

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001444/24
to the Commission
Emmanouil Fragkos (ECR)
(27 July 2024)**

Subject: Nuclear energy production in Greece

22% of the energy produced in the EU (2022) was from nuclear plants, representing one-half of energy production with a low carbon footprint.

France, for example, produces about 70% of its electricity from nuclear energy. On this basis, electricity exports increased fivefold in the first quarter of 2024.

Nuclear energy contributes to the declared aims of the Energy Union:

- strengthening energy security,
- enhancing energy efficiency,
- reducing economic dependence on pollution-generating methods.

The construction of a nuclear power plant near Akkuyu, together with Türkiye's talks with Russia, the USA, South Korea, China and Japan on the construction of additional plants, will result in a huge, unacceptable energy imbalance, further increasing Türkiye's attractiveness for investments.

The first cycle of investment in nuclear energy in Greece demands exceptionally high expenditure and a long-term strategy.

Obviously, there will be orchestrated 'local reactions' from NGOs that are funded by energy competitors, energy exporters and local intermediaries of energy importers, and a dynamic legislative framework is therefore needed to overcome these anticipated legal delays, along with infrastructure and the creation of a supply chain.

In view of this:

1. Is there a usable European legislative framework to overcome the legal obstacles?
2. How can Greece apply for long-term targeted funding for the earliest possible production of nuclear energy?
3. Can Greece contribute towards forming a coherent nuclear strategy?

Submitted: 27.7.2024

**Answer given by Ms Simson on behalf of the European Commission
(17 September 2024)**

The European legal framework for the nuclear sector is based on the Euratom Treaty ⁽¹⁾ and the secondary legislation derived from it. It covers in particular nuclear safety ⁽²⁾, radioactive waste management ⁽³⁾, radiation protection ⁽⁴⁾, investments ⁽⁵⁾, and provides regulatory clarity to Member States wishing to include nuclear energy in their energy mix.

The decision whether to use nuclear energy remains within the remit of each Member State in accordance with the provisions of Article 194 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

EU funding for nuclear energy projects based on the Euratom Treaty is currently available under the Euratom Research and Training Programme and as Euratom loans ⁽⁶⁾.

Moreover, several instruments developed under TFEU to facilitate the development and funding for energy projects put nuclear on equal footing with other low carbon sources ⁽⁷⁾.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A12012A%2FTXT>

⁽²⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2014.219.01.0042.01.ENG

⁽³⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32011L0070&qid=1397211079180>

⁽⁴⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L:2014:013:TOC>

⁽⁵⁾ See Chapter 4 of the Euratom Treaty.

⁽⁶⁾ 77/270/Euratom: Council Decision of 29 March 1977 empowering the Commission to issue Euratom loans for the purpose of contributing to the financing of nuclear power stations (here only a limited amount of Euratom loan funds remains available as the loan ceiling was not increased since its inception in 1977).

⁽⁷⁾ e.g. Electricity Market Design, Taxonomy Framework, the Net Zero Industry Act.

The role of nuclear as a low-carbon energy source contributing to the decarbonisation objectives is recognised in the Commission's overall decarbonisation strategy ⁽⁸⁾.

Greece can contribute towards further strengthening the role of nuclear in the European energy and decarbonisation strategy by integrating nuclear energy into its National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) ⁽⁹⁾ as the key strategic planning tool of European energy policies.

The NECPs will indicate the role of nuclear energy in countries' energy and decarbonisation policies, allowing to properly assess the nuclear investment needs. As of 9 September 2024, Greece has not yet submitted its NECP ⁽¹⁰⁾.

⁽⁸⁾ Commission Communication 'Securing our future Europe's 2040 climate target and path to climate neutrality by 2050 building a sustainable, just and prosperous society' (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2024%3A63%3AFIN>).

⁽⁹⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/energy-climate-change-environment/implementation-eu-countries/energy-and-climate-governance-and-reporting/national-energy-and-climate-plans_en

⁽¹⁰⁾ The legal deadline was 30 June 2024. So far, ten Member States have submitted their NECPs.