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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
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Subject:	COUNCIL REGULATION establishing the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community for the period 2026-2027 complementing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation and repealing Council Regulation (Euratom) 2021/765 - Adoption = Statement by Austria

STATEMENT FOR THE MINUTES BY THE REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA

**COUNCIL REGULATION ESTABLISHING THE RESEARCH AND TRAINING
PROGRAMME OF THE EUROPEAN ATOMIC ENERGY COMMUNITY FOR THE
PERIOD 2026-2027 COMPLEMENTING HORIZON EUROPE AND REPEALING
COUNCIL REGULATION (EURATOM) 2021/765**

The extension of the Euratom Research and Training Programme for the period 2026-2027 sets a clear focus on nuclear safety, radiation protection and safeguards in accordance with the highest standards. Austria shares these objectives and supports the targeted use of research funding to improve the safety of existing facilities.

During the negotiations in the Council, the European Commission clarified that research on small modular reactors (SMRs) under the Euratom Research and Training Programme focuses on safety issues and is not intended to support the technical development or industrial commercialisation of such reactor types. Austria welcomes the focus on safety aspects. Austria also welcomes the European Commission's emphasis on the neutral and independent role of the Joint Research Centre (JRC) in supporting long-term regulatory standards.

Nevertheless, Austria still has significant concerns. Austria considers nuclear fission, including as implemented in SMRs, to be neither safe, efficient nor economic, and therefore unsuitable to contribute to a climate-neutral energy system.

Austria reaffirms its position that use of nuclear fission for energy is neither a viable, cost-effective nor sustainable option for combating climate change. Nuclear power is not a renewable or safe energy source. Austria therefore does not support EU funding or a supportive European framework for nuclear fission reactors.

The outcome of the negotiations, with its support for nuclear safety, radiation protection and safeguards, nuclear medicine, nuclear fusion research, safe radioactive waste management, and training and knowledge sharing, covers important Austrian concerns. Accordingly, although Austria is not in favour of the programme, it abstains from voting, in line with its long-standing national political consensus.
