



STEP: a testing ground for EU funding for strategic technologies

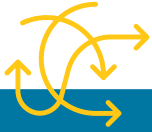


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STEP The pitch



The needs and challenges

- **Competitiveness** and **resilience** of EU industry at risk
- **Global race** for critical technologies
- **Investment needs** for transition
- Outward forces in the **Single Market**
- **Private capital** not at scale
- Constraints on **EU budget**
- Fragmented/complex **offer of EU funding**
- Need for a **European response**



An innovation in EU funding (under current MFF)

- **Not a new fund**
- **A collective journey** – STEP across 11 EU programmes (14 DGs involved, 27 MS + implementing partners)
- **Efficient:** use of existing networks/ processes
- **Articulation** direct/indirect/shared managed funds
- **Taskforce**
- **User-centric**



A testing ground for the future MFF

- **New Commission in 2024**
- **New MFF proposals by mid-2025**
- **Success & experience of STEP to feed into ambition**
- **EU value-added in the investment journey**



***STEP Regulation**
adopted on 1 March*



European
Commission

STEP The scope



NZIA

CRMA

STEP Sectors

Digital and deep innovation tech

Clean and resource efficient tech

Bio tech

STEP Objectives

Supporting the **development or manufacturing** of critical technologies or safeguarding and strengthening their respective **value chains***

Addressing shortages of **labour and skills**

STEP Conditions

Bring an **innovative**, cutting-edge element with significant economic potential to the Single Market

OR

Contribute to **reduce or prevent strategic dependencies** of the Union

Strategic project under **NZIA & CRMA**

Tech covered by an **IPCEI**

Support production **within the EU**

Third country participation in prog. ?

(indicative & non-exhaustive)

Examples

Artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, advanced connectivity

Carbon capture and storage technologies, heat pumps

Molecular biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, crop biotechnology

Guidance on the scope of STEP (article 2 - May)

STEP The tools



1



Reprogramming EU funding towards STEP

- Dedicated calls under directly managed funds
- Revision of RRP and cohesion policy funds' programmes to include STEP (uptake by cohesion policy funds/RRF)
- STEP embedded in existing funds, follows existing processes and governance (e.g. for project selection)
- Top-up of the European Defence Fund of 1.5bn€ for STEP

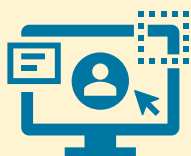
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STEP Sovereignty Seal

- Awarded under directly managed funds
- Valid unless the project has not started within 5 years of award; and project relocated outside EU.
- Easier access to (cumulative/combined) funding under other EU funds
- Visibility for other public investors, and for private investors
- First seals expected H2 2024

3



STEP Portal

- Consolidating all EU funding opportunities for STEP sectors
- Giving **visibility to projects awarded a STEP Sovereignty Seal**
- User-centric
- Gradual development, v1 in Q2
- Link to existing online resources (assistance, other portal, etc.)

