



Brussels, 17.9.2025
C(2025) 6215 final

ANNEX 2

ANNEX

to the

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

**amending implementing decision C(2024)8194 as regards the implementation of certain
actions under the Single Market Programme**

ANNEX 2

Annex II to Implementing Decision C(2024)8194 is amended as follows:

(1) point 3 is amended as follows:

(a) the introductory sentence is replaced by the following:

‘The global budgetary envelope reserved for procurement under the work programme for 2025 is EUR 34 320 741.’;

(b) point 3.4 is amended as follows:

(a) the subheading ‘General description of the contracts envisaged’ is replaced by the subheading ‘Description’;

(b) the text under the subheading ‘General description of the contracts envisaged’ is replaced by the following:

‘In order to implement the *Roadmap for Women’s Rights and the Union of Skills (the STEM Education Strategic Plan)* and thus advance women’s entrepreneurship, support girls and women to better exploit their interests, motivations and choices, and achieve their full potential, the European Commission has put in place awareness-raising initiatives coupled with training, mentoring, and coaching. One of these is the ESTEAM Festivals¹, a project that started in 2022 with a series of workshops and online communities that aim at empowering girls and women, enhancing their digital and entrepreneurial competences, and increasing the attractiveness of studying and taking up careers in entrepreneurship, science and technology. So far, more than 4500 girls and women from 12 countries have participated in the festivals, benefitting from the support of local partners – NGOs, schools, universities – that have an active role in supporting the empowerment of girls and women at local and regional level: [ESTEAM Fests and Communities for girls and women \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu/esteam)

Given the success and the know-how obtained in the initial ESTEAM Festivals project (ending in December 2025), the envisaged project intends to continue and further scale-up the festivals for another 2 years, with a possibility of a 2-year extension. In order to multiply the impact of the original project, this continuation can double the number of girls and women participating in the action from 4500 to 9000, which justifies a doubling of the budget from EUR 600 000 to EUR 1 200 000. This is of particular importance because this project is one of the few actions in the SME pillar that reaches a significant gender target.’;

(c) points a) and b) under the subheading ‘Additional information’ are replaced by the following:

(a) Total amount of the action: EUR 1 200 000

(b) Indicative implementation timetable (launch of the call): Q3/2025’;

(c) point 3.7 is deleted.;

(d) point 3.8 is deleted.;

(e) in point 3.13, under the subheading ‘Additional information’, the last sentence is replaced by the following:

‘Budget: EUR 7 027 025’;

¹ ESTEAM stands for the areas of Entrepreneurship, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics.

(f) the following point 3.14 is added:

‘3.14 “Business Intelligence services”

Description

In recent years, the global economic landscape has undergone a profound transformation, heralding a new era of unprecedented challenges and threats. Supply-chain disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the “weaponisation” of Europe’s dependency on Russian gas deliveries in the course of the Russian invasion of Ukraine have forced a reassessment of international sourcing, emphasizing the need for resilience and diversification. This is further complicated by rising trade tensions with key partners like the US and China. The era of unfettered globalization is shifting toward a more fragmented world, impacting the security and stability of European businesses. The situation is particularly challenging for SMEs which have less resources to monitor relevant developments and tend to have less possibilities to diversify imports and exports.

At the same time, the rapid emergence of disruptive technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), is revolutionising the global economy, presenting both opportunities and challenges for European enterprises. To remain competitive and thrive in this new landscape, it is essential that we harness the potential of these technological advancements, while also mitigating the risks and ensuring that European businesses are equipped to adapt and evolve in response to the changing circumstances.

The Commission is committed to supporting enterprises, and SMEs in particular, in navigating these challenges and seizing the opportunities presented by this new era. A key ingredient for this endeavour to be successful is information. Against this backdrop, the [Commissioners’ Project Group on Economic Security](#) tasked the Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) to set up a new entity centralising the gathering, analysis and dissemination of ‘Business Intelligence’ (BI) for the whole Commission. The new BI entity shall be assisted by an external contractor, helping with the gathering of ‘intelligence’.

Type of ‘intelligence’ to be collected:

Timely information on and assessment of specific risks, threats and opportunities (RTOs) for EU businesses. RTOs typically addressed include events disrupting global value chains (e.g., Red Sea crisis, rare earths export controls, etc.), firm-specific or geography specific events (e.g., blackouts, plant closures), M&A activities, foreign direct investment (FDI), changes to non-EU legislation and policies with a potential impact on EU firms, intellectual property rights violations, cybersecurity, technological developments with the potential to disrupt existing markets or create new business opportunities for EU companies, etc. (indicative, non-exhaustive list).

