

First workshop on dual-use components underlined the importance of cooperation between defence, space and civil research.



More than 70 representatives from Member States, industry and EU institutions gathered on 28 June 2016 for the workshop “Opportunities for Dual-Use Technologies – Components” organized by the European Defence Agency, the European Commission and the ECSEL JU.

The aim of the event was to find areas of cooperation and to pave the way for possibilities for dual-use research in the future.

Khalil Rouhana, Director in the European Commission, opened the workshop by presenting snapshots of the Commission’s ambitions in the electronic field. Through dual-use research, we can make sure we have technology autonomy in Europe and industrial autonomy for the future.

Denis Roger, EDA Director, underlined that the workshop will strive to have a better understanding of activities which can be jointly explored, believing that “better exploitation of dual-use synergies can bring a win-win situation for all stakeholders”. He addressed the issue of the fading borderline between civil and defence and stressed that “more cooperative investment and clear prioritization in resource allocation is a must for defence”.

Bert de Colvenaer, Executive Director ECSEL-JU, presented the joint undertaking’s role in investing in knowledge and innovation through its PPP-model.

The projects presented during the workshop showed success stories of electronic components research from each of the three institutions. The main technological areas addressed were thermal management and robustness, RF components, III-V technologies and advanced digital components.

Key takeaways from the discussions in the three sessions of the workshop were: the importance of developing value chains, ensuring supply, quality, appropriate business approaches, volume considerations, EU funding and support towards industry.

In the panel “dual-use, dual-benefits”, representatives from the UK MoD, STM, DG GROW and ESA outlined the dual-use spin-off benefits, spin-in technologies, unique European assets and the role of innovative SMEs.

The most important conclusion of the event was that exploiting synergies are highly necessary. Panagiotis Kikiras, Head of R&T Unit EDA, highlighted the perfect timing of this discussion in the context of the upcoming EU Global Strategy and European Defence Action Plan.

Recognizing the effort of the EC, EDA, and ECSEL communities as well as the need to further raise awareness on the subject, Willy Van Puymbroeck, EC, concluded that: “We need to seed in order to harvest but we have to dare to harvest the work that is being done.”