



MFF mid-term review

Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP)

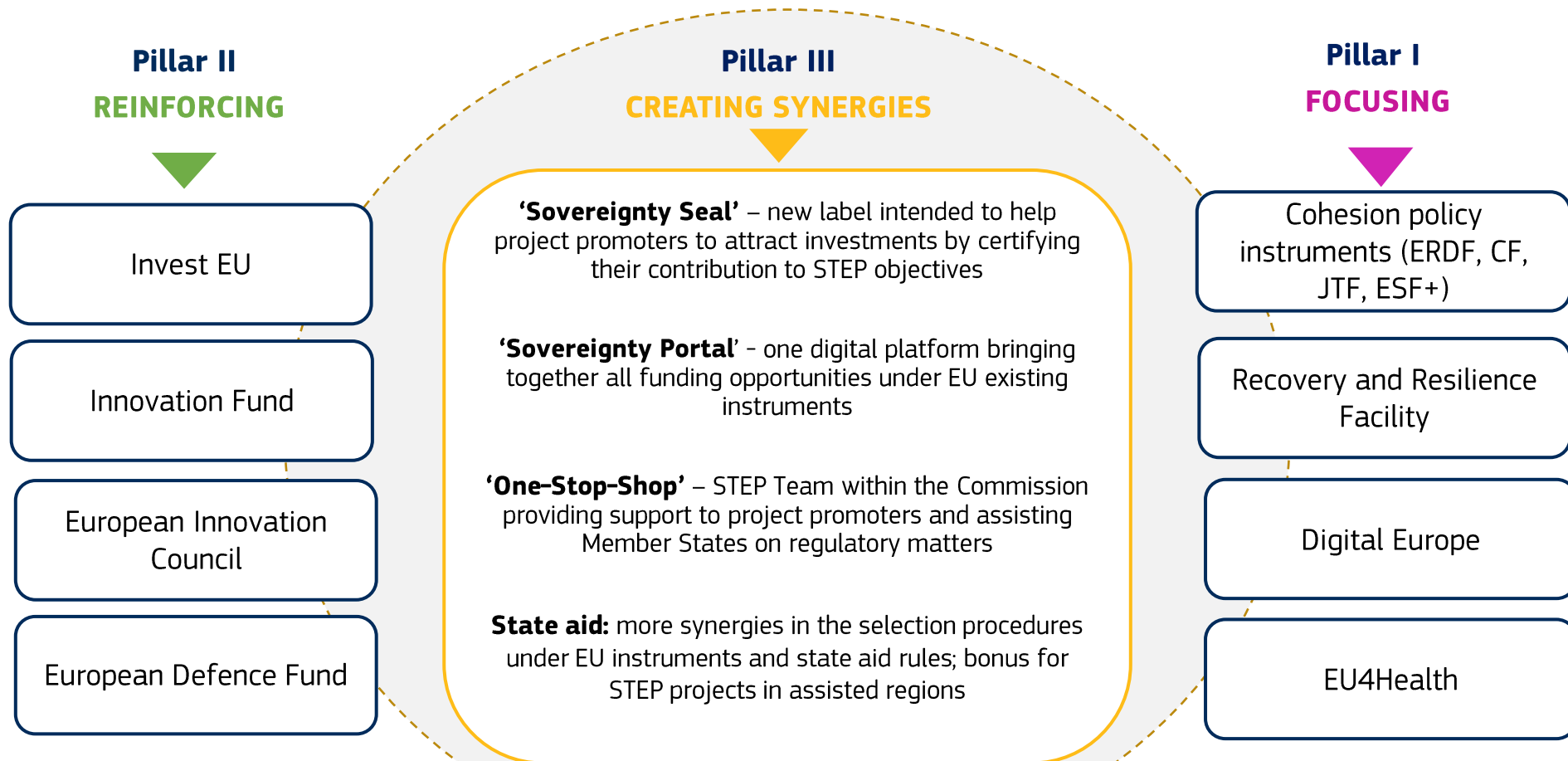


STEP introduction

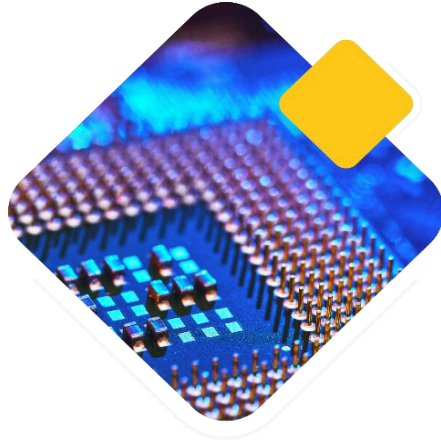
European Council conclusions of 23 March 2023 - *'ensure full mobilisation of available funding and existing financial instruments and deploy them in a more flexible manner, so as to provide timely and targeted support in strategic sectors without affecting the cohesion policy objectives'*

- **As a result, the STEP Platform is structured along three components:**
 - **Pillar 1:** Focusing and making a better use of existing instruments
 - **Pillar 2:** Reinforcing in a targeted manner the firepower of instruments best suited to address the challenges affecting the EU industry
 - **Pillar 3:** Creating synergies among existing instruments to optimise their impact
- **The benefits of using existing instruments under the EU budget:**
 - **Setting up a new fund takes time**
 - **Increasing possibilities of blending different sources of financing**
 - **Limiting risk of additional burden:** limiting administrative burden for project promoters and programme managers and minimising risk of overlaps amongst instruments

Policy priority: Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP)



STEP investment areas



Deep and digital technologies

Examples:

- *Microelectronics*
- *Quantum, cloud and edge computing*
- *AI*
- *Cybersecurity*
- *Robotics*
- *5G and advanced connectivity*



Clean technologies

Examples:

- *Renewable energy*
- *Sustainable alternative fuels*
- *Water purification and desalination*
- *Advanced materials*
- *Sustainable extraction of critical raw materials*



Bio technologies

Examples:

- *Biomolecules*
- *Pharmaceuticals*
- *Medical technologies*
- *Crop biotechnology*
- *Industrial biotechnology*

STEP Pillar 1: focusing priorities

Cohesion policy funds: ERDF, CF, JTF, ESF+ (Articles 10-13)

○ **New priorities**