Sectoral scope of ‘intelligence’ to be collected:

Information/assessments regarding RTOs should be collected primarily for economic sectors and technologies which are key to achieving the transformational imperatives as outlined in the ‘Competitiveness Compass’, such as AI, quantum, biotech, etc. (essential for closing the innovation gap), energy-intensive sectors, chemicals, the automotive industry, net zero technologies, hydrogen, etc. (central in decarbonisation), as well as critical raw materials, pharmaceuticals, defence, etc. (where excessive dependencies need to be reduced). Furthermore, the coverage can include highly tradeable services (financial, telecom, digital,

transport) and critical services of general economic interest, as well as other sectors, such as textiles, food and retail, and technologies, such as aerospace and nanotechnologies. The list is not exhaustive and will evolve with the concerns related to the EU's economic security.

Sources from which to retrieve 'intelligence':

Media sources as well as specialised press, available firm-level information (such as financial documents, earnings calls), online information, industry reports and academic research, etc. (indicative, non-exhaustive list). Furthermore, the following elements should be leveraged:

- a network of renowned senior experts with an industry, economic and/or financial expertise in the various sectors and technologies covered by the call;
- ad hoc / pulse surveys of companies operating in specific fields, in particular when other sources deliver no satisfactory results;
- databases providing timely information on developments in the various sectors/technologies covered by the contract.

Practical working arrangements:

The contractor will gather and share 'intelligence' as follows:

- on an ad hoc basis, in response to specific requests from the Commission, with answers provided in relatively short time (indicatively, 2-3 days to 2-3 weeks);
- regularly, based on a permanent monitoring system.

Expected results / deliverables:

Depending on the context, the 'intelligence' will be transmitted in the form of:

- alerts for the immediate notification of key developments or issues;
- briefs, providing the relevant information together with the essential context and immediate implications;
- concise reports, offering more comprehensive background information and a more detailed analysis of the potential impacts.

Implementation

DG GROW

Additional information

- (a) Total amount of the action: EUR 1 800 000
- (b) An open call for tenders is planned for the procurement of business intelligence services for up to EUR 1 550 000
- (c) Indicative implementation timetable:
Q3/2025 – launch of the call
Q1/ 2026 – start of the contract

- (d) Duration: 24 months. A follow up service contract may be considered, to be confirmed after the first 12 months.
- (e) Databases will also be procured for up to EUR 250 000 over the duration of the contract.’;

(2) point 4 is amended as follows:

(a) point 4.6 is amended as follows:

(a) the text under the subheading ‘Description’ is replaced by the following:

‘The action will support the OECD in the preparation of the next edition of the Tourism Trends and Policies report and in particular result in:

- increasing the knowledge base, in order to enrich the public policy debate on tourism;
- bringing forward-looking analysis and provide new ideas to support the development of better public policies for tourism
- monitoring the consequences of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, possibly including an OECD tourism dashboard
- benchmarking the EU transition to sustainable and resilient tourism against its main competitors, thanks to the development of sustainability indicators.

The activities will therefore consist of:

- formulating clear research questions;
- developing sound and specific methodological approaches;
- securing the participation of relevant stakeholders and experts (Member States’ tourism administrations, central statistical offices, and other governmental agencies active in tourism; industry federations at international and national levels; researchers and experts);
- analysing submissions and the result of desk research;
- drafting concrete and transposable policy recommendations, to be presented in the ‘OECD Tourism Trends and Policies’ biennale publication as well as ad hoc reports;
- the preparation of an in-depth policy report and case studies analysing the benefits of tourism for the local communities and the region, the drivers, the challenges and the contextual factors, and providing recommendations to national authorities, tourist destinations and the EU on supporting the positive impacts of tourism;
- organising in-person workshops with tourist destinations and other relevant stakeholders;
- supporting tourist? destinations in their dialogue with local communities and social partners, including communicating the positive impacts of tourism;
- advertising and disseminating research results and recommendations.’;

(b) ‘Implementation’ subheading is deleted.;

(c) ‘Additional information’ subheading is replaced by the following:

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- (a) Total amount of the action: EUR 500 000
- (b) Indicative duration: 24 months
- (c) Indicative implementation timetable:
- (d) Launch in Q3 2025
- (e) Signature of the contribution agreement in October 2025
- (f) Qualitative and quantitative indicators:
 - Timely delivery of quality reports
 - Sound and transparent methodological approach for data collection
 - Concrete and applicable recommendations for a more resilient, sustainable and digital tourism ecosystem
 - Awareness and use by (EU) stakeholders of the OECD tourism publications’;

(b) the following point 4.7 is added:

‘4.7. “SME Fund - Intellectual property voucher to support SMEs, notably start-ups and scale-ups”

Implementing entity

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

Description

The action aims at improving the capacity of Union-based and Ukraine-based SMEs, as well as Union-based producer groups² of craft and industrial geographical indications, to leverage intellectual property as part of their business growth plans, to promote innovation in the Union and Ukraine. The action will do this by providing financial support for these entities, in particular start-ups and scale-ups, through reimbursing some of their intellectual property-related costs. The financial support will enable that these entities will be able to protect and enforce their intellectual property (IP) better and attract more investment and in general have better access to finance provided also by banks and other financial institutions. The financial support will also help these entities in their green and digital transition. The action is also included in the new [Single Market Strategy](#).

EU SMEs are the backbone of the Union economy and the driving force for innovation and research. Improving access to and use of the Single Market’s IP system significantly increases the ability of SMEs to access finance and investment, and to scale up. IP protection is also crucial to enhance the value of intangible assets.

² Producer group as referred to in Article 4, point 3, of Regulation (EU) 2023/2411 on the protection of geographical indications for craft and industrial products means any association, irrespective of its legal form, mainly composed of producers working with the same product

The action will help SMEs and producer groups to continue deploying their IP strategies to maintain and reinforce their competitiveness by providing them with financial support towards costs related to the protection of their IP. It is an action which is a continuation of the current SME Fund, and which is now extended to the end of 2027.

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.

The applications for vouchers/grants must be submitted before the end of 2027, but the costs can occur from the moment an entity is awarded a grant under this action. The general time-limit for submission of invoices or proofs of costs can take place until the deadline set out in the relevant calls for proposals, foreseen at the end of 2028.

Until 2025, more than 72 000 SMEs benefitted from the 2022-2024 SME Fund, from all Member States and Ukraine. The results of the SME Fund up to now reinforce the case for additional SMP/SME pillar resources to tackle key challenges that EU and Ukraine-based SMEs, as well as Union-based producer groups of craft and industrial geographical indications are facing for managing their IP portfolio. This will also reinforce their innovation and growth potential in the medium-term and help them scale up, as well as their green and digital transition.

To help these entities better manage their intellectual assets, the Commission and the EUIPO will provide financial support to reimburse costs related to IP advice, IP services and the fees to protect and/or enforce IP rights in the Union or in the Member States and in international markets. The assistance will be in the form of a reimbursement (this may be in the form of lump sums) of up to EUR 7 000 per applicant, to be requested in 2026 and 2027. The following expenses are envisaged:

- Co-financing the costs of IP Scan services (also known as IP pre-diagnostic) or the costs of an initial assistance given to SMEs and producer groups for craft and industrial geographical indications for planning the use of their intangible assets, including all types of IP rights (trademarks, geographical indications for craft and industrial products, designs, patents, plant varieties, etc.). The percentage, the conditions and scope of co-financing shall be fixed in the contribution agreement.
- Co-financing of the costs of certain IP services in particular in relation to the registration, management and enforcement of IP, charged by IP attorneys, lawyers, consultants, business advisors or European, national or regional IP offices also including prior art search as well as the legal costs charged for the preparation of the product specification of geographical indications for craft and industrial products. This percentage, the conditions and the scope of co-financing shall be fixed in the contribution agreement.
- Co-financing of the fees charged by IP offices in relation to obtaining any IP rights protection in the Union or any of the Member States, also including European and unitary patents managed by the European Patent Office (application/registration fees of any IP right, also including plant variety rights and geographical indications for craft and industrial products). This percentage, the conditions and the scope of co-financing shall be fixed in the contribution agreement.
- Co-financing of the fees charged in relation to obtaining IP right protection using an international registration system administered by the WIPO or directly to non-EU IP offices (application/registration fees for any IP right). This percentage, the conditions and the scope of co-financing shall be fixed in the contribution agreement.