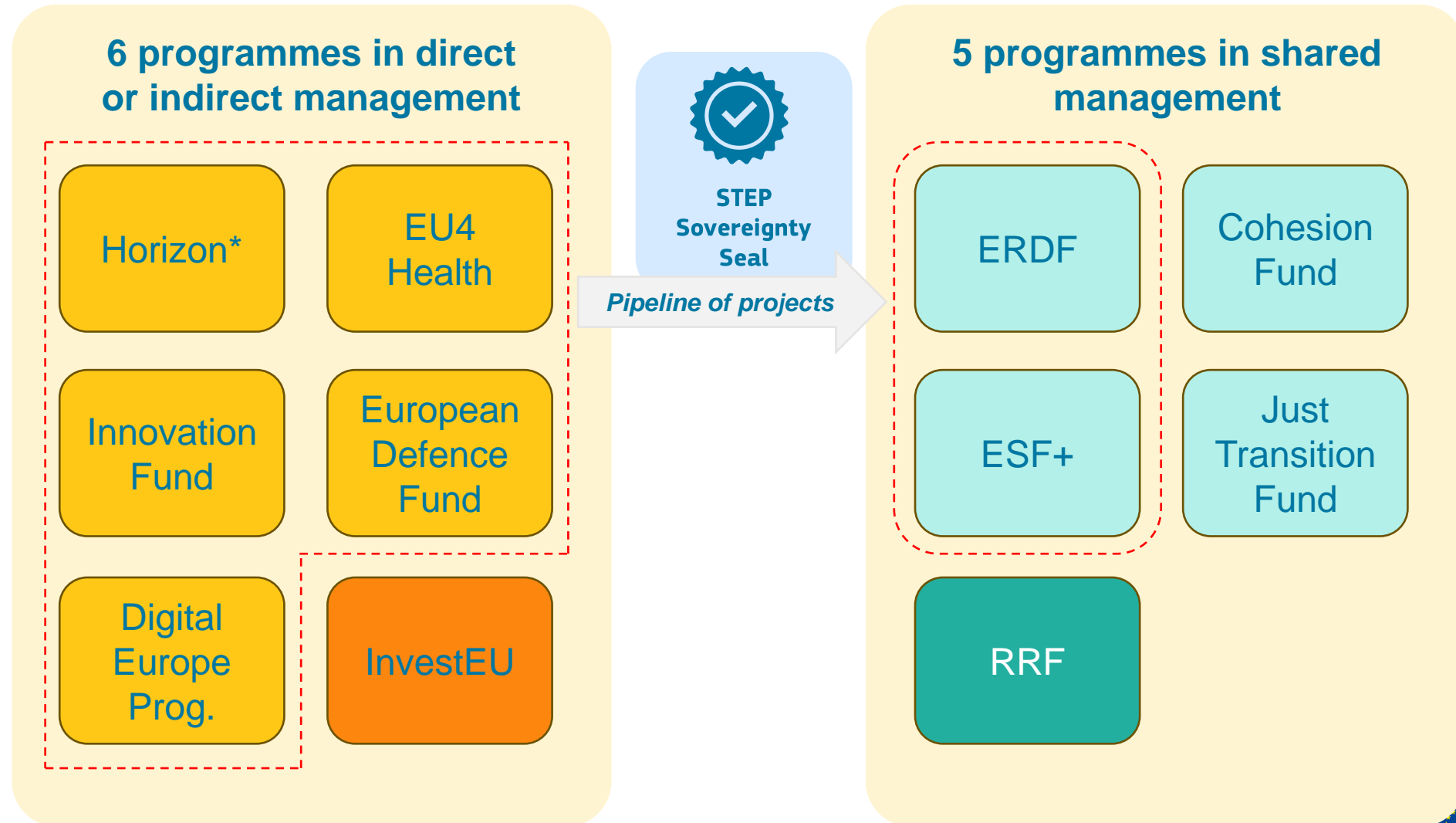
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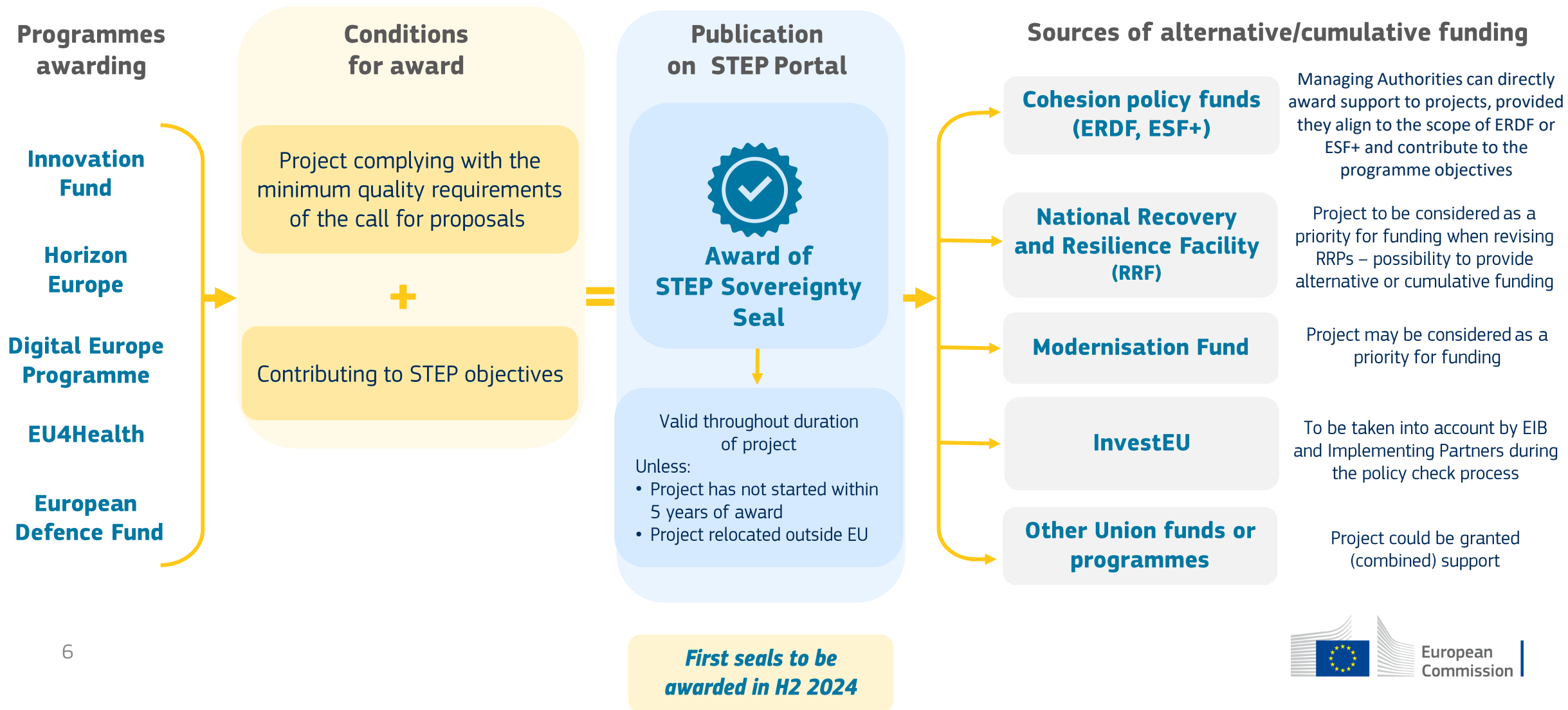
One-Stop-Shop

