ECSEL Joint Undertaking for the implementation of the Joint Technology Initiative on ‘Electronic Components and Systems for European Leadership’

2013/0234(NLE) - 31/01/2014 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy adopted, in the framework of a special legislative procedure (Parliament consultation), the report by Paul RÜBIG (EPP, AT) on the proposal for a Council regulation on the ECSEL Joint Undertaking.

The committee approved the Commission proposal subject to the following amendments:

Establishment of a Joint Undertaking: for the implementation of the Joint Technology Initiative on ECSEL, a Joint undertaking, ECSEL, (Electronic Components and Systems for European Leadership), should be established for a period from 1 January 2014 until 31 December 2024. In order to take account of the duration of Horizon 2020, **all calls for proposals should be launched by 31 December 2020**.

Objectives: the Joint Undertaking should: (i) ensure the availability of electronic components and systems for key markets and for addressing societal challenges by **bridging the gap between research and industrial and commercial exploitation**; (ii) apply a simplified **operating model and simplification measures;** (iii) promote the involvement of **small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).**

Scope of work: Members introduced a new article which aims to clarify the scope of activities of the ECSEL Joint Undertaking, in particular with respect to the relevant Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) covered by its research programme. The rules of participation also call for a greater consideration of the TRL-concept to stipulate funding levels, which is taken up in this article with a view to the funding rates used in indirect actions.

Union’s financial contribution: the maximum Union contribution, including contributions from member states of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), to the ECSEL Joint Undertaking to cover administrative costs and operational costs should be **EUR 1 154 492 250** (compared to EUR 1 215 255 000 as proposed by the Commission).

The Union's financial contribution should be conditional upon proof by the ECSEL Joint Undertaking that its multiannual work plan and the actions which it funds correspond to the research priorities laid down in the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme.

Staff: in exceptional circumstances, the Governing Board could, by motivated decision, decide to temporarily suspend the delegation of the appointing authority powers to the Executive Director. In this case, the Governing Board should **inform in writing the Commission and the European Parliament** on such decisions of suspension within 5 working days, provide detailed reasons and specify the implementing rules of new or temporary provisions with regard to the management of the Joint Undertaking. The ECSEL Joint Undertaking should take appropriate administrative measures, inter alia, through training and prevention strategies, to avoid **conflicts of interest**.

Evaluation: by **30 June 2017**, the Commission should organise an independent interim evaluation of the ECSEL Joint Undertaking. The results of the independent interim evaluation of the ECSEL Joint

Undertaking shall be taken into account in the interim evaluation of Horizon 2020. In order to respond to unforeseen situations or to new developments and needs the Commission may, following the interim evaluation of Horizon 2020, within the annual budgetary procedure, review the budget of the ECSEL Joint Undertaking.

The evaluation should pay specific attention to the impact on the accessibility of entities from Union Member States which are not members of the ESCEL Joint Undertaking to funding under the ECSEL Joint Undertaking.

Discharge: Members proposed that the discharge for the implementation of the budget of the ECSEL Joint Undertaking should be given by the European Parliament, upon recommendation of the Council.

Audits: the European Court of Auditors should regularly carry out audits not only of compliance but also of the performance of the Joint Undertaking's activities and partners on the basis of documents or on-the-spot checks.

Anti-fraud measures: the amended text provides that the staff of the Joint Undertaking, the Executive Director and the members of the Governing Board should, without delay and without any question of their responsibility being called into question as a result, notify OLAF of any frauds which have come to their attention in the fulfilment of their duties or remit.