DECISION OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF SMART NETWORKS AND SERVICES JOINT UNDERTAKING No 07/2024

On the approval of the Back Office Concept notes for synergies and efficiencies among Horizon Europe Joint Undertakings

THE GOVERNING BOARD,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EU) 2021/2085 of 19 November 2021 establishing the Joint Undertakings under Horizon Europe[1], and notably the Smart Networks and Services Joint Undertaking (hereinafter "the SNS JU"), and in particular Articles 17(2)(k), 19(4)(c) and 25(1) thereof,

WHEREAS

(1) According to Article 13(1) of Council Regulation (EU) No 2021/2085, in order to gain synergies and efficiencies, joint undertakings established by this Regulation should operate back-office arrangements (hereafter "BOAs) in several areas listed in this article,

(2) Those BOAs should be operated by the joint undertakings established under Council Regulation (EU) No 2021/2085, within one year following the date of entry into force of this Regulation,

(3) The establishment of those BOAs should take the form of service level agreements, subject to the need to guarantee an equivalent level of protection of the Union's financial interest when entrusting budgetary implementation tasks to joint undertakings,

(4) Following the adoption of the BOA concept note by the Governing Board of SNS JU for accounting, GB Decision 05/2022 of 14/12/2022 , the SNS JU expressed an interest in joining the other BOAs proposed,

HAS ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING DECISION:

Article 1

The Back Office Arrangement concept notes on HR, ICT and procurement, as described in the annex to this decision, are hereby approved.

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[1] This Regulation is also equally named "Single Basic Act (SBA)" or "Founding Regulation" in SNS JU documents; OJ L 427, 30.11.2021, p. 17

Article 2

This Decision shall take effect the day following that of its adoption.

Done at Brussels, on 04 March 2024.

For the Governing Board

Pearse O'Donohue

The Chair

Annexes:
- BOA Concept note HR
- BOA Concept note ICT
- BOA Concept note Procurement

Background note: Back-office arrangement for HR support

Introduction

The Single Basic Act of the Joint Undertakings[1] establishes that the JUs shall achieve synergies via the establishment of a back-office arrangements, operating in some identified areas. The SBA also underlines that these synergies should be implemented where screening of resources has proved to be efficient and cost effective, while respecting the autonomy and the responsibility of each Authorising officer.

The SBA art. 13 identifies Human Resources Support among the areas where common back-office arrangements can be set up. The HR domain is a sensitive area for all Joint undertaking, where confidentiality is a key building block of effective HR policies and for staff management, taking into account the strategic objectives to be achieved. It is therefore welcome that the legislator focuses on the support area of HR where synergies can be achieved without impacting HR policies that must remain under the remit of the JU and ultimately under the responsibility of each appointing authority.

In order to obtain an independent view on the possible synergies among the JUs and the impact in terms of efficiencies, the JUs contracted an external consultant to perform a study on the Common back-office arrangements. The study was finalised in July 2022 and provided several areas where synergies can be achieved, together with conclusions on what possible "model" should be used to achieve the most cost-effective/efficient results.

For what concerns the HR domain, the study recommended to explore synergies by coordinating the management of SYSPER, possibly joining the future HR digitalisation project of the European Commission, perform joint recruitments, harmonise job profiles and procedures. These synergies will allow to obtain a better harmonisation among the JUs, exploiting best practices, achieving efficiency gains and economy of scale. Following the screening of HR resources in each JU, the study also points out no more than marginal FTE gains would be achieved in this area due to the very limited HR dotation of the JUs.

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[1] Article 13, Council Regulation (EU) No 2021/2085, of 19 November 2021

Participants Joint undertakings

The Joint undertakings that are under the Single Basic Act[2] will contribute to the Back Office Arrangements for HR Support, together with Euro HPC and SESAR that will participate on specific initiatives in line with their internal priorities and according to their own specificities[3].

The following table highlights the HR dotation of the JUs. Considering that part of tasks related to human resources management are very important and must remain under the responsibility of each appointing authority (Executive Directors), only a part-time contribution to the work of the Common Back Office is possible and no FTE savings are envisaged.

Joint Undertakings	Staff dotation (HR and HR support)
CBE (lead JU)	1
IHI (backup JU)	1.3
CH	0.8
CAJU	1
EURail	0.8
KDT-CHIPS	1
SNS	0.5
EDCTP3	1.5
EuroHPC	2
SESAR	2

Scope of the Back-Office arrangement HR support

In the abovementioned context, it is proposed that the Executive Directors of the JUs give mandate to the BOA HR to implement actions in three main areas of HR support:

- **Recruitment**

- Alignment and harmonisation of our recruitment processes: while the JUs share the same legal framework on recruitment, the actual recruitment practices and templates may differ. The JUs

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[2] Circular Biobased Europe, Clean Aviation, Clean Hydrogen, Europe's Rail, EDCTP3 Global Health, Smart Networks and services, Key Digital Technologies (and in the future Chips JU), Innovative Health Initiative,
[3] SESAR JU despite being part of the SBA, is exempted by the provisions related to the Back-office arrangements

will valorise the best practices by establishing a common recruitment procedure that shall then be applied across the board when launching a recruitment. This will include for example common scoring guides, templates, platforms and tools that will provide a consolidated ground for individual and common recruitments. This aspect is particularly interesting for those JUs having few resources devoted to HR and for newly established JUs.

- Organisation of joint selection procedures for same grade: this practice is already in place and need to be deployed to a larger extent in order to achieve efficiency gains. It is important though that the JUs identify a list of job profiles that would be recruited under the same grade and in line with the existing staff establishment plans. Typically, some horizontal profiles will be the easy targets to be reached with joint recruitments (financial officers, administrative officers, legal officer/assistant) while in other more specific areas the JUs will continue to run specific recruitment panels (project officers for example) due to the specificity of the JUs operations.
- Sharing of reserve lists/profile library: an additional synergy that can be achieved is the sharing of existing reserve lists and a harmonisation of job profiles. This would allow time saving and quicker recruitments.

- **2. HR Legal framework**

Given the fact that the JUs share a common legal framework in the HR domain, additional synergies can be achieved by enhancing the existing collaboration in this area:

- Shared network of CCs: the JUs already share a network of confidential counsellors and joint call for expression of interest are launched to expand the network, together with trainings, information campaigns and joint actions to ensure wellbeing of staff and prevention of harassment and conflicts. This initiative – coordinated by CBE JU – will be extended to a larger number of JUs and to new JUs.
- Ensure JUs' representation in EUAN meetings and liaise with DG HR/PMO about common HR matters: the JUs will be represented at the EUAN HR network by the lead JU (and the backups) providing feedback and stronger representation in the HR related working groups.
- Establish a common HR strategy in well identified areas where the JUs have strong interest in speaking with one voice towards staff and towards other EU institutions, for example: learning and development, staff motivation and mobility, new ways of working, employee health and wellbeing, work life balance, recruitment and selections.
- Other initiatives can be developed within the European Agencies Network, for example building on the good experience on the common disciplinary boards. The JUs could enhance their collaboration and find further synergies among their Staff Committee and ensure adequate staff representation even where there is no staff willing to stand for office in the given JU.

