

Youth4Regions – the programme for aspiring journalists 2026

- *Conditions for participation* -

Deadline for submissions: 07 July 2026 17:00 CET (Brussels time)¹

The European Commission's Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO) wishes to encourage journalism students and young journalists to learn about the EU, [Cohesion Policy](#) and to communicate on European solidarity and concrete projects co-funded by the European Union. The specific objectives include:

- Providing the framework and conditions for young and future journalists to specialize in EU affairs and Regional Policy
- Fostering young journalistic productions to promote knowledge of EU-funded projects
- Promoting innovative means of covering the European Week of Regions and Cities
- Enhancing the links between European institutions and young Europeans

The call for applications is open to **any person** that fulfils **all** the following conditions:

- **Is a citizen of an EU Member State or an EU neighbouring country²**
- **Is between 18 and 30 years old at the time of Youth4Regions Programme (10-16 October 2026)**
- **Demonstrates a real interest in a journalistic career through studies and/or work/ volunteering experience, with a maximum of 3 years full-time work experience after graduating**
- **Has not participated in previous editions of the Youth4Regions Programme**

Only individual applications are accepted. The applicants will be asked to prove that they fulfil the above conditions if selected to participate in the [Youth4Regions programme](#).

¹ Applications received after this date will not be accepted.

² ENP countries (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine*, Syria and Tunisia, as well as Armenia and Azerbaijan), EU candidate countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye and Ukraine) and potential candidates (Kosovo*), EFTA countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland) and the UK.

The following formats are eligible for submission:

- 1. Written feature journalism: one short article (500 – 800 words)**
- 2. Photojournalism: one photo report (three pictures)**
- 3. Video journalism: one short video report (2 – 3 minutes)**
- 4. Audio journalism: one short audio report (2-3 minutes)**

Only one application per participant is accepted. The submission must be an original piece of work, not previously published.

The submission must cover a project co-financed by Cohesion Policy (ERDF, ESF+, Cohesion Fund, JTF, Interreg) or the European Solidarity Fund.

Specific projects co-financed by the EU can be found online on kohesio.ec.europa.eu, what-europe-does-for-me.eu or other EU sources.

Contributions are accepted in all the 24 EU official languages. However, in case of photo and video submissions we require a short, written summary in English.

Please note that all communication with the Youth4Regions secretariat will be in English.

The jury will assess eligible applications on both substance and style based on the following selection criteria:

- Degree of originality (a new story or an unusual angle)
- Narrative and journalistic quality
- Extent to which a rigorous approach in terms of research and field work is demonstrated

The jury will be composed of communication experts from the European Commission.

The jury's decision is final and without appeal.

The jury reserves the right to reject:

- entries that do not comply with the requirements of the competition,
- entries that have been plagiarised or published prior to the current competition,
- entries that were created using AI software (e.g. ChatGPT).

The competition results will be announced on 14 August 2026.

All successful applicants **will be invited to Brussels to attend the Youth4Regions programme** during 10 - 16 October 2026, for which the European Commission will cover food, travel and accommodation.

The programme includes training sessions on journalism and EU affairs, mentorship from established journalists, visits of media organisations and EU institutions, as well as European Commission certified work experience as journalists covering the [EU Regions' Week](#). Upon completion of the programme the participants become part of the Youth4Regions Alumni network.

The European Commission will select the three winners of the 2026 [Megalizzi – Niedzielski prize for aspiring journalists](#) from among the selected participants based on their entries in the competition and their commitment to European journalism. The Megalizzi –Niedzielski prize honours the memory of Antonio Megalizzi and Bartek Piotr Orent-Niedzielski, young European journalists with a strong attachment to the EU and its values, who passed away after a terrorist attack in Strasbourg in late 2018.

If you have any questions, please refer to the FAQ section.

If your question is not answered there, feel free to contact the competition secretariat at contact@youth4regions-application.eu.