



Brussels, 15.1.2025
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COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 15.1.2025

**on the financing of the Research Programme of the Research Fund for Coal and Steel
(RFCS) and the adoption of the work programme for 2025**

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on the financing of the Research Programme of the Research Fund for Coal and Steel (RFCS) and the adoption of the work programme for 2025

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to the Protocol, annexed to the Treaty on European Union and to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, on the financial consequences of the expiry of the ECSC Treaty and on the Research Fund for Coal and Steel,

Having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union¹ ('the Financial Regulation'), and in particular Article 110(1) thereof,

Having regard to Council Decision (EU) 2003/76/EC of 1 February 2003 establishing the measures necessary for the implementation of the Protocol, annexed to the Treaty establishing the European Community, on the financial consequences of the expiry of the ECSC Treaty and on the Research Fund for Coal and Steel², as amended by Council Decision (EU) 2021/1208 of 19 July 2021³,

Having regard to Council Decision (EU) 2008/376/EC of 29 April 2008 on the adoption of the Research Programme of the Research Fund for Coal and Steel and on the multiannual technical guidelines for this programme⁴, as amended by Council Decision (EU) 2021/1094 of 28 June 2021⁵,

Whereas:

- (1) In accordance with Article 2 (1) of Council Decision (EU) 2003/76/EC, as amended by Council Decision (EU) 2021/1208, the annual Research Fund for Coal and Steel (RFCS) allocation of EUR 111 million must be maintained until 2027 in order to finance research in sectors related to the coal and steel industry⁶.

¹ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (recast) (OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.09.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>).

² OJ L 29, 5.2.2003, p. 22.

³ Council Decision (EU) 2021/1208 of 19 July 2021 amending Council Decision (EU) 2003/76/EC establishing the measures necessary for the implementation of the Protocol, annexed to the Treaty establishing the European Community, on the financial consequences of the expiry of the ECSC Treaty and on the Research Fund for Coal and Steel (OJ L 261, 22.7.2021, p. 54).

⁴ OJ L 130, 20.5.2008, p. 7.

⁵ Council Decision (EU) 2021/1094 of 28 June 2021 amending Council Decision (EU) 2008/376/EC on the adoption of the Research Programme of the Research Fund for Coal and Steel and on the multiannual technical guidelines for this programme (OJ L 236, 5.7.2021, p. 69)

⁶ Commission Decision C(2022)6996 of 6 October 2022 approving the Financial Report of the European Coal and Steel Community in liquidation (ECSC i.l.) at 31 December 2021, setting the 2023 allocation and updating the 2021 and 2022 allocations to the Union Budget for the Research Fund for Coal and Steel.

- (2) In order to ensure the implementation of the RFCS programme, it is necessary to adopt a financing decision, which is to constitute the annual work programme for 2025 in accordance with Article 110(2) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 ('the Financial Regulation'). The decision launches three calls for proposals in 2025 to finance research in the sectors related to the coal and steel industry, with EUR 40 million to finance collaborative research and EUR 71 million to finance research for breakthrough technologies leading to near-zero-carbon steelmaking and research projects for managing the just transition for coal mines already closed or being closed down, and related infrastructure in line with the Just Transition Mechanism.
- (3) The envisaged assistance is to comply with the conditions and procedures set out by the restrictive measures⁷ adopted pursuant to Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.
- (4) It is necessary to allow for the payment of interest due for late payment on the basis of Article 116(5) of the Financial Regulation.
- (5) In order to allow for flexibility in the implementation of the work programme, it is appropriate to determine the changes, which should not be considered substantial for the purposes of Article 110(5) of the Financial Regulation.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1
The work programme

The annual financing decision, constituting the annual work programme for the implementation of the Research Programme of the Research Fund for Coal and Steel (RFCS) for 2025, as set out in the Annex, is hereby adopted.

Article 2
Union contribution

The maximum Union contribution for the implementation of the programme for 2025 is set at EUR 177 000 000. The contribution shall be financed from the appropriations entered in the following lines of the general budget of the Union for 2025:

- (a) Budget line 01.200301 (steel): EUR 130 576 000, corresponding to EUR 29 120 000 for the standard annual RFCS call, EUR 100 000 000⁸ for the Big Tickets call and EUR 1 456 000 for *Actions d'appui et actions préparatoires*;
- (b) Budget line 01.200302 (coal): EUR 46 424 000 corresponding to EUR 10 880 000 for the standard annual RFCS call, EUR 35 000 000⁹ for the Big Tickets call and EUR 544 000 for *Actions d'appui et actions préparatoires*;

The appropriations provided for in the first paragraph may also cover interest due for late payment.

⁷ See www.sanctionsmap.eu – Note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In the case of discrepancy, the OJ prevails.

⁸ This amount includes appropriations left unused in 2022, 2023 and 2024, carried over to 2025.

⁹ This amount includes appropriations left unused in 2022, 2023 and 2024, carried over to 2025.

Article 3
Flexibility clause

Cumulated changes to the allocations to specific actions not exceeding 20 % of the maximum Union contribution set in Article 2 of this Decision shall not be considered to be substantial for the purposes of Article 110(5) of the Financial Regulation, where those changes do not significantly affect the nature of the actions and the objectives of the work programme.

The authorising officer responsible may apply the changes referred to in the first paragraph. Those changes shall be applied in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and proportionality.

Done at Brussels, 15.1.2025

For the Commission
Ekaterina ZAHARIEVA
Member of the Commission