- **3. HR digitalisation**

Human resources management is moving more and more towards a digitalisation of HR processes and procedures. Given also the scarce dotation of HR staff among the JUs, it is fundamental to deploy the right IT tools in order to achieve harmonisation and efficiency.

Currently the JUs have quite different IT landscape in the HR area. Most of the JUs have SYSPER, although different modules are deployed, some of them use SYSTAL (e-recruitment tool), some have ARES, other use different IT tools. Such a scattered IT landscape make difficult to achieve synergies in the HR area and action should be taken to harmonise as much as possible.

In the same context it is fundamental that the JUs are included in the implementation of the new HR management tool the EC is developing over the next years. Another aspect that could provide benefits on the IT side could be the implementation of the electronic signature across the JUs.

Expected benefits per each area of the Back-office HR support

As concluded by the report from Deloitte, the expected advantages of the BOA HR in terms of FTE savings are marginal, also because the HR dotation for the JUs is extremely limited (most JUs have one FTE and some 0,5 FTEs). The greatest advantages of the proposed BOA are linked to harmonisation, streamlining procedures, economies of scale, simplification, sharing of good practices, faster procedures, harmonising the HR strategy in certain areas of common interest.

To summarise, the specific benefits expected from the implementation of the BOA HR in each identified area are:

Recruitment:

1. Harmonisation of the recruitment procedure by valorising the best practices and drafting internal recruitment procedures that will be used by all JUs' HR teams.
2. Faster, easier recruitment procedures.
3. Lower exposure to remarks in case of audit (ECA, IAS), also on joint recruitments.
4. More joint recruitment panels and access to joint reserve lists, leading to faster recruitments.
5. Added value for newly established JUs, knowledge and expertise sharing among the JUs.

Legal framework

1. Consolidation of the existing network of confidential counsellors and coordination of activities linked to wellness, anti-harassment and conflict resolution policy across the JUs.
2. Common approach for what concerns the adoption of some implementing rules in the HR area. Speaking with one voice towards the EC when IR are proposed for the JUs.

3. Representation at the EUAN meetings and in meetings with DG HR (e.g. mandatory presence of the lead JU or back up JU with a delivery of the minutes of the meeting to all JUs).
4. Common learning and development framework, potential common employer branding for the JUs, including a comprehensive "employer's offer" for candidates, common templates for staff surveys increasing and improving staff engagement, wellbeing and satisfaction leading to staff retention.

HR digitalisation

1. Harmonisation of SYSPER implementation across the JUs.
2. Extend the use of SYSTAL to all JUs.
3. Establish a joint planning for what concerns the development of IT tools from DG HR, with the objective of JUs progressing all at once.

Multi-annual action plan of the Back-office HR support

In order to achieve the expected results, it is proposed to implement gradually the BOA HR plan over the next 2 years.

Phase 0: [Q3 2022] – [Q4 2022]

- Finalisation of SLA for BOA HR by end of December 2022 (*ongoing*) and signature in January 2023.
- Recruitment and training of confidential counsellors, establishment of the JUs network and training of confidential counsellors (*ongoing*).
- Reinforce the sharing of existing reserve lists among JUs and other EU bodies.

Phase 1: [Q1 2023] – [Q4 2023]

- Launch of common FWC to support the recruitment procedures (already included in the planning of the common procurement BOA) for example for the supervision of the JU written tests, psychometric tests, etc.
- Communication campaign on confidential counsellors 'role.
- Definition of the calendar of common recruitments for 2023.
- Analysis and comparison of recruitment procedures among the JUs, identifying the best practices.
- Mapping of our internal notices/procedures (including procedure and templates) in the recruitment area and "fill the gaps" among JU.
- Definition and implementation of a common recruitment procedure based on JUs' best practices.

Phase 2: [Q4 2023] – [Q2 2024]

- Mapping of job profiles and job descriptions among the JUs.
- Define a calendar of common recruitments for 2024.
- Optional: more JUs to join SYSTAL (JUs using the HR tool will "share" it with other JUs).

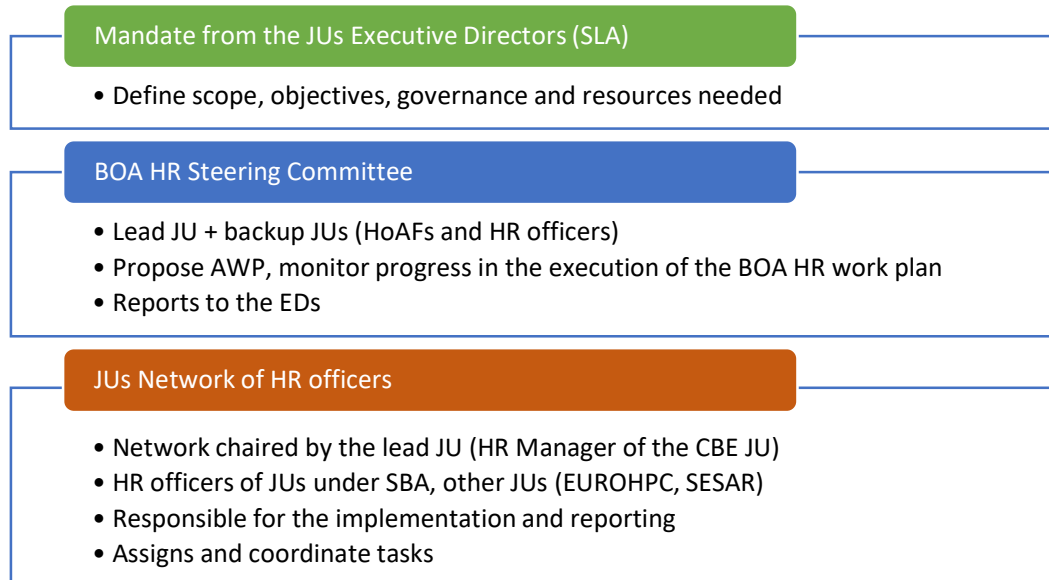**Phase 3: [end of 2024] – [onwards]**

- Establish a common JUs HR strategy in well identified areas like recruitment and selections, new ways of working, employee health and wellbeing, work life balance, learning and development, staff mobility, staff motivation/engagement and retention.
- Digitalisation of HR processes with the harmonisation of the use of SYSPER, SYSTAL, ARES, Intranets (e.g.: harmonised local intranets for HR purpose).
- Challenges and opportunities of the New Ways of Working participation of the lead JU (HR Manager) to the EUAN Task Force on new ways of working, emerging challenges and opportunities with a clear reporting to other JUs and establishment of action plans per JU if necessary.
- Define a calendar of common recruitments for 2025.

