



Basic information	
<p>2023/0199(COD)</p> <p>COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure) Regulation</p>	Procedure completed
<p>Establishing the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform ('STEP')</p> <p>Amending Directive 2003/87 2001/0245(COD) Amending Regulation 2013/1303 2011/0276(COD) Amending Regulation 2014/223 2012/0295(COD) Amending Regulation 2021/1060 2018/0196(COD) Amending Regulation 2021/1058 2018/0197(COD) Amending Regulation 2021/1057 2018/0206(COD) Amending Regulation 2021/695 2018/0224(COD) Amending Regulation 2021/697 2018/0254(COD) Amending Regulation 2021/1056 2020/0006(COD) Amending Regulation 2021/241 2020/0104(COD) Amending Regulation 2021/523 2020/0108(COD)</p> <p>Subject</p> <p>4.70.01 Structural funds, investment funds in general, programmes 8.70 Budget of the Union 8.70.01 Financing of the budget, own resources</p>	

Key players			
European Parliament	Joint committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	BUDG Budgets	FERNANDES José Manuel (EPP)	17/07/2023
	ITRE Industry, Research and Energy	EHLER Christian (EPP)	17/07/2023
		Shadow rapporteur ECKE Matthias (S&D) FERNÁNDEZ Jonás (S&D) HAYER Valérie (Renew) HAHN Henrike (Greens/EFA) ANDRESEN Rasmus (Greens/EFA) KLOC Izabela-Helena (ECR) RZOCA Bogdan (ECR) ERNST Cornelia (The Left) OMARJEE Younous (The Left)	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs	LOISEAU Nathalie (Renew)	17/08/2023	

	ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs (Associated committee)	POPTCHEVA Eva-Maria Alexandrova (Renew)	19/07/2023
	EMPL Employment and Social Affairs (Associated committee)	VEDRENNE Marie-Pierre (Renew)	28/08/2023
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (Associated committee)	WÖLKEN Tiemo (S&D)	17/07/2023
	REGI Regional Development (Associated committee)	PLUMB Rovana (S&D)	13/07/2023
	AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development	Chair on behalf of committee LINS Norbert (EPP)	28/06/2023
Council of the European Union			
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Budget	HAHN Johannes	
European Economic and Social Committee			
European Committee of the Regions			

Key events			
Date	Event	Reference	Summary
20/06/2023	Legislative proposal published	COM(2023)0335 	Summary
13/07/2023	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading		
13/07/2023	Referral to associated committees announced in Parliament		
13/07/2023	Referral to joint committee announced in Parliament		
09/10/2023	Vote in committee, 1st reading		
11/10/2023	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading	A9-0290/2023	
16/10/2023	Debate in Parliament	CRE link	
17/10/2023	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	T9-0364/2023	Summary
17/10/2023	Matter referred back to the committee responsible for interinstitutional negotiations		
22/02/2024	Approval in committee of the text agreed at 1st reading interinstitutional negotiations	PE759.055 GEDA/A/(2024)000999	
27/02/2024	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	T9-0084/2024	Summary
27/02/2024	Results of vote in Parliament		
27/02/2024	Debate in Parliament	CRE link	
28/02/2024	Act adopted by Council after Parliament's 1st reading		
29/02/2024	Final act published in Official Journal		

29/02/2024	Final act signed		
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Technical information	
Procedure reference	2023/0199(COD)
Procedure type	COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure)
Nature of procedure	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Regulation
	Amending Directive 2003/87 2001/0245(COD) Amending Regulation 2013/1303 2011/0276(COD) Amending Regulation 2014/223 2012/0295(COD) Amending Regulation 2021/1060 2018/0196(COD) Amending Regulation 2021/1058 2018/0197(COD) Amending Regulation 2021/1057 2018/0206(COD) Amending Regulation 2021/695 2018/0224(COD) Amending Regulation 2021/697 2018/0254(COD) Amending Regulation 2021/1056 2020/0006(COD) Amending Regulation 2021/241 2020/0104(COD) Amending Regulation 2021/523 2020/0108(COD)
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 59 Rules of Procedure EP 57_o Treaty on the Functioning of the EU TFEU 173-p3 Treaty on the Functioning of the EU TFEU 175-p3 Treaty on the Functioning of the EU TFEU 178-p1 Treaty on the Functioning of the EU TFEU 177-p1 Treaty on the Functioning of the EU TFEU 182-p1 Treaty on the Functioning of the EU TFEU 164 Treaty on the Functioning of the EU TFEU 192-p1
Mandatory consultation of other institutions	European Economic and Social Committee European Committee of the Regions
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CJ44/9/12692


