EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

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ANNEX 2

ANNEX

to the

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

amending implementing decision C(2025)8895 as regards the implementation of certain actions under the Single Market Programme

ANNEX 2

Annex II to Implementing Decision C(2025)8895 is amended as follows:

(1) point 2 is amended as follows:

(a) in point 2.7, 'SME innovation support in connected and automated mobility' subheading 'Type of applicants targeted by the call for proposals' is replaced by the following: 'Public buyers, i.e. entities defined as contracting authority under national public procurement provisions transposing the EU public procurement Directives, including entities acting on behalf of public authorities, such as Smart Ports and Logistics Hubs. If relevant, Business Support Organisations (BSOs), technology institutes, and SMEs.'

In point 2.7, subheading 'Description of the activities to be funded under the call for proposals as well as of the objectives pursued and the expected results' is replaced by the following:

'The proposed action is the launch and implementation of a targeted Call for Proposals supporting public buyers and SMEs and start-ups working on Connected and Automated Mobility (CAM) solutions in high-potential areas, with link to the Automotive Action Plan (AAP) flagship action on testbeds for autonomous driving:

The call will fund projects supporting Public Procurement of Innovation (PPI) of CAM solutions and increasing the market uptake of CAM solutions

Activities will also include technical assistance, impact monitoring, and dissemination of results.

Objectives Pursued

- Accelerate the market readiness of CAM solutions led by European SMEs
- Retain valuable SMEs developing innovative CAM solutions within the EU (some EU players are already moving to test/deploy in US)
- Boost SME innovation and competitiveness in strategic mobility areas
- Support the green and digital transition of European logistics and freight transport
- Enable collaboration between SMEs, infrastructure operators, and municipalities
- Demonstrate scalable, replicable CAM deployments in the EU
- Contribute to the Commission AAP initiative on testbeds for autonomous driving

Expected Results

- Increased market uptake of CAM solutions
- Feasibility demonstration of the business case related to CAM applications in ports/logistics and freight transport
- Acceleration of solutions reaching commercial readiness
- Creation of long-term partnerships between SMEs and public buyers

In point 2.7, subheading 'Additional information' is replaced as follows:

‘Total amount of the action: EUR 5 250 000

Rate of co-financing: up to 90% of eligible costs. If the call includes the “PPI cost category” up to 75% of eligible costs where acquisition costs of innovative solutions shall be maximum 75% of total eligible costs’

Indicative implementation timetable:

- Call for proposals: Q4/2026
- Grant Agreement signature: Q3/2027

Indicative duration of the project(s) to be funded: between 24 and 48 months

Qualitative and quantitative indicators:

Core indicators:

- Number of SMEs participating in PPI activities
- Change in turnover as a result of support/advisory services
- Change in employment as a result of support/advisory services

Ports/Logistics hubs KPIs:

- % reduction in container turnaround time
- CO2 emissions saved per pilot site

Freight transport KPIs:

- CO2 emissions saved per trip
- Cost per kilometre;’

(b) the following point 2.9 is added:

‘2.9 SME Strategic Growth Service for NZIA pilot

Type of applicants targeted by the call for proposals

SMEs and start-ups with technical and commercial potential in one NZIA sector

Description of the activities to be funded under the call for proposals, as well as of the objectives pursued and the expected results

The Net-Zero Industry Act (NZIA) sets a strategic objective: by 2030, at least 40% of the EU's demand for net-zero technologies must be met with domestically manufactured products and components. This pilot will contribute to test before possible scale up of the tool, and will contribute to deliver on the 40% NZIA target.

Building on the value chain mapping of strategic sectors (ongoing in 2026), this action will pilot the sector specific SME Strategic Growth Service. The pilot will target SMEs and start-ups active in one NZIA sector. Discussions are still on-going to identify the most relevant sector for the pilot.