Governance of the Back-office HR support

The governance of the BOA HR is particularly important to ensure leadership and commitment of all JUs involved. In this context it is also important to valorise to the maximum extent the competence of the existing JUs network of HR officers by ensuring a clear guidance in implementing the BOA HR annual work plans and the resources – internal and external – needed to achieve the set objectives.

The EDs will nominate a Steering committee for the BOA HR composed by the HoAF of the Lead JU, main JU contact point (HR Manager of the Lead JU), HoAF and HR officer of the backup JUs. This will be the main governance body of the BOA. They will meet once a month, will provide guidance to the HR officers' network in drafting the BOA work plan and will report to the EDs on the execution of the BOA work plan.

The existing Network of JUs' HR officers will be chaired by the Lead JU HR Manager of the CBE JU , will implement the BOA work plan, create ad hoc working groups, will assign and coordinate the tasks and monitor their execution on a mandate from the EDs. The Network will meet once a week, implement actions, ensure information sharing, update/report on progress of BOA tasks, AWP and objectives' definition. The Network will prepare a quarterly reporting of the BOA HR activities to be sent by the steering committee and to the JUs (ED level).

Mandate from the JUs Executive Directors (SLA)

- Define scope, objectives, governance and resources needed

BOA HR Steering Committee

- Lead JU + backup JUs (HoAFs and HR officers)
- Propose AWP, monitor progress in the execution of the BOA HR work plan
- Reports to the EDs

JUs Network of HR officers

- Network chaired by the lead JU (HR Manager of the CBE JU)
- HR officers of JUs under SBA, other JUs (EUROHPC, SESAR)
- Responsible for the implementation and reporting
- Assigns and coordinate tasks

Resources needed by the Back-office HR support

In line with the proposal of an enhanced coordination of the Network of JUs' HR officers, the JUs HR officers commit to implement the BOA HR action plan as part of their daily job. If additional resources might be needed for the implementation of some specific actions, the BOA HR shall then request to the EDs via the Steering Committee the authorisation to hire ad hoc interim agents or external contractors to perform specific tasks and for a determined period. The cost of these resources shall be shared proportionally among the participating JUs.

CBE JU will be the lead JU and its HR Manager will provide coordination and support to the BOA, IHI JU will act as the backup JU and will provide additional support in this sense. All JUs' HR officers commit to contribute to the implementation of the BOA HR action plan under a mandate from the EDs via the Steering Committee and the coordination of the Lead JU. A clear action plan and a clear timeline to deliver the BOA objectives will be proposed by the lead JU and all HR Officers will commit to deliver them on time.

Next steps

In line with the proposal of an enhanced coordination of the Network of JUs' HR officers, the conclusion of a SLA among the JUs is deemed as necessary since a clear commitment to the execution of the BOA HR AWPs must be made by the JUs under the coordination of the Lead JU.

The SLA shall be sent for signature of the EDs as soon as the respective Governing Boards have taken a decision on the BOA HR implementation.

Joint Undertakings – Back-office arrangements for ICT

Contents

1 Context and purpose

In its Article 13, the Single Basic Act identifies ICT as one of the 7 areas for common back-office arrangements.

The opportunity to create or reinforce the current cooperation in the form of back-office arrangements was confirmed through the BoA study carried out in the period from May to July 2022.

The Executive Directors (EDs) and the Governing Boards of the JUs endorsed the areas where the back-office arrangements are most relevant, including ICT, and EDs have started to move forward with the implementation of the back-office arrangements. The purpose of the BOA ICT is to achieve efficiency gains, economy of scales and relevant critical mass in the area of information and communication technologies. The JUs are committed to reinforce the existing collaboration, identify new areas where advantages can be achieved and provide assurance for each JUs in terms of quality, harmonisation, business continuity and timely delivery of ICT services.

This document outlines the concept of the BOA ICT, starting with an overview of the ICT activities currently carried out in common, that form its baseline.

2 Baseline: the common ICT activities

2.1 Description of common ICT activities and existing staff allocation

Since 2010, six JUs and their predecessors[1] have consistently looked for synergies and, where relevant, centralisation of ICT operations, and have carried out ICT activities in common, through a common ICT strategy, a shared ICT infrastructure, a shared workspace services management.

In addition, JUs have used corporate tools and services provided by the Commission, in particular in the fields of financial management and accounting (ABAC, SUMMA), HR (SysPer, PMO services), record management (Ares), grant management (e-grants suite), procurement (e-procurement suite, PPMT), ICT security (Cert-EU) etc. JUs have also participated in multi-institutional procurement actions and resulting framework contracts orchestrated by the Commission or by decentralised agencies (for instance for license acquisition, studies and consultancy services procurement…), and offered access to their procurement actions to other agencies (for instance for the Testa connection).

Lastly, the JUs have a common IT governance, which materialises in particular in the drafting, approving and monitoring of a common annual work plan for ICT.

Under the current organisation (baseline), ICT is managed by IT Officers and additional staff (including administrative staff and in some cases interims) complemented by outsourcing, under the supervision of Heads of Administration and Finance (HoAFs) and Executive Directors (EDs).

This represents a total effort (not including EDs and HoAFs) for 6 JUs composed of 7 ITOs representing ~5.7 full-time equivalents[2], and other (admin) staff and interim effort: ~2 FTEs.

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[1] Namely: Fuel Cells and Hydrogen JU and its successor Fuel Cells and Hydrogen 2 JU, Clean Sky JU and its successor Clean Sky 2 JU, Innovative Medicines Initiative JU and its successor Innovative Medicines Initiative 2 JU, ECSEL JU, joined in 2014 by Shift2Rail JU and Bio-Based Industries JU; in 2021, these JUs became Circular Bio-based Europe JU (CBE JU), Clean Aviation JU (CA JU), Clean Hydrogen JU (CH2 JU), Europe's Rail JU (EU-Rail JU), Innovative Health Initiative JU (IHI JU), Key Digital Technologies JU (CHIPS JU),

[2] Not all ITOs are full-time dedicated to ICT activities: Clean Hydrogen 1 FTE + CAJU 0.6 FTE + CBE 1 FTE + EU-Rail 0.6 FTE + IHI 1.5 FTEs + Chips 1 FTE. ITOs can be TA or CA, from CA FG III to TA AD8, depending on the Staff Establishment Plan of each JU.

It has to be noted that IT officers only work part-time on common ICT activities, while they devote the rest of their time to activities specific to each JU.

To deliver all ICT services, tools and activities, the JUs have relied on external resources. Outsourced activities are not quantified in FTEs as they are contracted as service provision. The main component of the outsourced activities and services is a framework contract for IT managed services (provision of ICT infrastructure, workplace services and end-user support) with a total value of up to EUR 7,500,000 for the period from 2023 to 2027.

