and to preserve existing ties between the Union and the other OCTs, acknowledging their geostrategic positions in the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean, the Atlantic and the Pacific.

The association will respect the fundamental principles of liberty, democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms, the rule of law, good governance and sustainable development, all of which are common to the OCTs and the Member States to which they are linked.

Priorities

The association will provide the framework for strategic dialogue and cooperation on issues of mutual interest. The Council's revised draft clearly outlines the different areas of cooperation proposed. In particular, it includes:

- more extensive reference to the 2030 Agenda and the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as the recognition that gender equality and women's empowerment are key to achieving the SDGs;
- recognition of the important role of civil society organisations in all areas of cooperation;
- additional provisions on the protection of human rights, especially of women and children;
- an increase in the climate target from 20% to 25% with a greater emphasis on nature and environmental protection;
- an increase in the number of annual trilateral consultations between the Commission, the Member States to which they are linked and the OCTs;
- encouraging the OCTs to express their views in the context of the design and impact assessment of the EU's free trade agreements with third countries;
- clarification of what happens to the reflows from the OCT Investment Facility managed by the European Investment Bank;
- an Annex II concerning the definition of the concept of 'originating products' and methods of administrative cooperation.

Budget

The financial envelope of the programme for the period 2021-2027 is set at EUR 500 million in current prices.

Association of the overseas countries and territories with the EU including EU/Greenland/Denmark relations 2021–2027

2018/0244(CNS) - 17/05/2021

PURPOSE: to establish the rules and procedures governing the EU's association with the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs), including Greenland, for the period 2021-2027, replacing Council Decision 2013/755/EU (Overseas Association Decision) and Council Decision 2014/137/EU (Greenland Decision).

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the Council adopts the act after consulting the European Parliament but is not bound by its opinion.

BACKGROUND: EU aid to the OCTs previously financed by the European Development Fund (EDF) should, as from 1 January 2021, be financed from the general budget of the EU.

In order to streamline the number of external financing instruments and their performance, the relations with all OCTs, including Greenland, should be regrouped by replacing the Overseas Association Decision and the Greenland Decision by a single Decision.

The partnership provided for in this Decision should ensure that a strong relationship is maintained between the EU on the one hand and all OCTs on the other. The new decision should also highlight the particularities of the partnership between the Union on the one hand and Greenland and Denmark on the other.

CONTENT: the draft Council Decision:

- establishes an association of the overseas countries and territories (OCTs) with the Union to support the OCTs' sustainable development as well as to promote the values and standards of the Union in the wider world;
- lays down rules concerning the relations between the Union on the one hand, and Greenland and Denmark on the other;
- establishes the funding programme for the association with all the OCTs, for the period from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2027.

Objectives

The proposed Decision's general objective is to:

- promote the economic and social development of the OCTs and to establish close economic relations between them and the Union as a whole by the enhancing the OCTs' competitiveness, strengthening the OCTs' resilience, reducing their economic and environmental vulnerability and the promoting of cooperation between them and other partners;
- preserve the existing ties between the Union on the one hand, and Greenland and Denmark on the other, acknowledging the geostrategic position of Greenland in the Arctic, and to preserve existing ties between the Union and the other OCTs, acknowledging their geostrategic positions in the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean, the Atlantic and the Pacific.

In pursuing those objectives, the association should respect the fundamental principles of liberty, democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms, the rule of law, good governance and sustainable development, all of which are common to the OCTs and the Member States to which they are linked.

Priorities

The Association should provide the framework for strategic dialogue and cooperation on issues of mutual interest. Priority should be given to cooperation in areas of mutual interest such as:

- sustainable diversification of the OCT economies, including their further integration into global and regional economies; in the specific case of Greenland, the necessary upgrading of its labour force;
- the promotion of trade, cooperation and partnerships to accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- education and training, public health, tourism and culture;
- promotion of the green and blue economy
- sustainable management of natural resources;
- climate change;
- action for disaster risk reduction;
- promotion of research, innovation and scientific cooperation activities;
- Digital accessibility;
- promotion of social, cultural and economic exchanges;
- the social sector, labour mobility, social protection systems, food safety and food security issues;
- issues related to the Arctic region;
- the development of intra-regional cooperation in the Arctic, Caribbean, Indian Ocean, Atlantic and Pacific.

Budget

The financial envelope of the programme for the period 2021-2027 would be set at **EUR 500 million** in current prices.

The overall breakdown proposed is as follows:

- EUR 164 million in the form of grants for bilateral programmable support for the long-term development of OCTs other than Greenland;
- EUR 225 million in the form of grants for bilateral programmable support for the long-term development of Greenland;
- EUR 76 million to support regional OCT programmes, of which EUR 15 million could help finance intra-regional operations, with Greenland only eligible for intra-regional operations;
- EUR 22 million for studies or technical assistance actions for all OCTs including Greenland;
- EUR 13 million for a non-allocated fund for all OCTs including Greenland in order, *inter alia*, to enable the Union to react appropriately in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

Dialogue with the OCTs

The association should be based on a broad dialogue and consultation on issues of mutual interest between the OCTs, the Member States to which they are linked and the Commission and, where appropriate, the European Investment Bank (EIB) and other EU institutions and bodies.

The dialogue with the OCTs, including Greenland, shall in particular provide a basis for broad cooperation on issues such as education, energy, climate change, nature, the environment, the blue economy, natural resources (including raw materials and fish stocks), maritime transport, research and innovation, as well as the Arctic dimension of these issues, where relevant.

Programming

Under the Decision, the Commission should adopt, in the form of 'single programming documents', the multi-annual indicative programmes referred to in the rules proposed in the Neighbourhood, Development Cooperation and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI).