

**Question for written answer E-003771/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Protecting the technology transfer rights of European SMEs undertaking EU-funded innovation projects abroad

The stalemate of technology transfer in the case of the SPACETECH4SEA project, a joint venture by OCEAN FINANCE PC (a European SME) and CIMARRON LLC (a previously US-owned company, currently Korean-owned), which developed and certified an aerospace technology for maritime applications, funded by EU funds through the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA), is a worrying sign of unreleased technological potential made in Europe.

Despite the technology's development and certification and the commitments outlined in the Grant Agreement between the contracting parties and CINEA on behalf of the Commission, the technology transfer has yet to come to fruition. This undermines future investments and innovation that can spearhead sustainable transformations within the maritime industry in EU Member States and especially Greece, the country of origin of the project.

In the light of the above:

1. What tools does the Commission employ to ensure that taxpayers' money used for such projects is well spent and guaranteed against misconduct by third parties?
2. How does it tackle the consequences of the administrative backlog in projects where non-EU third parties do not assume their contracted responsibilities?
3. How will it pursue the contracted technology transfer to the EU, which was engineered abroad partially by European entrepreneurs and funded by EU funds, to avoid an eventual disparity in size between the EU and non-EU companies involved?

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