2.2   Service coverage

The ICT area covers a list of ~50 activities or services grouped in 6 service groups (JUs ICT service catalogue). These activities or services are either provided within the JU and/or with the support of external service provider, or fully delivered by others (e.g. European Commission departments).

When services are delivered by the European Commission or by external service providers ("service brokerage"), the service group includes activities related to ICT portfolio management, services specification of service requirements, procurement and/or contractual procedures, contract management, supervision of service delivery and monitoring of quality and performance. Therefore, even when "brokered", the related services require in-house ICT competency in collaboration with administrative competency.

The JUs ICT service catalogue is structured in 6 service groups:

1. Inter-JU IT Governance: this service group consists in the coordination of common ICT activities and services, planning, effort allocation, decision-making and reporting;

2. Management of shared ICT infrastructure: this service group consists in ensuring provision of ICT infrastructure (servers, networks, IT security infrastructure, cloud services, teleconferencing systems, Wi-Fi provision, landlines and Internet infrastructure) and the related services to the JUs. According to the ICT strategy adopted in 2017, the provision of ICT infrastructure is outsourced and acquired from external service providers, the specification, monitoring and supervision of services remaining within the JUs;

3. Management of ICT tools, services and contracts: this service group is related to the management of services (tools, systems, contracts) provided by the European Commission (DG DIGIT, DG HR, DG BUDG, DG RTD…) or by external service providers. It also includes the functional maintenance of these systems and tools;

4. Workplace services provision: this service group consists in ensuring the provision of configured JUs specific ICT hardware (e.g. laptops, printers, etc.) and software (e.g. EU-Login), managing access rights (in/out), purchasing licenses other than EC (e.g. Microsoft, Adobe) and assignment of licenses to users, liaising with the IT help desk providers for workplace services and end user support. In accordance with the ICT strategy, the provision of ICT infrastructure is outsourced;

5. Security and compliance management: this service group is related to the provision of information security services, including the execution of the role of Local Information Security Officer (LISO) for the JUs, the future implementation of the Cyber-Security regulation, the maintenance of the business continuity and disaster recovery plans from an ICT standpoint, and the coordination of the related testing and update activities. This activity is currently provided within each JU by the IT Officer, with the support of external service providers;

6. ICT activities specific per JU: this service group is related to the execution of activities specific within each JU, which can include development of specific software in relation with the JU's mission and objectives.

These groups and the related services or activities are further detailed in the annex.

2.3 Governance

The coordination of common ICT activities between the JUs is depicted in the following figure:
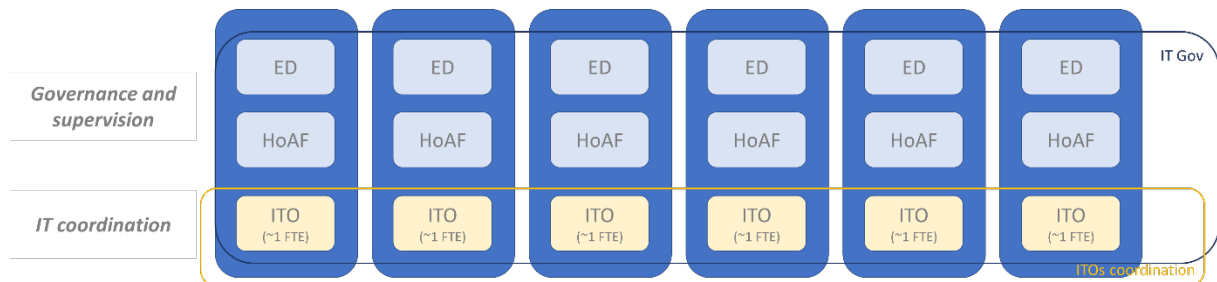
- The "IT governance", composed of all EDs and/or Heads of Administration and Finance and IT Officers, is responsible for the adoption of the common ICT annual work plan (common ICT AWP) and supervision of its implementation; the IT governance meets at least once per quarter,

- The IT Officers group is composed of all IT Officers and meets on a weekly basis. It coordinates daily IT operations to secure the implementation of the annual work plan. IT Officers also prepare the common ICT AWP before its submission to the IT governance.

3 Target: the back-office arrangements for ICT

In continuation of the effort to manage jointly ICT activities, infrastructure and services and in response to the requirements of Article 13 of the SBA, the Executive Directors of the Joint Undertakings want to further structure ICT in the form of back-office arrangements (BOA ICT), to achieve further benefits.

3.1 BOA ICT concept

The BOA ICT provides an organisation, working arrangements and a legal framework to ensure the delivery of ICT services and activities of common interest for the Joint Undertakings. Within the BOA ICT, responsibilities are allocated, activities defined and their outputs and benefits identified. It defines a clear resource allocation and costs per activity.

In line with back-office arrangements in other areas of activity (Accounting, Procurement, HR), the model can be described with one or several JU(s) being ICT service provider(s)/broker(s) and all JUs being ICT service beneficiaries.
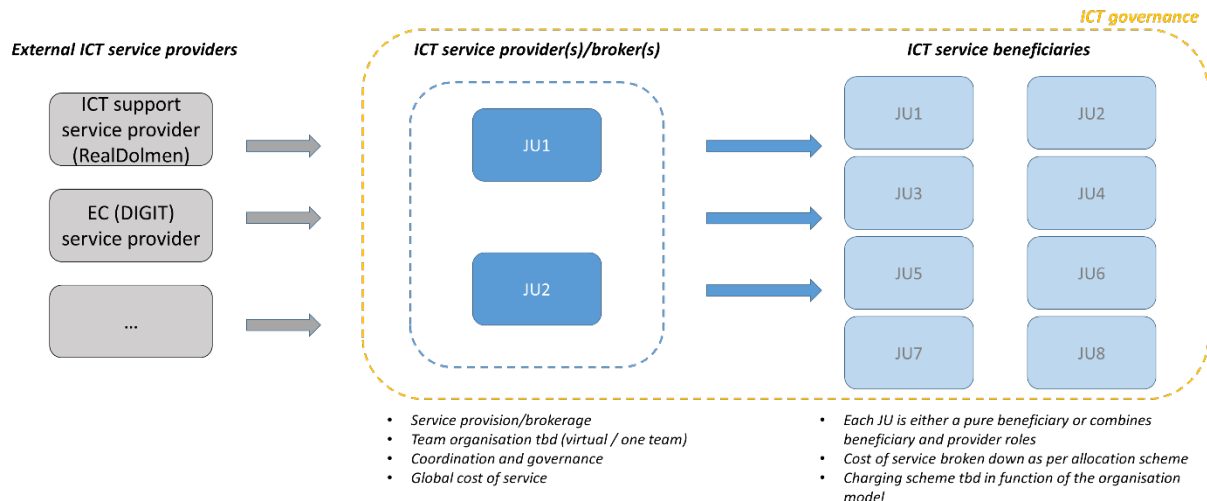
The model relies on a clear allocation of roles and responsibilities for the various services amongst the JUs, characterised by the following elements:

- The BOA ICT co-leads deliver the activities under the service group #1 "Inter-JU IT governance" (see in annex 5.1.1);

- One or several JU(s) act as "service provider" or "service broker"[3] for services of the other service groups;

- The common ICT working arrangements shall be settled in the form of an SLA, which shall amongst other clauses formalise and clarify the mandate(s), roles and responsibilities. The SLA shall:

  o Provide a clear description of the services and activities including well-defined roles and responsibilities for the different stakeholders (for instance, in case one or more JUs take the responsibility of signing contracts on behalf of all the others),

  o Centralise and/or outsource some other official roles (compliance related) for all JUs, after careful assessment of its legal feasibility and the related expected effort,

  o Establish cost repartition.

