Basic information

2016/0047(NLE) NLE - Non-legislative enactments	Procedure completed
Research Programme of the Research Fund for Coal and Steel (RFCS) and multiannual technical guidelines: advisory groups and technical groups Amending Decision 2008/376/EC 2007/0135(CNS) **Subject** 3.50.02.03 Framework programme and research programme for Coal and Steel	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
ITRE Industry, Research and Energy	BUZEK Jerzy (PPE)	16/03/2016
	Shadow rapporteur MARTIN Edouard (S&D) KRASNODĘBSKI Zdzisław (ECR) TELIČKA Pavel (ALDE) LÓPEZ BERMEJO Paloma (GUE/NGL) DALUNDE Jakop G. (Verts/ALE) BORRELLI David (EFDD) KAPPEL Barbara (ENF)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
BUDG Budgets	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
JURI Legal Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Competitiveness (Internal Market, Industry, Research and Space)	3544	2017-05-30

European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner
	Research and Innovation	MOEDAS Carlos

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
18/02/2016	Legislative proposal published	COM(2016)0075	Summary
07/03/2016	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
29/11/2016	Vote in committee		
30/11/2016	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	A8-0358/2016	Summary
14/12/2016	Decision by Parliament	T8-0501/2016	Summary
14/12/2016	Results of vote in Parliament		
30/05/2017	Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament		
30/05/2017	End of procedure in Parliament		
07/06/2017	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2016/0047(NLE)
Procedure type	NLE - Non-legislative enactments
Procedure subtype	Consultation of Parliament
Amendments and repeals	Amending Decision 2008/376/EC 2007/0135(CNS)
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ITRE/8/05822

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE583.919	05/10/2016	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE592.283	27/10/2016	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A8-0358/2016	30/11/2016	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T8-0501/2016	14/12/2016	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary

Legislative proposal	COM(2016)0075	18/02/2016	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2017)131	08/03/2017	

Additional information		
Source	**Document**	**Date**
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act	
Decision 2017/0955 OJ L 144 07.06.2017, p. 0017	Summary

Research Programme of the Research Fund for Coal and Steel (RFCS) and multiannual technical guidelines: advisory groups and technical groups

2016/0047(NLE) - 18/02/2016 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to revise Decision 2008/376/EC in order to ensure a coherent framework for participation in both the “Research Fund for Coal and Steel” (RFCS) Programme and Horizon 2020 Framework Programme in sectors relating to the coal and steel industry.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the Council adopts the act after consulting the European Parliament but without being obliged to follow its opinion.

BACKGROUND: after the expiry of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) Treaty in 2012 and under a Protocol annexed to the EU Treaties, the European Member States established the new “**Research Fund for Coal and Steel**” (RFCS) and transferred all remaining assets of the (expired) ECSC to this new fund.

The RFCS Programme provides **annually around EUR 50 million of R&D and Innovation funding** to both coal and steel sectors (with a distribution of 27.2 % for coal and 72.8 % for steel) bringing together industrial partners, SMEs, leading research centres and universities across the European Union to develop knowledge and foster innovation. The Programme is **funded by the EU general budget** and is managed by and under the responsibility of the Commission.

The legal basis laying down the management rules of the RFCS was adopted by the Council in 2003 and has already been revised in 2008. It provides for systematic periodical reassessments of the programme’s relevance and of the effectiveness of its management rules (multiannual technical guidelines).

CONTENT: the purpose of this proposal is to **amend the legal basis of the research programme dedicated to the Coal and Steel sectors** after the periodical assessment of its management rules with a view to implement the following objectives:

- ensuring a transparent management of a programme funded by the EU general budget and under the responsibility of the Commission with the implementation of the rules of the Commission concerning expert groups;
- facilitating access to funding for beneficiaries with simplified rules and through a proportionate alignment with the rules of the general research programme ‘Horizon 2020’ with which Coal and Steel stakeholders are familiar;
- updating the provisions referred to in the legal basis concerning in particular comitology.

The proposed revision of the RFCS legal basis is focused on the management rules of the RFCS programme (chapter III) and aligns, as much as possible the procedures and concepts used for H2020 to facilitate the participation of same beneficiaries to both programmes (RFCS and H2020). In particular:

- the different **category of actors** in a funded project (participant, subcontractor, third party), their eligibility and obligations are defined in accordance with the definitions used in H2020 programme;

- the H2020 appointment procedure for **independent experts** charged with the evaluation of proposals submitted applies for the appointment of independent experts in the RFCS programme;
- the possibility to charge as eligible costs an amount fixed by the Commission as **Staff costs for SME's owners and other natural persons not receiving a salary** is authorised.

