Expiry of the ECSC Treaty: financial and search activities after 2002

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The European Parliament adopted the resolution on the Communication on the expiry of the ECSC Treaty: Financial activities after 2002. However, the Parliament takes notes of the Commission's proposals but considers that they would leave the European Parliament virtually no say on any of the decisions to be taken on the guidelines of the future Coal and Steel Research Fund despite the fact that its administrative expenditure would have to be met from the general budget and it wonders how the Parliament as one arm of the budgetary authority could approve this additional expenditure and give discharge to the Fund if it does not have any influence on the implementation of its activities. It also stresses that it cannot accept such a passive role, which is contradictory to present-day requirements of transparency and accountability. Therefore, it considers that the legislative acts laying down the multiannual financial and technical guidelines of the Coal and Steel Research Fund should be brought under the co-decision procedure, whereby the Parliament would decided on these guidelines on equal terms with the Council. Moreover, the Parliament requests the full budgetisation of the annual interests of the Coal and Steel Research Fund as preallocated revenue, including administrative costs of coal and steel research. It proposes the creation of a specific budget line in the revenue and expenditure side of the budget following the principles of budgetary specificity and neutrality. Parliament also considers that the inclusion of these activities in the general budget will require increased appropriations in the corresponding headings. The Commission is called upon to present a financial assessment of the post-ECSC activities being phased into the general budget as they may have an impact on the margin under the ceiling of each heading of the financial perspective. It stresses the need for further consultation of the budgetary authority should significant changes be made during the renewal of programmes financed under the general budget. Lastly, the Parliament proposes the inclusion of an enlargement clause which would enable the ratio of funds available for coal and steel research to be reconsidered in order to take account of the impact of enlargement.