- The allocation of responsible JU (and corresponding ED and ITO) to the services shall be documented in the SLA. The corresponding ED shall be entrusted for the provision or brokerage of the services within the service group and shall be decision-making and contracting authority, on the basis of an annual work plan adopted by the EDs, taking into account budget availabilities and each JU's work programme. The common ICT annual work plan may provide further details each year on responsibilities allocated to actions involving one or multiple services.

The BOA ICT will be provided resources by all JUs either in the form of staff allocation (for service providers or other JUs with the necessary ICT resources interested to provide the service) or financial resources (for service beneficiaries). Staff allocation should be complemented by outsourcing as required and agreed and documented in the SLA underlying the BOA ICT. A global cost of service shall be defined and agreed upfront in the SLA and confirmed on an annual basis in the common ICT annual work plan. The invoicing and payment scheme, if required, will be defined in the SLA.

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[3] The roles and responsibilities of service provider/broker will be further defined in the Service Level Agreement.

3.2 Expected benefits

In implementing the BOA ICT, JUs are seeking the following benefits:

- One cluster:
  - Common ICT portfolio management and IT procurement resulting in economies of scale e.g. license purchasing (to be confirmed),
  - Smoother planning and deployment of IT solutions made available to users across all JUs, with the related change management process and business impact analysis,
  - Pooling financial resources,
  - Leverage experience across JUs,
  - Flexibility (e.g. quotas and ceilings management),
  - JUs speaking with one voice.
- Common ICT governance and harmonised procedures for processes and activities in the scope of the BoA,
- Efficiencies:
  - Simplification of IT management and administrative follow-up,
  - Easier and smoother collaboration between JUs,
  - Clearer allocation of tasks, roles and responsibilities,
  - Efficiency in some IT areas, with economy of scale that will enable ITOs to better focus on individual JU IT needs,
- Business continuity with effective back-up,
- Avoided redundancies,
- Better IT legacy management, development of centers of expertise for certain service groups, reuse of IT solutions.

In implementing the BOA ICT, the JUs will follow main guiding principles and good practices applied at the Commission, such as the corporate digital strategy, the reuse-buy-build approach, the IT governance workflow.

It should also be noted that the BOA ICT could also provide the framework to implement other synergies identified in the future as well as other synergies already identified through the BoA study.

3.3 Participating JUs

The following 10 JUs will participate to the BOA ICT and sign the related SLA:

- Circular Bio-based Europe JU (CBE JU),
- Clean Aviation JU (CA JU),
- Clean Hydrogen JU (CH2 JU),
- European High-Performance Computing JU (EuroHPC JU), depending on the service groups,
- Europe's Rail JU (EU-Rail JU),
- Innovative Health Initiative JU (IHI JU),
- Key Digital Technologies JU (CHIPS JU),

- Single European Sky ATM Research 3 JU (SESAR 3 JU), depending on the service groups,

- Smart Network & Services JU (SNS JU),

- Global Health European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials 3 Joint Undertaking (GH EDCTP3 JU).

CH2 JU and IHI JU will co-lead the BOA ICT.

EuroHPC JU and SESAR 3 JU, due to their own constraints and ICT service delivery set-up and location, are the signatory of the BOA ICT SLA focusing on the principles of the BOA, showing the willingness to enhance synergies with other European Partnerships and ensuring access to knowledge sharing around common ICT activities (including EC provided services and security as well as coordination activities i.e. Governance). They may be included in common ICT activities (e.g. coordination activities) and be recipient of common services on an ad-hoc basis, as required. The two JUs will express their interest in joining specific activities to the ICT BOA co-lead JUs by using inclusion mechanism defined in the BOA ICT SLA. Consequently, they will participate in the related cost sharing scheme, as relevant.

3.4   Service coverage

The BOA ICT will cover service groups 1 to 5 identified.

Within these service groups, the Annex 1 identifies which services or activities are in scope of the BOA ICT and which are out of scope (for instance, covered by each JU individually or through other arrangements).

ICT developments and other activities specific to each JU (service group #6) will be under the responsibility of each ED and will not be part of the BOA ICT, that in any case will have to ensure the integrity of the overall ICT architecture.

3.5   Target effort allocation

This section is work in progress and will be addressed in further detail in the SLA.

BOA ICT builds on the current practice of common support to activities in ICT. The BOA ICT rationalises synergies and aims at bringing efficiencies and benefits whilst enhancing quality delivery and availability to focus on individual JU IT specific needs (as described under section 3.2 Expected benefits and with a transfer on focus for JUs on strategic service group #6). After the arrangement is in place, the total effort (not including EDs and HoRs) for 9 JUs will remain basically unchanged: 8 ITOs representing ~7.2 positions, other (admin) staff and interim effort: ~2 FTEs, complemented with outsourced services.

3.6   Governance

Further detail on the governance of ICT and its evolution in the context of the back-office will be documented in the SLA.

