The Commission supports the participation of Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in aid measures, in particular in the field of Research and development (R&D). In its decision of 9 December 2021\(^1\), approving the scheme\(^2\) for supporting the Strategic Project for the Economic Recovery and Transformation on electric and connected vehicles,\(^3\) the Commission welcomes the inclusion of certain safeguards; at least 40% of the participants must be SMEs, and at least 30% of the aid must be awarded to SMEs. In addition, SMEs benefit from higher aid intensities. The required ex-post evaluation reports will allow assessing the scheme’s actual effects on SMEs.

The scheme provides RDI and environmental protection aid for producing electric vehicles and the relevant components and spare parts, as opposed to their distribution and sale. The Commission notes that it is for the Member States to decide on the scope of their schemes. That said, the Commission understands that many of the component and spare part manufacturers that are eligible for aid under the scheme are SMEs.

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3. Commission decision of 9 December 2021 in case State Aid SA.64685 (2021/N) – Spain RRF - Integrated aid measures to support the electric and connected vehicle value chain (ECV PERTE).