Council of the European Union

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NOTE

From:	Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1)
To:	Council
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Subject:	COUNCIL DECISION laying down the measures necessary for the implementation of Protocol No 37 on the financial consequences of the expiry of the ECSC Treaty and on the Research Fund for Coal and Steel - General Approach

1. On 10 December 2025, the Commission submitted to the Council a proposal for a Council Decision laying down the measures necessary for the implementation of Protocol No 37 on the financial consequences of the expiry of the ECSC Treaty and on the Research Fund for Coal and Steel, annexed to the Treaty on European Union and to the Treaty for the Functioning of the European Union.

2. In accordance with Protocol No 37, the Research Fund for Coal and Steel (RFCS) is an EU research programme, funded outside the Multiannual Financial Framework by the revenue of the assets of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in liquidation allocated to this fund. The RFCS finances exclusively research projects in the coal and steel sectors.

3. The proposed Decision is part of a package of proposals to revise the RFCS' legal framework to provide for research and innovation funding to support the decarbonisation, clean transition and competitiveness of the coal and steel sectors. This proposal aims to establish the measures necessary to use the remaining non-allocated assets of the ECSC in liquidation, as well as any remaining uncommitted funds from previous RFCS Research Programme calls.

4. The Research Working Party discussed the proposal on four occasions and agreed on a few amendments, mainly in relation to the amount of the annual allocation to finance research in the coal and steel sectors as well as the duration of the programme. The proposal was also discussed at a meeting of the Financial Counsellor Working Party, focusing on the aspects related to the management of the assets of the fund and other financial provisions. The agreed text is set out in the addendum to this note.

5. On 18 February, the Permanent Representatives Committee was able to endorse the agreement reached at Working Party level.

6. In accordance with the first paragraph of Article 2 of Protocol No 37 on the financial consequences of the expiry of the ECSC Treaty and on the Research Fund for Coal and Steel, the consent of the European Parliament on the draft Council Decision is to be requested by the Council before its adoption.

7. The Council is therefore invited to reach a general approach as set out in doc. 6338/26 ADD 1 at its meeting on 27 February 2026.