4   Timeline

The BOA ICT will be implemented according to the following timeline. To note that as of the entry into force of the ICT BOA an action plan covering the indicative services listed in the Annex, regrouped in the 6 identified service groups, will be developed. This planning will prioritise the activities and include a multi-annual IT strategy, taking into account the budgetary and resources availability of each JUs to ensure the feasibility of its implementation:
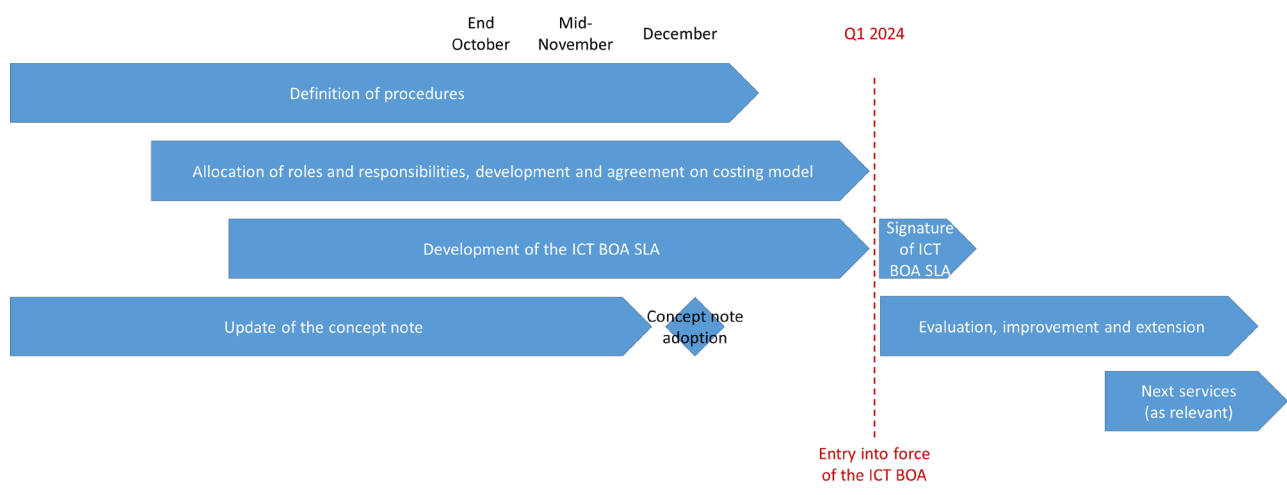
5 Annex

5.1 Annex 1: List of ICT services

This annex establishes a list of ICT services delivered to the JUs per service group as identified in section 2.2.

Further detail on the activities and services delivered by the BOA ICT will be documented in annexes to the SLA identifying the roles and responsibilities, the deliverables and outputs of the activities, and the related effort and costs.

5.1.1 Service group #1: Inter-JU IT Governance

Service	Status (09/2023)
Weekly ITOs coordination and quarterly IT Governance Committee meetings	Common
Definition and supervision of common (multi-)annual work plan	Common
Development of AWP projects	Common
Periodic reporting to IT Gov	Common
Future IT architecture development	Common
Support to Audit and Strategic Risk Assessment (IAS, ECA)	Common where relevant
Participation to EUAN ICTAC	Coordination

5.1.2 Service group #2: Management of shared ICT infrastructure

Service	Status (09/2023)
Server management	Common (outsourced)
IT security infrastructure	Common (outsourced)
Teleconferencing	Common (outsourced)
Wi-Fi provision	Common (outsourced)
Landlines	Common (outsourced)
Internet	Common (outsourced)

5.1.3 Service group #3: Management of ICT tools and services

Business owner	SERVICES							
	System administration /Contract management	Functional maintenance (e.g. access management etc.):	Set-up of contracts and quotas	Follow-up of consumption	Definition of requirements	Budget management	Acquisition	Invoicing
DIGIT – SIDE II and successors	Not common		Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)
DIGIT – CLOUD II and successors	DIGIT – SIDE II and successors		Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)
DIGIT – NATASHA (network hardware) and successors	DIGIT – SIDE II and successors		Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)
DIGIT – MTS II and successors	DIGIT – SIDE II and successors		Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)
DIGIT – MEQ (mobile devices) and successors	DIGIT – SIDE II and successors		Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)
DIGIT - EXICON	DIGIT – SIDE II and successors							
OIB – AVC (audio-visual equipment)	DIGIT – SIDE II and successors		Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)

Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking | Chips JU | CLEAN AVIATION JOINT UNDERTAKING | Clean Hydrogen Partnership | EuroHPC Joint Undertaking | Europe's Rail | Global Health EDCTP3 | iHi innovative health initiative | sesar JOINT UNDERTAKING | 6G SNS

BUDG - ABAC	DIGIT – SIDE II and successors	DIGIT – SIDE II and successors			Coordination	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)
HR – SysPer/reto + COMREF	DIGIT – SIDE II and successors	DIGIT – SIDE II and successors			Coordination	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)
Sec GEN - Ares	DIGIT – SIDE II and successors	DIGIT – SIDE II and successors			Coordination	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)
RTD - e-grants	Coordination	DIGIT – SIDE II and successors			Coordination	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)
EC application - e-procurement	DIGIT – SIDE II and successors	DIGIT – SIDE II and successors			Coordination	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)
EC service-Cert-EU	DIGIT – SIDE II and successors	DIGIT – SIDE II and successors			Common (to be assessed)	Common	Common	Common
EC service - Testa	DIGIT – SIDE II and successors	Common	Common	Common	Common	Common	Common	Common
Common JU application – GDPR Central	Common	Common	Common	Common	Common	Common	Common	Common
Common JU application – Systal / Visitor application	DIGIT – SIDE II and successors	DIGIT – SIDE II and successors	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common	Common (to be assessed)
Websites	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)				Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)	Common (to be assessed)

5.1.4 Service group #4: Workplace Services Provision

Service	Status (09/2023)
Providing and configuring the JUs specific ICT hardware (e.g. laptops, printers, etc.)	Common (outsourced)
Providing and configuring the JUs specific ICT software	Common (outsourced)
Managing access rights (in/out)	Common (to be assessed)
EU-Login (ex-ECAS)	Coordination
Purchasing of licenses other than EC (e.g. Microsoft, Adobe)	Common (to be assessed)
Assignment of licenses to users	Common (outsourced)
Liaison with the IT help desk provider for workplace services and with the IT help desk for operations (provided by the H2020 tool for the whole research family)	Common
End user support	Common (outsourced)

5.1.5 Service group #5: Security and compliance management

Service	Status (09/2023)
LISO assessment of IT configurations and tools	Common (to be assessed with legal feasibility[4])
LISO annual report	Common (to be assessed with legal feasibility)
CISO (future regulation)	Common (to be assessed with legal feasibility)
Business Continuity Management and Disaster Recovery Planning	Common (to be assessed with legal feasibility)

5.1.6 Service group #6: Specific ICT activities per JU

Service	Status (09/2023)
JU developed tools and platforms	Common (to be assessed)

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[4] https://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/imi-net/docs/decision_3602_2006_en.pdf

SYSTAL	Common (to be assessed)
EC apps – ABAC/SUMMA	Common (to be assessed)
EC apps - MIPS	Common (to be assessed)
EC apps – Visitors registration tool	Common
IT studies specific to each JU	Common (to be assessed)
Data collection and analysis	Common (to be assessed)
ABAC Asset Management	Common (to be assessed)
ICT budget management (intra-JU)	Not common

Done in Brussels, on 20 December 2023,

Giorgio Travaini
Executive Director EU-Rail *ad interim*

(signed electronically in Ares)

Nicolo Giacomuzzi-Moore
Executive Director CBE JU

(signed electronically in Ares)

Axel Krein
Executive Director CA JU

(signed electronically in Ares)

Mirela Atanasiu
Executive Director Clean Hydrogen JU *ad interim*

(signed electronically in Ares)