- Hub managing a COM internal network, a MS/Partners network
- Entry point on STEP for the industry
- Support to identify funding opportunity matching need
- Working closely with all DGs, including DG REGIO/DG EMPL to provide adequate support

STEP The EU programmes covered



STEP The STEP Sovereignty Seal



STEP First calls in direct management: detail



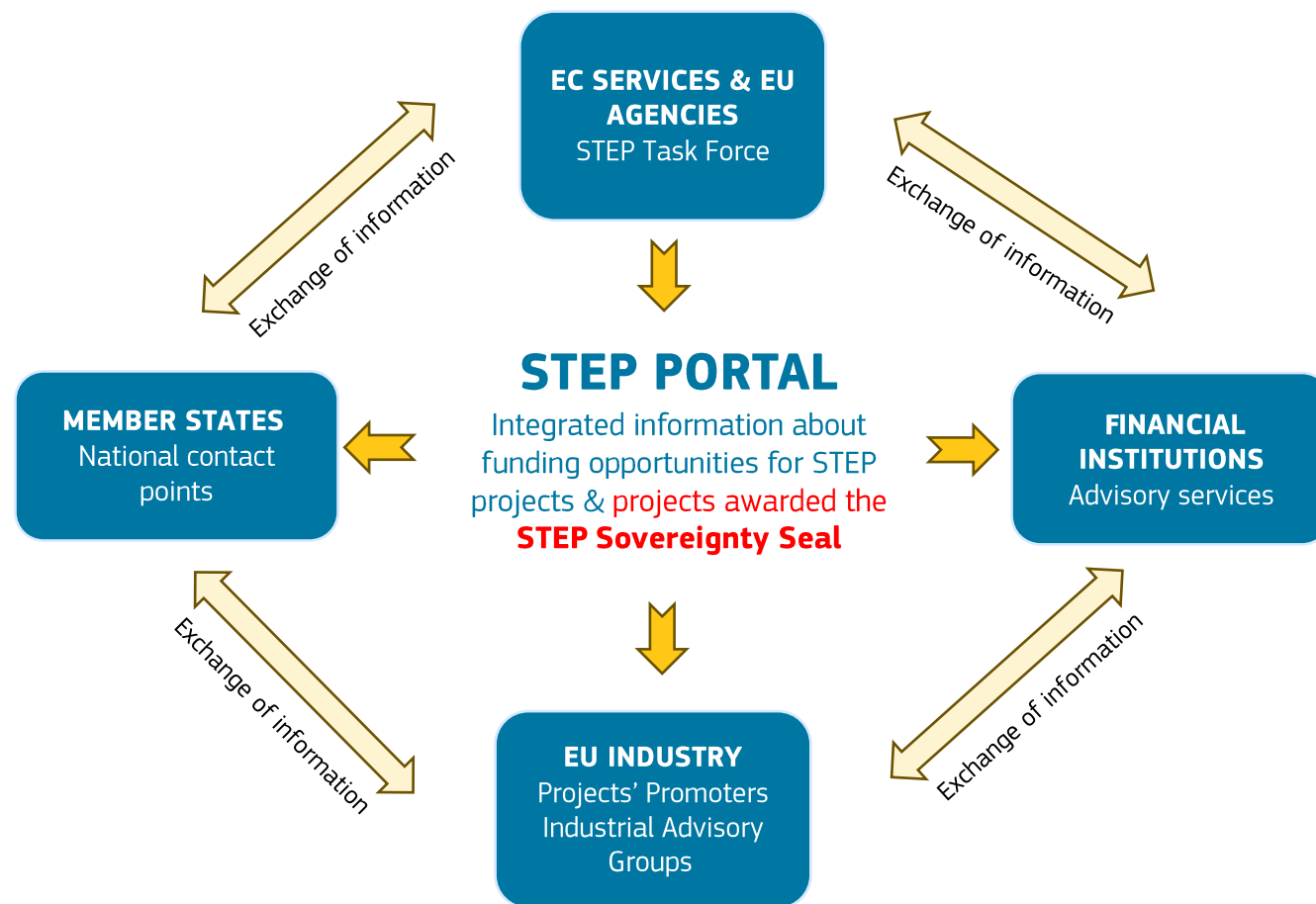
Programme	Call topic name	Budget (in M€)	STEP sector	Opening date	Submission date
Innovation Fund	General decarbonisation - Large-Scale Projects	1,700	clean tech	23-Nov-23	09-Apr-24
	General decarbonisation - Medium-Scale Projects	500	clean tech	23-Nov-23	09-Apr-24
	General decarbonisation - Small-Scale Projects	200	clean tech	23-Nov-23	09-Apr-24
	Clean-tech manufacturing	1,400	clean tech	23-Nov-23	09-Apr-24
	Pilot projects	200	clean tech	23-Nov-23	09-Apr-24
European Defence Fund	Unmanned collaborative combat aircraft (U-CCA) systems	15	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Secured and adaptive underwater communications for UUSs	24	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Methods for bridging reality gaps	15	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Electronic components	25	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Quantum technologies	24	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	AI-based multifunctional aperture and transceiver	45	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Defence multi-dimensional communication standard	25	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Small enhanced European UAS	11	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Next-Generation Cooperative Cyber Range	48	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Secure waveform for satellite communications	25	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Energy-independent and energy-efficient systems for military camps	40	clean tech	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Multipurpose unmanned ground systems	50	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Simulation and training for medical emergencies	10	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Defence medical countermeasures Alliance – Research actions	15	biotech	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Defence medical countermeasures Alliance – Development actions	10	biotech	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24

