

**Question for written answer E-004769/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: EUROfusion – funding cuts and consequences for Croatian and European science, research and economy

Over the past five years, the Ruđer Bošković Institute (RBI), with the help of EUROfusion and the IAEA, has built a DiFU chamber for the dual-beam irradiation of fusion materials – one of only four in the EU. Seven doctoral students and dozens of scientists and technical staff were engaged in fusion research in Croatia. At least three Croatian companies are participating in the construction of ITER, and their involvement and number are expected to grow in the next decade. Many universities have entered into cooperation agreements with the RBI on the project, which is now under threat.

The most damaging aspect is the technological lag that this will engender, which is a much bigger loss than the profits of companies or jobs.

Companies and institutes will have to find other projects, and researchers will reorient to other jobs, losing valuable know-how. When the funds are returned to EUROfusion after several years, many things will have to start from scratch because the interruption was too long, causing yet more damage.

For all these reasons, this cut in funding for EUROfusion is a severe blow to science and industry and a brake on the technological development of Croatia and Europe. Such measures will significantly delay the use of fusion energy and lead to Europe lagging behind on the global stage.

Why can EUROfusion not be considered a strategic project and allowed to keep all the necessary financial resources?