Documentation gateway				
European Parliament				
Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE752.782	04/09/2023	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE752.819	06/09/2023	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE752.820	06/09/2023	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE752.832	06/09/2023	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE752.830	06/09/2023	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE752.907	08/09/2023	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE752.908	08/09/2023	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE752.951	12/09/2023	
Specific opinion	AGRI	PE752.840	12/09/2023	
Specific opinion	AFET	PE752.672	20/09/2023	
Committee opinion	ECON	PE752.779	03/10/2023	
Committee opinion	ENVI	PE753.684	03/10/2023	
Committee opinion	EMPL	PE753.709	03/10/2023	

Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A9-0290/2023	11/10/2023	
Committee opinion	REGI	PE753.469	12/10/2023	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T9-0364/2023	17/10/2023	Summary
Text agreed during interinstitutional negotiations		PE759.055	14/02/2024	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T9-0084/2024	27/02/2024	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Coreper letter confirming interinstitutional agreement	GEDA/A(2024)000999	14/02/2024	
Draft final act	00011/2024/LEX	29/02/2024	

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Legislative proposal	COM(2023)0335 	20/06/2023	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2024)270	08/07/2024	

National parliaments

Document type	Parliament/Chamber	Reference	Date	Summary
Contribution	CZ_SENATE	COM(2023)0335	08/11/2023	
Contribution	DE_BUNDES RAT	COM(2023)0335	09/11/2023	
Contribution	CZ_CHAMBER	COM(2023)0335	14/11/2023	
Contribution	IE_HOUSES-OF-OIREACHTAS	COM(2023)0335	11/12/2023	

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
ESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES3586/2023	20/09/2023	
CofR	Committee of the Regions: opinion	CDR3512/2023	10/10/2023	

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
EP Research Service	Briefing	15/02/2024

Meetings with interest representatives published in line with the Rules of Procedure

Rapporteurs, Shadow Rapporteurs and Committee Chairs

Name	Role	Committee	Date	Interest representatives
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PEKKARINEN Mauri	Shadow rapporteur for opinion	REGI	23/10/2023	Regional Council of Central Finland
EHLER Christian	Shadow rapporteur	ITRE	18/10/2023	European Association of Research and Technology Organisations
FERNANDES José Manuel	Rapporteur	BUDG	10/10/2023	European Association of Long-Term Investors
ANDRESEN Rasmus	Shadow rapporteur	ITRE	21/09/2023	Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie e.V.
FERNANDES José Manuel	Rapporteur	BUDG	07/09/2023	EuropaBio
WÖLKEN Tiemo	Rapporteur for opinion	ENVI	04/09/2023	Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Klimaschutz
PEKKARINEN Mauri	Shadow rapporteur for opinion	REGI	30/08/2023	Permanent representation of Finland to the EU

Other Members

Name	Date	Interest representatives
WINZIG Angelika	16/11/2023	Österreichs E-Wirtschaft
TOIA Patrizia	20/09/2023	ASSONIME
DANTI Nicola	13/09/2023	Confederazione Generale dell'Industria Italiana
TOIA Patrizia	06/09/2023	Cassa Depositi e Prestiti s.p.a.
GEIER Jens	31/08/2023	BASF SE

Final act
Regulation 2024/0795 OJ L 000 29.02.2024, p. 0000 Summary

Establishing the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform ('STEP')

2023/0199(COD) - 27/02/2024 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 517 votes to 59, with 51 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform ('STEP').

