



October 2017

## The European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom)

### History

The Treaty establishing the European Economic Community and the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) were signed in March 1957 and came into force on 1 January 1958.

At the time there were six founding states - Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands - but Euratom has grown as membership of the European Community, and then European Union (EU), has increased. The UK became a member on 1 January 1973.

The Euratom treaty is legally distinct from the European Union (EU) treaty, but has the same membership (which includes all 28 Member States), and makes use of the same institutions (the European Commission, Council and Court of Justice of the European Union).

### Purpose

Euratom currently sets standards for the regulation of civil nuclear activity in the UK, including fuel supply, waste management and cooperation between nuclear states. It provides a system of nuclear safeguards, controls the supply of fissile materials within Euratom member states, guarantees high safety standards and funds international research into nuclear fission and fusion.

### Euratom & Safeguards

Under the Euratom Treaty, all Member States (including the UK) subject their civil nuclear material and facilities to nuclear safeguards inspections and assurance carried out by the European Commission on the behalf of Euratom.

Euratom also provides information on Member States' safeguards to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which has responsibility for nuclear safeguards globally. Euratom and the IAEA carry out joint inspections on some nuclear sites in the UK.