- Co-financing of fees charged for the valuation of intellectual assets, possibly from 2027. This percentage, the conditions and the scope of co-financing shall be fixed in the contribution agreement.

The EUIPO will apply the criteria agreed in advance with the Commission services, based on economic and non-discriminatory conditions. This action will target SMEs and producer groups seeking to register and exploit their intangible assets to scale up, make their businesses more green and more digital, or to help reduce the negative impact of the Russian military aggression in Ukraine.

This action will be complementary to the support provided by national and Benelux IP offices or by partners who cooperate with them. In providing support to SMEs and producer groups, the EUIPO will cooperate with IP offices and will work together with various SME intermediaries, including the Enterprise Europe Network, clusters and/or incubators. The EUIPO will also cooperate with other IP support providers such as EU IP Helpdesks and, if possible, with patent information centres and the EUIPO Observatory.

The EUIPO's contribution is up to EUR 15 000 000 in 2026, which will be provided from its legacy surplus outside its operational budget. The EUIPO will define its contribution for 2027, if any, in 2026. The Commission's contribution is EUR 5 000 000 covering 2026 and 2027. Contributions by the Commission and the EUIPO unused in the previous years may also be used in 2026 and 2027.

The Union contribution will finance exclusively patent and plant variety related costs. The EU contribution may also finance costs related to geographical indications for craft and industrial products and IP valuation.

Additional information

- (a) Total amount of the action: EUR 5 000 000
- (b) Indicative implementation timetable:
 - Signature of the Contribution Agreement with EUIPO: Q4/2025
 - Transfer of funds: Q4/2025
 - Evaluation of impact: as of 2027
 - End of action: 2028
 - Final reporting: 2029
- (c) Qualitative and quantitative indicators:
 - Number of requests/SMEs, producer groups funded
 - SME/producer group demographics (size, country, industrial sector)
 - Number of IP rights, fees and services by types and geographical scope applied by SMEs and producer groups
 - Change of IP protection/management practices by SMEs and producer groups (self-reported)
 - Satisfaction of SMEs and producer groups, and, if possible, of other stakeholders, with the action.';

(3) in point 6.2, the table is replaced by the following: ‘

Action	Title	Budget	Sub-total
Grants			
2.1	Enterprise Europe Network	53 500 000	
2.2	Joint Cluster Initiatives	11 000 000	
2.3	Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs	5 000 000	
2.4	Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs (new call 2025 – 2027)	12 000 000	
2.5	Supporting sustainable competitiveness of tourism SMEs	6 900 000	
2.6	Promoting trans-European tourism products in third countries	2 000 000	
			90 400 000
Procurement			
3.1	SME policy - SME Performance Review	550 000	
3.2	SME Policy - Outreach (SME Assembly/SME Week/SME Envoys, IT tools)	3 164 104	
3.3	SME Policy - Late Payment Directive (Continuation of the Observatory)	600 000	
3.4	ESTEAM Festivals: Enhancing Digital and Entrepreneurial Competences in Girls and Women	1 200 000	
3.5	Enterprise Europe Network – animation activities	3 572 612	
3.6	European Cluster Collaboration Platform	6 000 000	
3.7	CANCELLED EU Industry Days 2026	0	
3.8	CANCELLED Monitoring the performance of EU industry and industrial ecosystems	0	
3.9	Transition Pathways Stakeholders Support Platform	4 000 000	
3.10	Production and distribution of the “Business Planet” magazine 2025	700 000	
3.11	Fit for Future: Engaging SMEs and Stakeholders on policy design and implementation/strengthening of the Better Regulation Agenda	807 000	
3.12	Digital Product Passport IT tool	4 900 000	
3.13	Supporting actions	7 027 025	
3.14	Business intelligence	1 800 000	
			34 320 741
Indirect management			
4.1	European Wind Academy	5 000 000	

4.2	European Hydrogen Academy	5 000 000	
4.3	European Union Chemicals Legislation Finder (EUCLEF)	1 123 400	
4.4	European Union Observatory for Nanomaterials (EUON)	624 000	
4.5	Retail SMEs and the twin transition	1.000 000	
4.6	Improving socio-economic knowledge of the EU tourism ecosystem	500 000	
4.7	SME Fund: Intellectual property vouchers to support SMEs notably start-ups and scale-ups	5 000 000	
			18 247 400
Other actions			
5.1	Remunerated experts; reimbursement of experts	700 000	
		TOTAL EUR 143 668 141	

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