The pilot is designed for companies that are too early, too small or too specialised to benefit directly from large loan-based or production ramp-up instruments, but which remain strategically important for the resilience NZIA value chains. The service targets growth-oriented companies and coordinates complex support around financing, R&D and innovation, export development, and strategic business advice. It is framed as a way to connect businesses with “the right support, at the right time” so they can execute ambitious expansion plans, adopt new technologies, increase production capacity, and enter new markets

The service targets growth-oriented European SMEs that are already generating stable revenues and showing a solid trajectory in terms of market expansion, innovation or internationalisation. Beneficiary firms are expected to demonstrate sufficient organisational capacity and leadership commitment to engage in an intensive, multi-year collaboration with public partners and to mobilise the internal resources required to implement an ambitious growth strategy.

It also responds to a coordination gap. SMEs working on new materials, process routes and recycling technologies are often scattered across different programmes and ecosystems. A structured pilot can improve visibility, reduce fragmentation and create stronger links between innovators, industrial buyers, recyclers, investors and EU strategic initiatives, and serve as a blueprint to be scaled up if successful.

The proposed pilot addresses this gap with a focused and proportionate action. It will first identify, based on the Commission's value chain mapping, scout and then support a limited cohort of high-potential SMEs and startups in the selected NZIA sector. It should be designed following the structure below.

1. Scouting and Mapping

- Identify SMEs and start-ups with strong technical and commercial potential in the selected sector.

2. One-to-one support

2.1 Advisory support

Provide tailored advisory services to selected SMEs and start-ups, including:

- Business development support (strategy, business models, go-to-market and scale-up advisory tailored to selected sector).
- Financial advisory (funding options across EU, national and private instruments; capital structure; investment-readiness for CAPEX-intensive industrial projects).
- Technology validation and IP/patent assessment. Regulatory and sandbox advisory, including guidance on NZIA strategic project procedures, environmental and industrial permitting, and identification of regulatory pathways and barriers in key markets.

2.2 Partnership creation

- Facilitate partnerships between supported SMEs and industrial players across the value chain, as well as strategic cross-sector collaborators if relevant.
- Promote pilot and demonstration projects in collaboration with identified partners, for example by coupling start-ups with corporates, off-takers and industrial clusters, including where relevant in net-zero clusters and existing industrial.

3. Horizontal support – matchmaking and pitching

- Organise thematic matchmaking events focusing on selected sector topics connecting selected SMEs and start-ups with corporates, cluster organisations and investors active in battery and cleantech.

- Prepare and coach SMEs for investor pitching sessions, including refining their value proposition, investment cases and communication to specialised cleantech investors and corporate venture arms.

4. Grants

- Provide tailored catalytic grant support to up to 20 SMEs to co-finance expenditures linked to a clearly defined industrial investment plan (e.g. new or expanded production lines, pilot or demonstration facilities, industrial-scale testing infrastructure).

5. Digital support and monitoring

- Development of a digital platform to track SME progress.
- Maintain a structured database with profiles, support history, and KPIs.
- Provide reporting dashboards to enable monitoring by the Commission or entrusted entity.

Implementation

EISMEA

Additional information

(a) Total amount of the action: EUR 3 500 000 of which EUR 1 300 000 is allocated to this call for proposals

(b) Rate of co-financing: Up to 90% for the grants and (if required) 100% for financial support to third parties

(c) Indicative implementation timetable: Publication of call: Q3-Q4/2026; award Q2-Q3/2027 for a duration of approximately 12 months

(d) Indicators:

Output

- Number of SMEs supported

Results

- Change in SME performance (turnover, employment, exports) attributable to support
- Contribution to EU net-zero technology supply and/or production capacity
- Follow-up financing and market readiness
- Number of SMEs reaching investment readiness
- Number of SMEs securing or applying for additional funding
- Number of partnerships or market/industrial engagements established

Innovation and deployment progress

- Advancement toward pilot, validation, or industrial deployment

Monitoring requirement

- Annual KPI reporting by supported SMEs

(e) Amount of grant per project: a grant of EUR 60 000–80 000 per SME, with the possibility of a limited performance-based top-up for a small number of companies, bringing the maximum total grant per SME up to EUR 100 000.