The European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure amends the Commission's proposal as follows:

The STEP objectives

The proposed Regulation establishes a **Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP)** to support critical and emerging strategic technologies and their respective value chains in relevant sectors.

STEP aims to: (i) ensure Union sovereignty and security; (ii) reduce the Union's strategic dependencies in strategic sectors; (iii) strengthen the Union's competitiveness by strengthening its resilience and productivity and by mobilising financing; (iv) favour a level playing field for investments in the internal market; (v) foster cross-border participation, including of SMEs, strengthen economic; (vi) social and territorial cohesion and solidarity among Member States and regions and (vii) promote inclusive access to attractive quality jobs by investing in the skills of the future and making its economic, industrial and technological base fit for the green and digital transitions.

The STEP should pursue the following objectives:

1) **Supporting the development or manufacturing of critical technologies throughout the Union**, or safeguarding and strengthening their respective value chains, in the following sectors: (i) digital technologies, including those contributing to the targets and objectives of the Digital Decade Policy Programme 2030, multi-country projects, and deep tech innovation; (ii) clean and resource efficient technologies, including net-zero technologies as defined in the Net-Zero Industry Act; (iii) biotechnologies, including medicinal products on the Union list of critical medicines and their components;

2) **Addressing shortages of labour and skills critical** to all kinds of quality jobs in support of the objective set out in point (a), in particular through life-long learning, education and training projects, including the European Net-Zero Industry Academies established pursuant to the relevant provision of the Net-Zero Industry Act, and in close cooperation with social partners and education and training initiatives already in place.

Financial Support

STEP should **mobilise resources from existing EU programmes**, including InvestEU, Horizon Europe, the European Defence and Innovation Funds, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Cohesion Fund, the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), the Just Transition Fund (FTJ), the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the EU Health Programme and the Digital Europe Programme.

The resources mobilised through these EU programmes should be accompanied by **additional funding of EUR 1.5 billion** from the European Defence Fund for projects contributing to the achievement of the STEP objectives.

Sovereignty Seal

The Commission should award a Sovereignty Seal to any project contributing to any of the STEP objectives, provided that the project has been assessed and complies with minimum quality requirements, in particular eligibility, exclusion and award criteria, provided for in a call for proposals. A call for proposals may include geographical limitations and should, where appropriate, in accordance with the relevant sector-specific Union legislation, include obligations to respect working and employment conditions under applicable Union and national law, International Labour Organization conventions and collective agreements.

The Sovereignty Seal should be valid for the period of implementation of the project to which it was awarded and shall cease to be valid if that project has not started within five years of the award, or the project has been relocated outside the Union.

Implementation of the STEP

In order to implement the STEP, the Commission should, in particular:

- promote the Sovereignty Seal in particular to enhance the visibility of projects that have been awarded the Sovereignty Seal and of projects that have received funding under the ERDF, the Cohesion Fund, the ESF+ or the JTF;
- set up and manage the **Sovereignty Portal** (publicly accessible website established by the Commission), in particular to bring all Union funding opportunities closer to potential beneficiaries and enhance transparency towards Union citizens;
- liaise with national competent authorities and other relevant stakeholders, with a view to coordinating and exchanging information about the financial needs, existing bottlenecks and best practices in access to funding within the scope of this Regulation;
- foster contacts across the sectors of the technologies, making particular use of existing industrial alliances, networks and structures, including the Net-Zero Europe Platform established by the Net-Zero Industry Act and the European Critical Raw Materials Board established by the Critical Raw Materials Act;
- promote consistency, coherence, synergy and complementarity among Union programmes to support projects contributing to the STEP objectives.

Evaluation of the STEP

By 31 December 2025, the Commission should provide the European Parliament and the Council with an interim evaluation report on the implementation of the STEP, for the purpose of informing future decision-making.

The interim evaluation report should, where appropriate, be accompanied by a **legislative proposal** for an amendment of this Regulation with the aim of reducing the Union's strategic dependencies and strengthening Union industrial policy, while ensuring the proper functioning of the internal market, avoiding market distortions and creating a level playing field in the Union, or by legislative proposals for other initiatives that pursue similar objectives.