Hugh Laverty
Acting Executive Director IHI JU

(signed electronically in Ares)

Jari Kinaret
Executive Director CHIPS JU

(signed electronically in Ares)

Erszebet Fitori
Executive Director SNS JU

(signed electronically in Ares)

Michael Makanga
Executive Director GH EDCTP3 JU

(signed electronically in Ares)

Anders Jensen
Executive Director EuroHPC JU

(signed electronically in Ares)

Andreas Boschen
Executive Director SESAR 3 JU

APPENDIX 1
BOA Procurement Description and Working Arrangements

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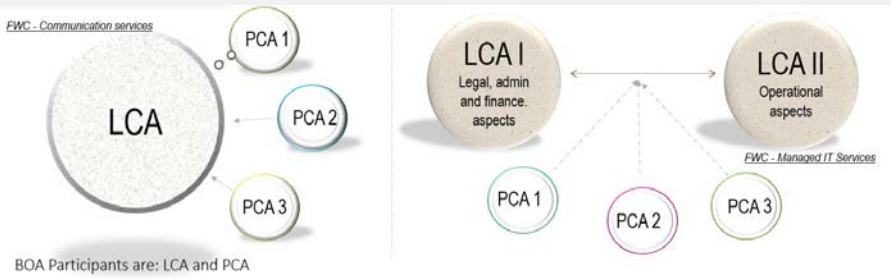
General information

Service area	Legal services (procurement and contract management)
Synergies	Centralised procurement to manage joint administrative procurements for the benefit of all JUs
Legal Basis	Single Basic Act (SBA) – Art. 13 Financial Regulation- Art. 165(1) Inter-institutional calls for tenders
Scope	The following elements are covered in the implementation of the synergy: centralised administrative procurement capability and process to maximise open tenders for award of inter-JUs FWCs and middle value negotiated procedures with focus on the critical joint admin procurement such as ICT, building management/corporate services, some comm support services, law firms list, data protection to be identified and be agreed via joint Public Procurement Planning (PPP).
Leading and Coordinating JU [Coordinator]	Clean Aviation JU
Back-up Coordinating JUs [Back-up Coordinator]	EU-RAIL, EuroHPC JU
Coordinator's Point of Contact	Katarzyna Bogumil Legal Officer in the CAJU +32(0)2 541 8252 katarzyna.bogumil@clean-avaition.eu
Back-up Coordinator's Point of Contact	Isaac González García Chief Legal & Data Protection Officer +32(0)2 541 83 72 Isaac.Gonzalez@rail-research.europa.eu María Casado Navarro-Rubio Legal Officer (+352) 2812-4527 maria.casado@eurohpc-ju.europa.eu
High-level timeframe	Deployment December 2022 1st Gate Review December 2023
Service recipients	All JUs ideally - signatories of the SLA

BOA configuration

Acronyms	**LCA** = Leading Contracting Authority

BOA Procurement Description and Working Arrangements

	LCA I= Leading Contracting Authority in charge of the legal, administrative, and financial aspects **LCA II**=Leading Contracting Authority in charge of the operational aspects **PCA**= Participating Contracting Authority **TS**= Technical Specifications **FWC**= Framework Contract **DC**= Direct Contract **SC**= Specific Contract
Configuration alternatives	Classic/central mode: **LCA** (Legal, Admin and Finance, Operational aspects) + **PCA** Hybrid mode: Legal, Administrative and Financial aspects under supervision of one **LCA** + Operational aspects under responsibility of another
Retained configuration	Hybrid mode + Classic /central mode

Resource allocation	Preliminary estimate
	LCA I for administrative and legal aspects:
	- max 0.5 FTE- Legal Officer from the CAJU
	- 1 Interim Legal/Administrative Assistant from the CAJU
	- Estimated max 0.25 FTE – Legal Officer and Assistant from the EU-RAIL to be defined depending on the number of procurement procedures
	- Estimated max 0.25 FTE – Legal Officer from the EURO-HPC
	  to be defined depending on the number of procurement procedures
	
	LCA II for operational aspects:
	  Operational Initiator from any of the JUs being able to provide the necessary technical expertise, to draft the TS, to support the **LCA I** in management of Q&A during the procurement procedure, to contribute to the evaluation and finally management of the future awarded and signed FWC/ DC.

Services	- To coordinate and align JUs PP planning before publication of the Work Programmes. - Launch and manage on behalf of the participating JUs a maximum of 4 joint open procedures per year - To build/reinforce a common JU procurement capability - To establish common templates and library of PP document - To explore and maximise use of available IT supportive digital tools - To organise common workshops and information sessions, maximise information flow on available EC FWCs, and potentially pool external support to the common BOA benefit

APPENDIX 1
BOA Procurement Description and Working Arrangements

Implementation

Start date for implementation	July 2022 – pilot phase with an inter-institutional open tender for award of the single FWC – Managed IT Services (hybrid mode of the implementation of BOA Procurement) Formal start of ''BOA Procurement'' December 2022
Target date for completion	End of the Programmes- December 2031
Milestones	**Phase 1:** Sept 2022 – Nov 2022 BOA procurements' setup: Working arrangements among JUs, PP included in the WP 2023, division of roles and responsibilities, allocation of resources (**LCA I, LCA II, PCAs**) **Phase 2:** December 2022 BOA into force **Phase 3:** JANUARY 2024 Review and implementation of eventual modifications based on the results of the first year BOA procurement
Benefits	- Establishing a higher negotiation power of the tendering authority and benefit from standardised process and services – Better service quality. - Reducing administrative burden when one JU leads the procedure – Optimization of JUs resources and skills in the field of procurement, avoid overlaps of procedures. - Attracting broad types of service providers (bigger economic operators) – Foster competition and increase of volume in the number of offers received. - Sharing knowledge, reinforcing specific competences, quality and effectiveness of services provided among several JUs – Time-savings.
Challenges & Risks	Challenges: - Fair and proportionate FTEs allocation to BOA across the JUs - Annual and bi-annual Work Programmes in different JUs - Identification of the feasible joint procurement needs to be reflected in the procurement planning of the **LCAs I** - Agreement on common working arrangements in the form of a "soft"SLA" to agree on key necessary arrangements and able to comply with SBA requirements on BOA) - Assignments of roles (**LCAs, PCAs**) per individual tender procedure

- Shared leading responsibilities (Admin + legal/ Operations - optimalisation of resources and time)
- Expected large portfolio of contracts for the **LCA I**
- Limitations of IT tools supporting procurement (lack of shared management mode)
- SUMMA – ABAC integrated financial system transition
- Efficiency of the communication between **LCA I and LCA II, PCAs**

Risks:

- Given that no direct shift of resources is envisaged, due to lack of sufficient permanent full time FTEs on legal/procurement across the JUs, the risk to mitigate is that the **LCA I** could suffer from a lack of resources in the legal team to handle all the other legal tasks.