(2) point 3 is amended as follows:

‘The global budgetary envelope reserved for procurement under the work programme for 2026 is EUR 29 116 076.’;

(a) point 3.2 is deleted.;

(b) point 3.3 is deleted.;

(c) in point 3.8, under the subheading ‘Additional information’, the last sentence is replaced by the following: ‘Budget: EUR 8 199 571’;

(d) the following point 3.9 is added:

‘3.9 “SME Strategic Growth Service for NZIA pilot”

Description

The pilot fills a specific market gap and is designed for growth-oriented SMEs and start-ups that encounter barriers to commercialising their products, scaling up their activities, and integrating into large-scale industrial projects and value chains. It is designed for companies that are too early, too small or too specialised to benefit directly from large loan-based or production ramp-up instruments, but which remain strategically important for the resilience NZIA value chains.

It also responds to a coordination gap. SMEs working on new materials, process routes and recycling technologies are often scattered across different programmes and ecosystems. A structured pilot can improve visibility, reduce fragmentation and create stronger links between innovators, industrial buyers, recyclers, investors and EU strategic initiatives, and serve as a blueprint to be scaled up.

This action is part of action 2.9 and is designed to provide business development and advisory support.

Implementation

EISMEA

Additional information

(a) Total amount of the action: EUR 2 200 000

(b) Indicative implementation timetable: launch of the call Q3-Q4/2026 for a duration of approximately 12 months

(c) Indicators

Output

- Number of SMEs supported

Results

- Change in SME performance (turnover, employment, exports) attributable to support

- Contribution to EU net-zero technology supply and/or production capacity
- Follow-up financing and market readiness
- Number of SMEs reaching investment readiness
- Number of SMEs securing or applying for additional funding
- Number of partnerships or market/industrial engagements established

  Innovation and deployment progress
- Advancement toward pilot, validation, or industrial deployment

  Monitoring requirement
- Annual KPI reporting by supported SMEs

(e) the following point 3.10 is added:

‘3.10 “Value chain mapping to better target dependencies and SMEs in strategic technologies in EU financing instruments”

Description

This action is part of DG GROW’s multiannual value chain mapping project of SMEs and dependencies in strategic EU and international value chains, launched in 2026. The overall objective of the multiannual project is to map SMEs and other companies at different segments of value chains in selected key technologies, combined with an identification of dependencies at each segment. The mapping will feed into and provide evidence for the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF) and other industrial policy initiatives. It is backed politically by the European Council's call in March 2026 to map dependencies in strategic sectors.

The results of this mapping will be integrated into an internal and secure Commission PowerBI dashboard.

This action will be conducted in Q4 2026. It will:

- conduct a mapping of technologies across the four policy windows of the ECF and other DG GROW priorities, in the form of granular value chain datasets containing the following information: classification of strategic technologies into their key components, classification of components into granular HS or CN-8 codes, company lists at the component or product level, manufacturing capacities of firms at the component level, with potential extensions to additional variables per technology (e.g. ownership structures of firms).
- cover up to 25 technologies, chosen in consultation and according to the priorities and needs of sectoral policy units in DG GROW and, to the extent judged useful, in other services of the Commission.
- building an internal and secure Commission Dashboard to represent the mapping results.

This action will be complemented by an Administrative Agreement with the JRC (point 5.4) to ensure the coherence between the firm and the dependency module in the dashboard.

Implementation

DG GROW

Additional information

(a) Total amount of the action: EUR 2 050 000

(b) Indicative timetable: specific contract to be signed under a framework contract: Q4/2026

(c) Indicators:

- Feedback from Policy Units on how the mapping helped design SME-targeted measures
- Feedback from SMEs/case studies indicating improved market access, or participation in industrial projects thanks to (future) ECF support measures informed by the mapping
- Number of supported SMEs through ECF calls in critical value chain segments (depending on the indicators of the future Performance regulation)
- The parallel OECD cooperation by DG GROW on SMEs and SMCs scaling up and value chains will provide statistics on the share of SMEs and SMCs in different value chain segments, which could serve to verify the accuracy of the data identified in the mapping';

(3) Point 4 is amended as follows:

(a) In point 4.3, "Critical Raw Materials-Stockpiling", the heading 'implementing entity' and point c under additional information are replaced as follows

