

Joint Undertakings under Horizon Europe

2021/0048(NLE) - 21/10/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 624 votes to 3, with 33 abstentions, following the consultation procedure, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a Council regulation establishing the Joint Undertakings under Horizon Europe.

The aim of the proposed regulation is to set up nine EU joint undertakings (JUs) for the implementation of institutionalised European partnerships. It determines their objectives and tasks, membership, organisation and other operating rules, including on transparency and accountability.

Objectives

Members stated that the joint undertakings should deliver, *inter alia*, on the following general objectives:

- strengthen and integrate the scientific, technological and innovation capacities of the EU, the Member States and the regions to foster the creation and dissemination of new high-quality knowledge, in particular to address global societal challenges, to ensure and improve EU competitiveness and European added value, resilience and sustainability
- ensuring global leadership, focusing on sustainability and resilience of EU value chains and safeguarding the EU's strategic autonomy, while preserving an open economy;
- develop the uptake of innovative solutions throughout the Union addressing climate, environmental, health, digital and other global societal challenges contributing to Union strategic priorities, accelerating the economic growth of the Union and fostering the innovation ecosystem, while reaching the UN Sustainable Development Goals;
- accelerate the green and digital transition and contribute to a zero-pollution and toxic-free environment while preserving and restoring ecosystems and biodiversity;
- enhance the research and innovation capabilities and performance of existing and new European ecosystems and value chains, including in SME and start-ups;
- reduce the specific skills gap across the Union by raising awareness and assisting in the building of new knowledge and human capital with reference to their domains of research;
- deliver environmental, energy and resource saving, sustainable, societal and productivity, circularity improvements in new products, technologies, applications and services;
- contribute to bridging the gender gap in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields in Europe as well as to mainstream gender in research outcomes developed by European partnerships.

Specific measures

Parliament highlighted the following specific measures:

- reinforcing the scope and budget for **Clean Aviation** as clean and sustainable aviation is a vital element for Europe's success;

- reinforcing the scope and budget for **Global Health** to develop new or improved health technologies;
- contributing to the reduction of the **connectivity gap** and focusing on emerging technologies and supporting the construction of the EU's ecosystem for developing 5G and 6G technologies, application and services;
- accelerating the development and improvement of advanced **clean hydrogen** applications ready for market, across energy, aviation, maritime and heavy-duty transport, building and industrial end-uses.

Governance

The governance of the JUs should be based on rules that enhance efficiency and ensure maximum administrative simplification; the evaluation process should be fully transparent, kept simple while ensuring synchronization of reporting and monitoring procedures. Simplification and workability should be the driving principles for management of all financial contributions from Participating States, which should entrust the JU with the evaluation of proposals, while keeping a right of veto on all issues concerning the use of its own national financial contributions.

Financing and synergies

The joint undertakings should be financed by the Union programmes under the 2021-2027 MFF and, where applicable, by the Next Generation EU. The ratio of administrative costs to the total budget of each JU should be of a comparable value across the JUs and should not exceed 5% of their budget. Members other than Union should agree among themselves on the fair distribution of their part of the administrative expenses of their joint undertakings.

In carrying out their research activities, the joint undertakings should seek synergies with European Structural and Investment Funds, other Horizon Europe initiatives as well as all research, innovation and competitiveness-related Union programmes. In addition to that, the joint undertakings should operate in close collaboration with the Commission's Joint Research Centre in their respective scientific domains.

The Commission is called on to develop clear, simple and concrete guidelines on the implementation of the different types of synergies by the joint undertakings, such as transfer of resources, alternative funding, cumulative funding and integrated funding.