In addition, the proposal:

- introduced a clarification on the **nature of the experts** appointed by the Commission to attend the Advisory Groups and the Technical Groups set up by the legal basis of the RFCS Programme is required to avoid any conflict of interests;
- provides that **the composition and tasks of the Advisory Groups and the composition and tasks of the Technical Groups should be revised**. The competencies of the Advisory Groups are focused on the management rules and procedures, the segregation between Advisory and Technical groups is enhanced and the appointment procedure of their members is clarified.

The objectives and the scope of the Programme are unchanged.

Research Programme of the Research Fund for Coal and Steel (RFCS) and multiannual technical guidelines: advisory groups and technical groups

2016/0047(NLE) - 14/12/2016 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted 562 votes to 103, with 45 abstentions (following the consultation procedure), a legislative resolution on the proposal for a Council decision amending Decision 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.

Parliament approved the Commission proposal subject to the following amendments:

Research projects: those research projects to which preference will be given include the following: projects on: (a) the impact on the **employment** of workers and the local community; (b) the impact on the **health and safety of workers** and of the local community.

The resolution stressed that the working conditions in the coal and steel sectors are demanding and have often resulted in damage to the health of workers and citizens.

Installations and companies should therefore **respect all legal requirements on social responsibility**, bring definitive solutions, and **minimise the social implications of transition or closure of installations**. The social partners need to be consulted to the extent possible on issues relating to social responsibility.

Tasks of the Advisory Groups: Members stated that the Advisory Groups will advise the Commission on tasks that include assessment of finalised projects of coal and steel production in the areas concerned.

Advisory Groups shall act **individually** and shall not represent an individual stakeholder. They shall be active in the field concerned and be aware of the industrial and sectoral priorities.

Technical Groups: Members urged the Commission to provide the maximum **transparency** possible, including publication of the agenda, background documents, voting records and detailed minutes, including dissenting opinions in line with the recommendation of the European Ombudsman.

Appointment of independent and highly qualified experts: for the appointment of independent and highly qualified experts, the provisions set out in Article 40 of Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council shall apply by analogy together with, for expert groups as a whole, the Commission Decision of 30 May 2016 on establishing horizontal rules on the creation and operation of Commission expert groups and a forthcoming European Parliament resolution on Control of the Register and composition of the Commission's expert groups.

Research Programme of the Research Fund for Coal and Steel (RFCS) and multiannual technical guidelines: advisory groups and technical groups

2016/0047(NLE) - 29/05/2017 - Final act

PURPOSE: to revise Decision 2008/376/EC in order to ensure a coherent framework for participation in both the "Research Fund for Coal and Steel" (RFCS) Programme and Horizon 2020 Framework Programme in sectors relating to the coal and steel industry.

NON LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision (EU) 2017/955 amending Decision 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

CONTENT: the Decision aims to change the legal basis of the **research programme dedicated to the coal and steel sectors** (Council Decision 2008/376/EC) with a view to implementing the following objectives:

- **ensure a coherent framework for participation in both the RFCS Programme and** Horizon 2020 **Framework Programme**, by aligning certain rules for participation under the RFCS Programme with those applicable under the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme;

- **revise the rules on the competencies and on the composition of the Advisory Groups and of the Technical Groups**, notably as regards the nature of the experts appointed by the Commission to ensure increased transparency and conflicts of interest, and contribute to a balanced representation of relevant areas of expertise and areas of interest as well as to an optimal gender balance;

- **ease the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises** (SMEs) in the RFCS Programme and to permit the use of 'unit costs' to calculate eligible staff costs for owners of SMEs and other natural persons not receiving a salary;

- update the provisions referred to in the legal basis concerning, in particular**, comitology**.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 27.6.2017.

Research Programme of the Research Fund for Coal and Steel (RFCS) and multiannual technical guidelines: advisory groups and technical groups

2016/0047(NLE) - 30/11/2016 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy adopted the report by Jerzy BUZEK (EPP, PL) on the proposal for a Council decision amending Decision 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.

It recommended that Parliament adopt the following amendments to the Commission proposal:

Research projects: those research projects to which preference will be given include the following: projects on: (a) the impact on the employment of workers and the local community of operations for mining; (b) the impact on the health and safety of workers and of the local community of operations for mining.

Tasks of the Advisory Groups: the report stated that the Advisory Groups will advise the Commission on tasks that include assessment of finalised projects, including further support measures to ensure their continuity and the long-term viability of coal and steel production in the areas concerned. Advisory Groups shall act individually and shall not represent an individual stakeholder. They shall be active in the field concerned and be aware of the industrial and sectoral priorities.

Appointment of independent and highly qualified experts: for the appointment of independent and highly qualified experts, the provisions set out in Article 40 of Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council shall apply by analogy together with, for expert groups as a whole, the Commission Decision of 30 May 2016 on establishing horizontal rules on the creation and operation of Commission expert groups and a forthcoming European Parliament resolution on Control of the Register and composition of the Commission's expert groups.