

**Question for written answer P-005699/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Taking account of the specific circumstances of the outermost island regions in the Erasmus+ Programme

A number of studies show that, this year, far fewer individuals from the outermost regions and from overseas countries and territories (OCTs) are taking part in the Erasmus+ Programme.

One obstacle to taking part in the programme is the fact that there is inadequate scope for defraying some types of expenses, in particular travel costs for individuals from extremely remote island regions, i.e. more than 12 000 km away from Europe.

Though recital 37 of the Erasmus+ Regulation stipulates that the 'constraints imposed by the remoteness of the outermost regions of the Union and the OCTs should be taken into account when implementing the Programme', it is worrying that the current Erasmus+ Programme Guide does not genuinely take account of extreme geographic remoteness.

How does the Commission intend to ensure that individuals from extremely remote island regions have genuine and fair access to the Erasmus+ Programme?

Does it propose to introduce, on a long-term basis, a new distance band for reimbursement of travel expenses which would cover the expenses incurred by individuals from the outermost island regions more than 12 000 km away from Europe, simplifying and harmonising practices in the process?

Does it also plan to extend the possibility of using the budget heading for exceptional costs so that travel expenses incurred by individuals from the outermost island regions are better covered?