Joint Undertakings under Horizon Europe: Chips Joint Undertaking

2022/0033(NLE) - 15/02/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 594 votes to 15, with 27 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a Council regulation amending Regulation (EU) 2021/2085 establishing the Joint Undertakings under Horizon Europe, as regards the Chips Joint Undertaking.

Parliament approved the Commission proposal subject to amendments.

Members stressed that reinforcing Europe's semiconductor ecosystem is one of the key components to achieving economic resilience and security, **strategic autonomy, enhanced digital sovereignty and reduced dependencies**; and will play an important role in the green and digital transitions.

The Chips Joint Undertaking should seek to:

- ensure clear and identifiable benefits across the semiconductor ecosystem;

- contribute to and reflect the **Union's core values**, including privacy by design, trust, security, safety, sustainability, and growing skills and quality employment at all levels of the value chain. The activities of the Chips Joint Undertaking should work effectively alongside the broader objectives of the Chips Fund, in order to support the development of a dynamic and resilient semiconductor ecosystem;

- seek to develop close **synergies** with EU funding programmes and instruments, in particular those that support the deployment of innovative solutions for the Union's challenges;

- integrate all stakeholders, SMEs and social partners in the sector;

- provide opportunities for increased access to funds to support the growth of start-ups and SMEs and stimulate investment across the value chain and the EU, thus contributing to achieving the twin digital and green transitions. Support and guidance should be provided, in particular to start-ups and SMEs, to facilitate their access to public and private investment, including venture capital;

- set up **private and/or public sector partners**, for example through memoranda of understanding, with a view to achieving specific impacts more effectively;

- facilitate cooperation between the EU and relevant like-minded international actors to strengthen the EU's open strategic autonomy and to protect intellectual property rights.

Additional objectives of the Chips Joint Undertaking

In addition to the main objectives, the report proposes that the Chips Joint Undertaking should have the following specific objectives:

- **build up design capacities** for integrated semiconductor, quantum technologies and other cutting-edge technologies such as photonics;

- **support the green transition** by ensuring that environmental considerations are taken into account in the development and implementation of R&D&I, such as increased energy and water efficiency;

- **promote STEM education**, in particular women's participation in R&D&I;

- foster open science and public visibility and ensure that the R&D&I activities are aimed at providing a positive impact upon society.

Guidance and guidelines

Clear and easily accessible guidelines should be established:

- on the access modes, software and hardware needed to participate in projects that fall under this Regulation;

- on the terms and conditions for the development of, and third party access to, pilot lines, and on the compatibility and accessibility of virtual design platforms, design libraries and EU competence centres.

Guidance should be provided on overcoming existing obstacles to international cooperation in the field of RDI within the structures of the European Semiconductor Council, international fora and other agreements and strategies linking the Union and third countries.

Financing

The Union's financial contribution to the Semiconductor Joint Undertaking, including EEA funds, would be a minimum of EUR 4 175 000 000, of which a maximum of EUR 50 174 000 would be for administrative expenditure, broken down as follows: (i) up to EUR 2 650 000 000 under Horizon Europe; (b) up to EUR 1 525 000 000 under the Digital Europe Programme.

According to Members, the Initiative should be adequately funded to achieve its ambitious goals. The increase in the EU's financial contribution to the Semiconductor Joint Undertaking should not lead to a reduction in the funds allocated to EU programmes or existing projects.

In order to achieve the greatest possible positive impact of Union funding and the most effective contribution to the Union's policy objectives, the Joint Undertaking and the Semiconductor Fund should seek to **maximise the potential of private and/or public sector partners**. These partners should include industry, R&D&I and technology organisations, bodies with a public service mission at local, regional, national or international level, and civil society organisations, such as foundations that support and/or carry out R&D&I activities, provided that the desired effects can be achieved more effectively in partnership than by the Union alone.

The impact of public expenditure related to the Initiative and the EU RDI sector should be assessed and reviewed before the next MFF.