'Implementing entity

The action is implemented by an entity that is able to fulfil the functions and tasks described below, namely to directly or indirectly purchase stockpiles of critical raw materials for the purpose of securing the CRM supply for EU industry. The selection of the entity will be made further to a call for expression of interest in compliance with the principles of equal treatment and non-discrimination';

'Additional information

(c) Indicative implementation timetable:

Q1/2026: launch of the task preparation

Q3/2026: launch of the call with a view to select the appropriate partner (depending on the options chosen)

Q1/2027: implementation of the mechanism';

(b) the following point 4.5 is added

'4.5 "Pilot international intellectual property SME helpdesk (China, India, Latin America and South-East Asia)"

Implementing entity: the action is implemented by the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) via a contribution agreement and a transfer of funds.

Description: This action aims to provide services for the Intellectual Property (IP) SME Helpdesks in China, India, Latin America, and South-East Asia. Through these services, the international IP SME Helpdesks offer first-line advice and support to European SMEs seeking to operate in—or be influenced by—markets outside the EU.

The services include practical business advice from experienced professionals (such as lawyers, business executives, and IP investigators), delivered in person, online, and through workshops, e-learning materials, and training.

The Helpdesks focus on high-growth markets and regions where European SMEs face significant IP challenges that these services can address, or investors in Europe originate.

Services are provided both "On the ground" to European SMEs already operating in these countries, and "At home" to SMEs based in Europe, ensuring that relevant IP information is delivered where it is most useful, efficiently and effectively.

The action is a follow-up of the previous International Intellectual property SME Helpdesk (China, India, Latin America and South-East Asia) implemented since 2010 by grants and/or procurement contracts.

This action, including also its duration and services, requires the approval of the EUIPO's governing bodies and will be implemented by the EUIPO in compliance with its financial rules.

Additional information

(a) This action will be governed by a Contribution Agreement, which will be subject to consultation with the Directorate-General for Budget.

(b) Indicative implementation timetable: Transfer of funds, Q4/2026, indicative duration 24 months, final reporting Q1/2029.

(c) Qualitative and quantitative indicators:

- number of inquiries from EU SMEs answered;
- number and quality of training and awareness events, including virtual events organised together with a number of SMEs and business support organisation participants;
- number of visits and hits on the website and SME user satisfaction of the website;
- number and quality of guides, factsheets, e-learning modules and other publications targeted at SMEs and business support organisations;

The result indicator for the action is:

- SME satisfaction and feedback on quality;

The impact indicators for the action are:

- qualitative case studies that illustrate how IP can help a company internationalise
- improved performance of beneficiaries in relation to targeted issue (including safer intellectual property strategy developed, new geographical market reached, new products or services developed)

To monitor this action and collect impact data, the EUIPO will be regularly asked, in line with the annual work plan, to report on KPIs and gather qualitative information -

such as case studies- demonstrating changes in SME behaviours and economic performance potentially linked to this action.

(4) Point 5 is amended as follows:

(a) In point 5.2 “SME Policy-SME Performance Review (SPR)” under the subheading ‘description’ the following is added:

‘The project will also provide an updated, granular overview and in-depth analysis of Small Mid-Caps, as defined in the 2025 Recommendation. By using the new SMC definition, this research fills a critical gap left by prior studies, which treated mid-caps more broadly. The availability of a sufficient database on EU SMCs is indispensable for the proper deployment of the SMC recommendation. At the moment, there are no official EU-wide statistics on SMCs and this will not change at EU-27 level in the foreseeable future. The action aims to address this gap by investing in the compilation of SMC statistics from all available private and public statistical sources. The main purpose of this project is to build up a database with as granular as possible data that would be used for all aspects relevant to SMC-policy making (evaluations - including the one scheduled for the SMC recommendation in 5 years’ time - and the design of ECF-based support programmes, etc).

Under the subheading ‘additional information’, the budget is replaced by the following: EUR 900 000

Under the heading ‘qualitative and quantitative indicators’, the following is added:

- Building up a database on SMCs

Granularity and coverage of the sectoral mapping and primary data analysis on SMCs.

