

Next European Commission programme: nuclear and renewables as essential contributors to unlock all decarbonisation pathways in Europe while ensuring our competitiveness

Nuclear Alliance joint statement of Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Sweden

Luxembourg, Energy Council 15th October 2024

The European Nuclear Alliance met on Tuesday October 15th in the margin of the Energy Council in Luxembourg with Ministers and high-level representatives from 14¹ Members States (including the upcoming Polish Presidency) as well as the European Commission.

In a changing global geopolitical context, the upcoming 2024-2029 Commission's mandate must ensure the competitiveness and resilience of our economies towards reaching climate-neutrality by 2050 and to address the « existential challenge » that Europe is facing, as highlighted by Mario Draghi's report on the future of European competitiveness.

We, the Ministers and high-level representatives of the Nuclear Alliance, underline our support to M. Draghi's call to pursue Europe's decarbonisation by leveraging all solutions in a technology-neutral approach. In his report, **M. Draghi underlines the relevance of nuclear for the future of the energy system and to meet the EU's climate goals through life-time extension of existing reactors and the construction of new ones using established technologies or bringing new generation of nuclear reactors to the market, including SMRs**. Indeed, nuclear energy, alongside renewable energy, is a cost-competitive solution to meet the growing demand for fossil-free electricity and mitigate climate change, thanks to its low-carbon footprint. Nuclear energy is the readily-available fossil-free technology able to produce consistent base-load dispatchable power, ensuring both our collective security of supply and the necessary flexibility in our electricity market.

Last March, the Leaders of the European Nuclear Alliance outlined² 4 pillars of actions to set an enabling European framework to foster a robust European nuclear industry and guarantee the security of supply of nuclear materials, particularly nuclear fuel, for power and non-power uses:

- Developing access to private and public financing, and exploring the possibilities and benefits of European financing instruments, in order to support large-scale reactors, SMR technologies and associated European value chain.
- Developing a skilled and diverse nuclear workforce for all civil nuclear applications.
- Scaling-up industrial, research and innovation collaboration across a European value chain through concrete projects.
- Respecting the national choices of all Member States with regards to the decarbonization of their energy mix so as to strengthen our unity.

¹Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Hungary, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Sweden as well as Italy and Belgium as observers.

² Nuclear Alliance Leaders' declaration of March, 21st, 2024 co-signed by *Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Hungary, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden* ([link](#))

We commit to intensify our cooperation within the Alliance, with all other like-minded EU Member-States and with the European Commission on these 4 pillars.

The benefits of existing and future nuclear power plants go beyond the borders of Member States which opt for nuclear energy. Indeed, low-carbon baseload energies such as hydro or nuclear power stabilize our common grid and the entire European electricity market. Nuclear energy as well as renewables are **true collective assets** for the European Union. Due to its baseload profile and low operating costs, nuclear power production creates less volatile market conditions. **Without such energies, there is no path for the EU to provide to its citizen affordable, reliable and abundant low-carbon energy while achieving Net Zero by 2050.**

We strongly encourage the upcoming college of Commissioners to deliver a paradigm shift in our energy policy by fully recognizing the role of nuclear energy, alongside renewables, for the future of our integrated energy system. Nuclear energy must be duly integrated within the upcoming proposals, in particular those of the first 100 days of the mandate, notably, by adopting a technology neutral approach in its Clean Industrial Deal, the 2040 climate objective, and any other piece of legislation or policy initiatives that will be brought forward to incentivize and finance nuclear energy. We call the Commission to present clearly in its upcoming proposals how the technology neutrality principle has been applied. We call the Commission to set-up, within the three first months of its mandate, a dedicated action plan, which should include an update of the Nuclear Illustrative Programme (PIN³) in close cooperation with Member States, to support the development of Nuclear Energy alongside Renewables and its financing in the EU, this is without prejudice to the upcoming MFF dedicated negotiations, in particular on its volume. In this respect, we recall "A new strategy on nuclear for the European Union"⁴ to be reflected.

Nuclear energy, alongside renewable energy, will power our long-term growth and competitiveness strategy: we commit to act on this basis to strengthen nuclear energy in Europe, ensuring it plays a pivotal role in achieving our climate goals and securing a sustainable energy future for Europe.

We look forward to engaging with the upcoming college of Commissioners and with the newly elected Members of the European Parliament to pursue and intensify our work in order to fully support the deployment of nuclear power in Europe and pave the way to a climate-neutral, competitive and resilient European Union.

³ The PINC is a tool defined in Article 40 of the Euratom Treaty, to map out the planned nuclear projects and assess the related investment needs.

⁴ Nuclear Alliance presented and handed over this document to the European Commission in July 2023 at the informal Energy Council.