

31st IAA SYMPOSIUM ON SPACE POLICY, REGULATIONS AND ECONOMICS (E3)
Space economy – Stimulating measureable economic activities through space policies and budgets (3)

Author: Dr. Rosario Pavone
SME4SPACE, Belgium

Mr. Augusto Cramarossa
Italian Space Agency (ASI), Italy
Ms. Ilaria D'Auria
NEREUS, Belgium
Ms. Rosa Maria Lucia Parrella
Agenzia Spaziale Italiana (ASI), Italy
Dr. Silvia Ciccarelli
Italian Space Agency (ASI), Italy

THE EUROPEAN R&D PROGRAMME HORIZON 2020: A MULTILEVEL FINANCIAL APPROACH
FOR A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SPACE TECHNOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS.

Abstract

The paper intends to define a possible harmonisation among funding policies existing at different geographical levels, i.e. EU, national and regional (through the Structural Funds). In particular it describes the great investment effort that European Commission (EC) is pursuing within space RD activities thanks to the so-called Horizon 2020 Framework Programme (H2020). Within this Programme yearly several Industries, SMEs, Universities and Research Centres present a quite impressive number of proposals. Among these only a very limited number is financed, while a large part, even though interesting and positively evaluated, remains unfunded. The paper provides an overview of presented proposals, with a focus on those positively evaluated but not financed, in order to understand the great effort that Industry, including SMEs, Universities or Research Centres bear for applying to H2020.

In order to overcome this issue, the paper proposes a set of possible mechanisms for financing RD proposals presented within H2020 that have not been financed by the EC due to lack of funding, even though positively evaluated. The proposed mechanisms adopt the Virtual Common Pot system that is already in use within EC programmes (e.g. in ERA-NET). With the Virtual Common Pot system each participating funding organisation funds its own successful participants. Funding is not available from one funding organisation for participants from other funding organisations, thus there is no cross border funding involved.

Furthermore the paper discusses the different possible mechanisms of financing, enlightening the positive and the negative aspects and suggesting which could be the more promising one(s). Finally the paper reports the survey carried out towards EC, National Agencies/Bodies and NEREUS (Network of European Regions Using Space Technologies) Members in order to investigate the viability of the suggested mechanisms and the willingness of the latter to eventually finance the proposals not financed by the EC.

The application of the suggested mechanisms would enhance the efficiency of the EC evaluation process and would increment the number of valuable proposals financed. Moreover the survey on the spacefaring regions and Nations would increase in any case the awareness and the success of a potential implementation of the Virtual Common Pot system, while the survey towards the EC could spark the development of an appropriate regulation.