At the end of the implementation of the Union programmes by which the STEP is financially supported, but no later than 31 December 2031, the Commission should provide a final evaluation report on the implementation of the STEP.

Establishing the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform ('STEP')

2023/0199(COD) - 29/02/2024 - Final act

PURPOSE: to strengthen the Union's sovereignty and security, accelerate its green and digital transitions, enhance its competitiveness and reduce its strategic dependencies.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Regulation (EU) 2024/795 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP) and amending Directive 2003/87/EC and Regulations (EU) 2021/1058, (EU) 2021/1056, (EU) 2021/1057, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) 2021/1060, (EU) 2021/523, (EU) 2021/695, (EU) 2021/697 and (EU) 2021/241.

CONTENT: this Regulation establishes a **Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP)** to support critical and emerging strategic technologies and their respective value chains in relevant sectors.

The STEP will pursue the following objectives:

- (a) **supporting the development or manufacturing of critical technologies throughout the Union**, or safeguarding and strengthening their respective value chains, in the following sectors: (i) digital technologies; (ii) clean and resource efficient technologies, including net-zero technologies as defined in the Net-Zero Industry Act; (iii) biotechnologies, including medicinal products on the Union list of critical medicines and their components;
- (b) **addressing shortages of labour and skills critical** to all kinds of quality jobs in support of the objective set out in point (a), in particular through life-long learning, education and training projects, including the European Net-Zero Industry Academies established pursuant to the relevant provision of the Net-Zero Industry Act, and in close cooperation with social partners and education and training initiatives already in place.

Financial Support

Through a mix of financial incentives and measures to facilitate the financing of projects, it will leverage funding in support of critical technologies **under existing EU programmes and funds**, including cohesion policy funds, InvestEU, Horizon Europe, the European Defence Fund, the Innovation Fund and the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

In order to boost defence investment capacity, an additional **EUR 1.5 billion** will be allocated to the European Defence Fund.

Sovereignty Seal

The Commission will award a Sovereignty Seal to any project contributing to any of the STEP objectives, provided that the project has been assessed and complies with minimum quality requirements, in particular eligibility, exclusion and award criteria, provided for in a call for proposals.

A call for proposals may include geographical limitations and should, where appropriate, in accordance with the relevant sector-specific Union legislation, include obligations to respect working and employment conditions under applicable Union and national law, International Labour Organization conventions and collective agreements.

Implementation of the STEP

The Commission will, in particular:

- promote the **Sovereignty Seal** in particular to enhance the visibility of projects that have been awarded the Sovereignty Seal and of projects that have received funding under the ERDF, the Cohesion Fund, the ESF+ or the JTF;
- set up and manage the **Sovereignty Portal** (publicly accessible website) as a one-stop-shop on funding opportunities for STEP-related projects.

Use of cohesion policy funds

An important element of STEP are financial incentives for channelling cohesion policy funds towards investments in critical technologies. This will help all Member States to develop their capacities and contribute to a level playing field for investments in critical technologies in the single market. For this purpose, a **100%** co-financing rate and a **30%** pre-financing rate will apply for STEP priorities under the 2021–2027 programming period.

In order to keep a high level of ambition in meeting climate objectives in cohesion policy, while at the same time allowing for flexibility between the Cohesion Fund and the ERDF, the amount of the climate contribution of the Cohesion Fund that exceeds **37%** of its total allocation will be allowed to be taken into account when calculating the climate contribution of the ERDF on the one hand and the amount of the climate contribution of the ERDF that exceeds **30%** of its total allocation should be allowed to be taken into account when calculating the climate contribution of the Cohesion Fund on the other.

At the same time, a **20% cap** will apply to STEP investments from the European Regional Development Fund, to ensure the continued focus of this fund on its original objectives.

Member states will have the possibility to amend programmes – and consequently Partnership Agreements – in 2024 through an expedited procedure, with a view to receiving pre-financing for STEP-related projects as early as this year, in addition to further amendments in 2025 within the timeline of the mid-term review.