Contribution to the methodology and data framework for the future review of the SMC definition.’;

(b) Point 5.4 is added as follows:

‘5.4 “Value chain mapping to better target dependencies and SMEs in strategic technologies in EU financing instruments – administrative agreement with the JRC (see point 3.10)”

General description of the agreement envisaged

This action is part of DG GROW’s multiannual value chain mapping project of SMEs and dependencies in strategic EU and international value chains, launched in 2026. The overall objective of the multiannual project is to map SMEs and other companies at different segments of value chains in selected key technologies, combined with an identification of dependencies at each segment. The mapping will feed into and provide evidence for the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF) and other industrial policy initiatives. Its main output will be a Commission PowerBI dashboard.

The action will consist of an Administrative Agreement with the JRC to support the Procurement action “SME Policy - Value chain mapping to better target dependencies and SMEs in strategic technologies in EU financing instruments” under point 3.10.

Under this Administrative Agreement, the JRC will contribute to the mapping by providing support in the analysis of firm data. It will notably ensure the coherence between the firm and the dependency module in the dashboard.

<u>Implementation</u>

DG GROW

Additional information

(a) Total amount of the action: EUR 300 000

(b) Indicative implementation timetable: launch of the action Q3/2026

(c) Qualitative and quantitative indicators:

- Feedback from Policy Units on how the mapping helped design SME-targeted measures
- Feedback from SMEs/case studies indicating improved market access, or participation in industrial projects thanks to (future) ECF support measures informed by the mapping
- Number of supported SMEs through ECF calls in critical value chain segments (depending on the indicators of the future Performance regulation)
- The parallel OECD cooperation by DG GROW on SMEs and SMCs scaling up and value chains will provide statistics on the share of SMEs and SMCs in different value chain segments, which could serve to verify the accuracy of the data identified in the mapping';

(5) in point 6.2, the table is replaced by the following: '

Action	**Title**	**Budget**	**Sub-total**
Grants			
2.1	Enterprise Europe Network	42 000 000	
2.2	Joint Cluster Initiatives	12 000 000	
2.3	Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs	12 000 000	
2.4	EU Japan centre for industrial cooperation	7 000 000	
2.5	Promoting trans-European tourism products in third countries	2 000 000	
2.6	Creation of EU biohubs for strategic collaboration and SME scale-up support	3 000 000	
2.7	SME innovation support in connected and automated mobility (CAM)	5 250 000	
2.8	Sustainable growth and building resilience in tourism	4 000 000	
2.9	SME Strategic Growth Service for NZIA Pilot	1 300 000	**88 550 000**
Procurement			
3.1	Enterprise Europe Network – animation activities	3 150 000	

3.2	CANCELLED Developing blueprints of efficient channels and methods to facilitate access of entrepreneurs at risk of insolvency to early warning mentors	0	
3.3	CANCELLED International intellectual property SME helpdesks	0	
3.4	Digital Product Passport DPP IT tool	9 100 000	
3.5	European Construction Sector Observatory	1 116 505	
3.6	European Capital and European Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism-awards	2 500 000	
3.7	Better Regulation: Engaging SMEs and Stakeholders on policy design and implementation/strengthening of the Better Regulation Agenda	800 000	
3.8	Supporting actions	8 199 571	
3.9	SME Strategic Growth Service for NZIA (pilot) advisory support (see 2.9)	2 200 000	
3.10	Value chain mapping: target dependencies and SMEs in strategic technologies	2 050 000	**29 116 076**

Indirect management

4.1	European Wind Academy	3 000 000	
4.2	EIB investment survey (ecosystems and supply chains)	200 000	
4.3	Scaling up and beyond - better evidence for startup scaleup policies	800 000	
4.4	Critical Raw Materials – stockpiling	14 000 000	
4.5	International intellectual property SME helpdesks	0	**18 000 000**

Other actions

5.1	Supporting the EU Tourism Dashboard – JRC	1 000 000	
5.2	SME Policy - SME Performance Review (SPR) – JRC	900 000	
5.3	Remunerated experts; reimbursement of experts	530 000	
5.4	SME value chain mapping (see 3.10) JRC	300 000	**2 730 000**
	TOTAL	**138 396 076**	

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