



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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Council agrees on general approach for extending the Euratom framework programme for nuclear research (2012-2013)

The Council today¹ agreed on a general approach² for extending, for a two-year period, the current European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) framework programme for nuclear research ([12009/11](#)).

The new decision will extend the Euratom programme, which expires at the end of 2011, in order to align it with the end of the EU's current financial cycle in 2013. Euratom programmes are limited by the Euratom treaty to five years, whereas the general 7th framework programme for research, which runs until end 2013, lasts for seven years.

The Euratom programme is organised in two parts corresponding to actions on fusion energy research and nuclear fission and radiation protection ([7402/11](#)), and to research activities of the Joint Research Centre (JRC) ([7404/11](#)).

- The fusion energy research activities include, as a central objective, to achieve the construction of ITER (International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor), a major experimental facility to demonstrate the scientific and technical feasibility of fusion power.

¹ The decision was taken without discussion at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council meeting.

² A general approach is an agreement on the essential elements of a legal act, pending the opinion of the European Parliament.

P R E S S

- The nuclear fission research activities are in line with the objective of enhancing the safety of nuclear fission and other uses of radiation in industry and medicine.
- The activities of the JRC cover customer-driven scientific and technological support for the formulation, development, implementation and monitoring of the Union's policies, with an enhanced focus on safety and security research. The JRC works as an independent reference centre of science and technology in the Union¹.

The rules for the participation of undertakings, research centres and universities in actions under the Euratom programme are set out in a separate proposal ([7418/11](#)).

The extension of the Euratom framework programme 2012-2013 will continue to contribute to the implementation of the "Innovation Union" strategy ([17165/10](#)), by enhancing competition for scientific excellence and accelerating the deployment of key innovations in the nuclear energy field, notably in fusion and nuclear safety, and will contribute to tackling energy and climate change challenges.

¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/jrc/index.cfm>