  To mitigate the risk, the Coordinating and Back-up JUs should support each other and share the responsibilities of the **LCA I** based on the established annual joint PPP. The max number of inter-institutional tender procedures manged in parallel by one and the same **LCA I** shall be two.

- Given that the IT tools used for the management of the procurement procedures does not support joint implementation of tenders by actors from different organisations, the **LCA I** back-up and the **LCA II** staff assigned to the management of the operational aspects of the procurement will have limited access to the tender procedures.

  To mitigate the risk, the WG on harmonization of procurement procedures and IT tools will reflect and propose the most efficient communication channel ensuring full access to the procurement documents to all actors involved in the management of the inter-institutional procurement procedures. In addition, the WG will liaise with the business owners of the individual IT platforms of e-Procurement suit to explore the possible ways to optimise the resources in the joint procurement process while at the same time to increase efficiency and to shorten the timing of the procedures.

- Administrative and legal management of some contracts may require a specific legal expertise (for example building contract) and former experience in the field, which may not be always guaranteed by one of the 3 JUs proposed to assume the role of the **LCA I**.
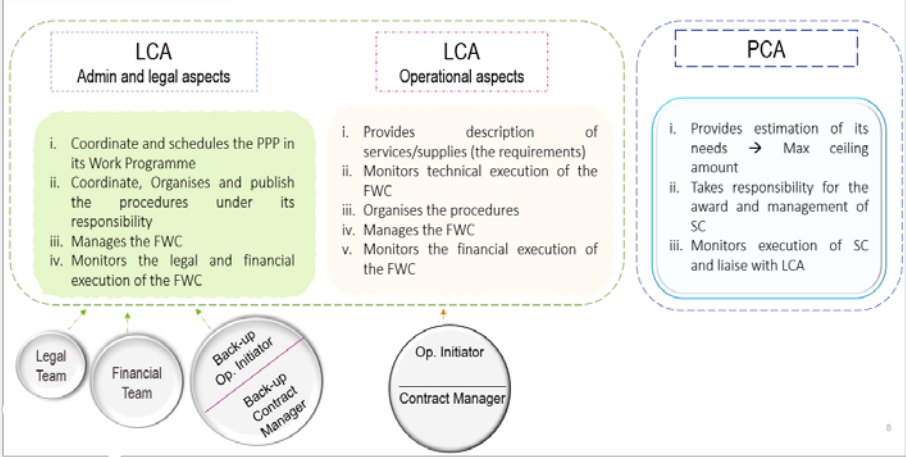
  To mitigate the risk, the JU having the internal legal and operational expertise in the management of non-standard type of contracts will act as the **LCA** implementing the classic mode of BOA Procurement.

Implementation team description

Governance	**Steering Committee** Members: HAFs of the JUs Tasks: - to launch strategic joint actions and to use procurement to innovate the Joint Undertakings by the establishment and adoption of the bi-annual Joint Procurement Planning – catalogue of services (Appendix 2), - to assess the effectiveness and impact of the services provided under the BOA Procurement, - to suggest the corrective measures where needed to ensure that the BOA Procurement meets its objectives, - to approve the accession of a new party to the BOA Procurement, - to assess the use of resources and the efforts invested by the service provider vis-à-vis the compensation brought by the other parties of the agreement, - to resolve the disputes among the parties.
Expertise needed	Legal and administrative Public Procurement & Contract Management
Roles and responsibilities	**Coordinator:** - to propose a design concept of the BOA Procurement, - to establish a draft bi-annual Joint Procurement Planning – catalogue of services (Appendix 2) on the basis of inputs provided by the Parties for the further elaboration and adoption by the steering committee, - to identify new inter-interinstitutional procurement procedures which could be of interest of the Parties to be launched by other EU Institutions/Agencies (i.e., EC, NAPO etc), - to initiate and to chair a working group on optimalisation of joint procurement processes and IT tools, - to share the procurement knowledge with other parties and to provide advice on the procurement and contract management activities following individual requests, - to prepare the reports for the steering committee as indicated in Article 5 of this agreement, - to perform the role of the LCA as indicated in Appendix 2, - to perform back-up LCA function for administrative and legal aspects in inter-instructional procedures launched by the back-up coordinator, - to provide secretariat to the steering committee. **Back-up Coordinator:** - to support the coordinator in the establishment of the draft bi-annual Joint Procurement Planning – catalogue of services (Appendix 2), - to support the coordinator in the identification of new inter-interinstitutional procurement procedures launched by other EU Institutions/Agencies (i.e., EC, NAPO etc),

	- to contribute actively to the work of the working group on optimalisation of joint procurement processes and IT tools, - -to share the procurement knowledge with other parties and to provide advice on the procurement and contract management activities following individual requests, - to support the coordinator in preparation of the reports for the steering committee, - to perform back-up LCA function for administrative and legal aspects in inter-instructional procedures launched by the coordinator, - to perform the role of the LCA as indicated in Appendix 2. **Implementation of BOA Procurement:**
Support required including sourcing	- Active role of the Steering Committee in the establishment/validation of the joint PP planning - Assignments of roles, resources, and responsibilities per procurement procedure by the HAFs - Active support and involvement of the JUs not performing the role of the **LCA I** and assuming the role of the **LCA II** - Power of attorney given by the **PCAs** to the **LCAs** with a mandate to design and to manage the procurement procedures independently for the benefit of the contracting authority (**PCAs** and **LCAs**) to be formalised via a separate MoU per joint procurement procedure.
Reporting Mechanisms	Reporting that covers Year N shall be provided at the latest in the Q1 of Year N+1. Reporting covers as a minimum: - the list of services provided to the client, - the overview on the implementation status of the inter-institutional tender procedures included in the joint procurement planning- catalogue of services (Appendix 2), - the overview on the implementation status of the inter-institutional contracts awarded and signed under the BOA Procurement, - the overview of the human resources and financial resources deployed by the service provider established on the basis of the information provide to the coordinator by the parties,

	- the modifications which had to be implemented by the service provider with regard to the catalogue of the services (Appendix 2) together with the justification, - the modifications and developments envisaged in the Appendix 2 and concerning the consecutive year following the reporting year. In addition, minutes of the steering committee meetings together with action plan updated are communicated to the users
Meetings	Two meetings/year: Q4 Year N for adoption of the Joint Procurement Planning – catalogue of services (Appendix 2) for Year N+1 and Q1 Year N+1 for review activities implemented during Year N via reporting submitted to the Steering Committee (Optional) Reporting Review –Q1 of Year n+2 to assess the progress of the BOA Procurement and to decide on any possible adjustments and implementing measures based on the assessment of the BOA's activities performed in Year n and Year n+1 including allocation of the resources and the results achieved.

Annex	Slides from the BOA procurement co-design workshop organized by CAJU