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**COMPET 279
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'I/A' ITEM NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council

No. Cion doc.: 16710/25 + ADD 1 + ADD 2

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
- Agreement in principle
- Request for the Consent of the European Parliament

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. Following the work within the Research Working Party since December 2025, resulting in some changes to the initial proposal, 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 Council (Competitiveness) at its meeting of 27 February 2026, adopted a General Approach on the text.
5. 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.
6. The Permanent Representatives Committee is, therefore, invited to recommend to the Council:
 - to agree in principle on the draft Council Decision as finalised by the lawyer-linguists and set out in doc. 6884/26, and
 - to decide to forward the draft Council Decision as set out in doc. 6884/26 to the European Parliament for its consent.