STEP Upcoming calls in direct management



Publication of calls - tentative timeline							
	2024			2025			
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
EDF							
DEP							
IF							
EU4Health							
HE (EIC)							

STEP The Portal for stakeholders



The portal will provide aggregated information about **relevant funding opportunities** with the ongoing and upcoming calls under the EU programmes contributing to the STEP objectives, as well as guidance and contacts to the **existing advisory services**. It will also show the projects that received the **STEP Sovereignty Seal**.

V1 will go live in **Q2 2024** with information about Direct Management Calls

V2 (around **Q3 2024**) will integrate Indirect Management

V3 (**Q4 2024**) will integrate Shared Management Calls (**including seal dedicated calls**)

STEP Projects displayed in the STEP Portal



- List of projects awarded the STEP Sovereignty Seal **published in STEP Portal after end of evaluation process** (aprox. 6 months after submission deadline)
- **Information** about projects will include:
 - Title
 - Project abstract
 - Name and address of beneficiary/ies
 - Programme that awarded the Sovereignty Seal
 - Funding requested/funding received
- Information **publicly** accessible by managing authorities (and other investors) but Commission will **actively push relevant lists of projects** to member states → in principle through NCPs
- Beneficiaries will also receive a **document** proving that they have been awarded the STEP Sovereignty Seal

STEP The National Contact Points



- To be nominated within **3 months from the adoption of STEP** (1 June 2024); 5 MS already nominated their NCPs; NCPs to be published in the Portal;
- **Main purpose**: To act as the main point of contact for the implementation of the STEP initiative at national level.
- **Responsibilities**: receive general updates on information relevant for the implementation of STEP (guidance on scope); engage bilaterally with the Commission taskforce for STEP to tackle specific questions/issues; coordinate strategically STEP in the MS.

Thank you!

Get in touch with us at EC-STEP-PARTNERS@ec.europa.eu

More information on STEP available on the dedicated [Webpage](#).

STEP Regulation available [here](#).

Webinar on STEP in cohesion policy (25 April 2024):

- [Webstreaming](#)
- [Recording and presentation](#)