Evaluation of the STEP

By 31 December 2025, the Commission should provide the European Parliament and the Council with an interim evaluation report on the implementation of the STEP, for the purpose of informing future decision-making.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 1.3.2024.

Establishing the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform ('STEP')

2023/0199(COD) - 20/06/2023 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to establish the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP) to support European leadership on critical technologies.

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: strengthening the competitiveness of the European economy through the green and digital transformations has been the EU's strategic goal over the last years. Despite its inbuilt resilience, EU industry is being challenged by high inflation, labour shortages, supply chain disruptions, rising interest rates, and spikes in energy costs and input prices. This is paired with strong, and not always fair competition on the fragmented global market. The EU has already put forward several initiatives to support its industry. The EU now needs a more structural answer to the investment needs of its industries. This will support the uptake and scaling up of development and manufacturing of strategic technologies in the EU, in the fields of digital and deep tech, clean tech and biotech. It will help companies seize the opportunities, build resilience and meet the objectives of the green and digital transitions, thereby strengthening European sovereignty.

CONTENT: therefore, the Commission is proposing the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform ('STEP') to support critical and emerging strategic technologies. It lays down the objectives of the Platform, the amount of financial support available under the Platform, and rules for the implementation of the Sovereignty Seal and Sovereignty portal and for reporting on the Platform objectives.

STEP seeks to **reinforce, leverage and steer EU funds** - existing and new - to investments in deep and digital, clean and bio technologies in the EU, and in people who can implement those technologies into the economy.

STEP's aims

The aim of this instrument is to support the uptake and scaling up of the development and manufacturing of critical emerging technologies relevant to the green and digital transitions in the EU and to the strategic sovereignty of the Union. Those are:

- **deep and digital technologies,**

- **clean technologies** and,
- **biotechnologies**.

The technologies will be deemed to be critical where they meet at least one of the following conditions: (a) bring an innovative, cutting-edge element with significant economic potential to the Single Market; (b) contribute to reduce or prevent strategic dependencies of the Union.

STEP will also support investments aimed at reinforcing their value chains, thereby reducing the EU's strategic dependencies, strengthening European sovereignty and economic security, and addressing labour and skills shortages in those strategic sectors. This will allow to enhance the long-term competitiveness of the EU and strengthen its resilience.

This proposal does not create a new instrument but is implemented through existing tools under the EU budget, such as InvestEU, Innovation Fund, Horizon Europe, EU4Health, Digital Europe Programme, European Defence Fund, Recovery and Resilience Facility, and cohesion policy funds, which are amended to be able to better mobilise investment resources into critical technologies.

Financial support

To boost the investment capacity dedicated specifically to promoting STEP objectives, the Commission further proposes to allocate additional **EUR 10 billion** to targeted programmes:

- EUR 3 billion for InvestEU, resulting in EUR 75 billion of investments;
- EUR 0.5 billion to Horizon Europe, complemented with EUR 2.13 billion of redeployment and use of decommitted amounts, resulting in EUR 13 billion of investments;
- EUR 5 billion to the Innovation Fund, resulting in EUR 20 billion of investments given the experience to date under the Innovation Fund;
- EUR 1.5 billion to the European Defence Fund, which could result in up to EUR 2 billion of investments.

Altogether, the total estimated amount of new investments through STEP could reach up to **EUR 160 billion**.

Sovereignty Seal

The proposal creates a 'Sovereignty Seal', which is a new label intended to help project promoters attract public and private investments by certifying its contribution to the STEP objectives. The Sovereignty Seal would be awarded under directly managed programmes, namely Horizon Europe, the Innovation Fund, the Digital Europe programme, the EU4Health programme, and the European Defence Fund. The Seal builds on the existing 'Seal of Excellence', which is a quality label for eligible projects that could not be funded due to lack of budget available.

Sovereignty portal

The Commission will establish a dedicated publicly available website (Sovereignty portal), providing investors with information about funding opportunities for projects linked to the Platform objectives and grant visibility to those projects.