- New specific objective under the ERDF/CF, under Policy Objective 1 (more competitive and smarter Europe) and Policy Objective 2 (green). New specific objective under JTF. For ESF+, a new priority will be created within the existing specific objectives.
- All decisions on reprogramming remain in the hands of national authorities.

○ **Opening the ERDF/CF for large companies**

- In all transition and less developed regions
- In developed regions of those Member States whose GDP/capita is below EU average – to preserve the level playing field in the Single Market

○ **Financial incentives in the ERDF/CF, JTF, and ESF+ for STEP priorities to incentivise uptake**

- 30% pre-financing in 2024 and increased EU co-financing to 100%

Common Provisions Regulation 2014-2020 and FEAD (Articles 14-15)

○ **Technical adjustment to better implement STEP**

- Extending the deadlines by 1 year for the submission of the closure documentation for 2014-2020 programmes to facilitate the revision of the programmes for STEP.

STEP Pillar 3: creating synergies



- **Sovereignty Seal (Article 4)**

- Awarded under directly managed programs (Horizon Europe, Innovation Fund, Digital Europe, EU4Health and European Defence Fund) to STEP projects.
- Aimed at enabling easier funding under other EU programmes, and helping projects attract public and private investments by certifying its contribution to the European sovereignty and therefore facilitating cumulative or combined funding from several Union instruments.



- **Sovereignty Portal (Article 6)**

- Centralising information about all EU funding opportunities for STEP projects (direct, shared or indirectly managed programmes), and giving visibility to projects awarded a Sovereignty Seal.



- **One-Stop-Shop within the Commission**

- New team within the Commission: providing advise to project promoters better seeking access to EU funding, assisting Member States and implementing partners on regulatory matters, and coordinating all instruments implementing STEP.

STEP Pillar 3: creating synergies

Sovereignty Seal (Article 4)



Thank you