



EU to invest €330 million to accelerate fusion energy and support nuclear technologies and skills

Brussels, 19 March 2026

Today, the European Commission has taken a decisive step in the development of nuclear technologies with the adoption of the Work Programme for the 2026 and 2027 [Euratom Research and Training Programme](#). By covering nuclear research and innovation, the Programme offers complementary funding to Horizon Europe.

The 2026-2027 Work Programme aims to bolster the EU's energy independence, competitiveness and technological leadership, while progressing towards carbon-neutrality by 2050, in line with the priorities set in the [Community Nuclear Illustrative Programme \(PINC\)](#), the [Net-Zero Industry Act](#), the [Clean Industrial Deal](#) and the [Strategy on Small Modular Reactors \(SMRs\)](#), presented by President **von der Leyen** at the [Nuclear Energy Summit on 10 March](#), in Paris. In addition, it will support the development of fusion-relevant technologies – a stepping stone towards the upcoming EU Fusion Strategy.

Accelerating fusion energy as a future source of energy

Fusion holds the potential to revolutionise Europe's energy landscape. The EU aims to connect the first commercial fusion power plant to the grid, providing clean, affordable, and safe energy to European citizens and businesses. Therefore, the 2026-2027 Work Programme will invest €222 million towards advancing fusion energy from laboratories to the power grid, by:

- Establishing a new European Public-Private Partnership (PPP) for fusion energy to help develop commercially viable fusion technologies and build a strong European supply chain.
- Supporting fusion-related challenges under the European Innovation Council's instruments to help emerging fusion start-ups grow and mature their technologies in the EU, while attracting private investment.
- Prioritising fundamental fusion research and the development of fusion-skilled talents, alongside joint exploitation of research facilities.

Investing for nuclear innovation, safety and talents

With the EU electricity demand expected to double by 2050, the 2026-2027 Work Programme is designed to strengthen the EU's ability to rely on research excellence, innovation, and talents to safely develop 'made in Europe' clean and low-carbon technologies.

In nuclear fission (€108 million), the collaborative research sponsored by the Programme will, among others, focus on the safe management of radioactive waste, radiation protection, and innovation in nuclear materials. In addition, the Programme will address research encompassing the safety of long-term operation of current nuclear power plants, SMRs, advanced reactors, and nuclear fuels.

Furthermore, the Programme will concentrate on advancements in nuclear medicine, funding research to enhance the EU's autonomy in supplying isotopes for novel nuclear medicine therapies.

Finally, the Programme will aim to attract nuclear talents both from within and beyond the European Union, for example, through [Marie Skłodowska-Curie grants](#). The Programme will also facilitate open access to over 230 nuclear research facilities across the EU, and further integration of Ukrainian nuclear researchers into the [European Research Area](#).

Background

The Euratom Research and Training Programme is the EU's initiative dedicated to nuclear research and training, focusing on advancing fusion energy, improving nuclear safety and security, radiation

protection and waste management. It ensures open access to infrastructures, education, and international cooperation. It operates alongside [Horizon Europe](#), supporting its energy goals and EU policies on energy security and technology leadership.

In line with the [Euratom Treaty](#), the Programme is established for 5 years. The current one ran from 2021 to 2025 and was extended by the Council in 2025 by 2 years, to be aligned with the EU's long-term budget 2021-2027.

The 2026-2027 Work Programme aligns with the EU strategies for competitiveness and carbon neutrality, supporting clean technology development and key policies such as the [Competitiveness Compass](#), the [Clean Industrial Deal](#), the [Net Zero Industry Act](#), the [Nuclear Illustrative Programme \(PINIC\)](#), the [SMRs Strategy](#) and the [European Industrial Alliance on SMRs](#).

For more information

[Euratom webpage](#)

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Quote(s):

"The EU wants to lead the world in innovative nuclear technologies, which will be key to securing our energy independence, competitiveness and decarbonisation. That is why we are working closely together with researchers, industry, startups and regulators on SMRs safety and to accelerate fusion energy, with the ambition to be the first to take fusion from lab to grid. For that, we need to ensure that our excellent science transforms seamlessly into innovation and industrial deployment."
Ekaterina Zaharieva, Commissioner for Startups, Research and Innovation

Press contacts:

[Maciej BERESTECKI](#) (+32 2 29 66483)

[Isabel ARRIAGA-E-CUNHA](#) (+32 2 29 52117)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)

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