Establishing the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform ('STEP')

2023/0199(COD) - 17/10/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 385 votes to 85, with 151 abstentions, **amendments** to the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform ('STEP') and amending Directive 2003/87/EC, Regulations (EU) 2021/1058, (EU) 2021/1056, (EU) 2021/1057, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) 2021/1060, (EU) 2021/523, (EU) 2021/695, (EU) 2021/697 and (EU) 2021/241.

The issue was referred back to the relevant committee for interinstitutional negotiations.

Objectives of STEP

The regulation should establish a 'Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform' (STEP) to support strategic technologies and their respective supply chains in the sectors concerned, and thus contribute to the implementation of the action programme for the digital decade to 2030.

STEP aims to strengthen various EU programmes and funds and to channel up to EUR 160 billion into new investments, alongside cohesion policy incentives and the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF).

The platform should foster the growth of crucial technological value chains in the **digital economy, net-zero industries, and biotechnologies**, as well as addressing **labour and skill shortages, and foster deep-tech innovation**, which has the potential to deliver transformative solutions, rooted in cutting edge science, technology and engineering, including innovation combining advances in the physical, biological and digital spheres.

When implementing programmes and activities to achieve the objectives under this Regulation, the Commission and Member States should put specific emphasis on supporting **Net-Zero Industry Valleys projects** in territories included in the Territorial just transition plans and in less developed and transition regions, as well as more developed regions in Member States whose average GDP per capita is below the EU average of the EU-27 measured in purchasing power standards (PPS) and calculated on the basis of Union figures for the period 2015-2017.

Financial support

Financial support for the implementation of the Platform should be provided from existing Union programmes, namely InvestEU, Horizon Europe, EU4Health, Digital Europe, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund (JTF), the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), the European Defence Fund, and the Innovation Fund, for projects contributing to the STEP objectives.

Members stated that this should be accompanied by providing **additional Union funding of EUR 13 billion**.

Of this, EUR 5 billion should be used to increase the endowment of the Innovation Fund and **EUR 4.2 billion** to increase the total amount of the EU guarantee available for the EU compartment under the InvestEU Regulation to **EUR 10.5 billion**, taking into account the relevant provisioning rate. **EUR 1.3 billion** should be made available to increase the financial envelope under the Horizon Europe Regulation and **EUR 2.5 billion** to the European Defence Fund.

Sovereignty Seal

The Commission should award a Sovereignty Seal to any project contributing to the achievement of one of the objectives of the platform, provided that this project has been evaluated and meets the minimum quality requirements. The Seal would be valid during the period of implementation of the project, during which the company undertakes **not to relocate the project outside the Union**. It would not be awarded to projects managed by a legal entity established in a third country which is not associated with the Union program concerned.

STEP Committee

The STEP Committee should be composed of Commission experts on the technologies and on the Union programmes and funds from which the Platform is financially supported. The Committee should award and promote the Sovereignty Seal and manage the Sovereignty Portal and assume a coordination role between the different networks and actors concerned to achieve the objectives of the platform.

Sovereignty Portal

The Sovereignty Portal should include a rapid simulator to provide project promoters, especially SMEs, guidance on the Union programme or fund for which their particular project may be eligible. The simulator should not require project promoters to provide confidential business information and its results should not be legally binding on the authorities responsible for the awarding of funding.

Evaluation of the Platform

By 31 December 2025, the Commission should provide the European Parliament and the Council with an interim evaluation report on the implementation of the Platform, on the state of dependencies of the Union, and on the sectors of strategic importance for its sovereignty, for the purpose of informing the decision-making process on the post-2027 multiannual financial framework in a timely manner.

The interim evaluation report should be accompanied by a proposal for amendments of this Regulation or by a **legislative proposal for a fully-fledged European Sovereignty Fund**, with the aim of helping to shape and strengthen a European industrial policy and to reduce strategic dependencies of the Union.

At the end of the implementation of the Union programmes and funds from which the Platform is financially supported, but no later than 31 December 2031, the Commission should provide a final evaluation report.