

Research and development programme aimed at supporting research performing small and medium-sized enterprises: participation of the Union

2013/0232(COD) - 31/01/2014 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy adopted the report by Miloslav RANSDORF (GUE/NGL, CZ) on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the participation of the Union in a Research and Development Programme jointly undertaken by several Member States aimed at supporting research performing small and medium-sized enterprises (Eurostars-2).

The parliamentary committee recommended that the position adopted by the European Parliament at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure amend the Commission's proposal as follows:

Programme approach: Members underlined that, to ensure the success of Eurostars-2, the bottom-up nature and the business-driven agenda with its **main focus on market potential** from the previous Eurostars programme must be kept.

Union's financial contribution: the maximum Union financial contribution, including EFTA appropriations, to Eurostars-2, including central administrative costs and operational costs, shall be **EUR 287 million** (unchanged from the Commission's proposal). The contribution shall be paid from appropriations allocated to the relevant parts of the Specific Programme implementing the [Horizon 2020](#) Framework Programme and in particular from appropriations under the heading "innovation in SMEs" under pillar II.

As a rule, the Union's contribution shall be equal to one third of the contributions of the participating states and shall cover operational costs, including the costs of the evaluation of proposals, and administrative costs. In the event that during the lifetime of the programme the rate of Union's contribution needs to be adapted, **certain flexibility should be given** for individual calls. In that case, the Union's contribution could go up to a maximum of half of the contribution of the participating states.

The maximum proportion of the Union's financial contribution that may be used to contribute to the administrative and project evaluation costs of Eurostars-2 shall be **6%**.

Participation: any **Eureka** Members or Associated country that is not associated with Horizon 2020 may become a Eurostars-2 partner country, so long as it meets the requirements. Those partner states shall however not be eligible for the Union's financial contribution under Eurostars-2.

Rules of participation: in accordance with the principles of transparency and non-discrimination, calls for proposals organised by Eurostars-2 shall be published on the web-based Horizon 2020 Participant Portal.

Delegation agreement: this foresees a clear allocation of tasks and responsibilities between the Commission, ESE and the Member States and any duplication shall be avoided.

Audits: audits carried out by the Commission shall only be in duly justified cases and in consultation with the relevant parties.

In general, Members stress the need to **reduce administrative and bureaucratic burdens** for all parties. Double audits and excessive documentation and reports should be avoided.

Evaluation: the Commission shall organise an **independent interim evaluation of Eurostars-2 by 30 June 2017** and send that report to the European Parliament and to the Council by 31 December 2017. The result of the interim evaluation of Eurostars-2 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, review, within the annual budgetary procedure, the budget of Eurostars-2.