

'What has Euratom achieved so far?' from the Communauté européenne (October 1960)


Caption: In October 1960, the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC or Euratom) undertakes to build several Joint Research Centres (JRC); the most important in terms of nuclear research is to be located on the banks of Lake Maggiore in Ispra, northern Italy.

Source: Communauté européenne. Bulletin mensuel d'information. dir. de publ. Fontaine, François. Octobre 1960, n° 10; 4e année. Paris: Service d'Information des Communautés Européennes. "Où en est Euratom?", p. 5.

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Last updated: 05/07/2016



What has Euratom achieved so far?

Ispra: one of the largest building sites in Europe

Euratom's essential goal is to make atomic energy competitive in electricity generation: it is only atomic energy that will, in the near future, be capable of satisfying the ever-increasing demand for electricity in the six countries of the European Community. In order to enable nuclear energy to supply electricity at the same price as coal or hydroelectric power, Euratom is active on both the research side and on the construction of full-size nuclear power stations.

On the research side, Euratom is establishing its 'Joint Research Centre' which will employ several thousand technicians and specialists. The Centre is not located in a single place but will consist of four Establishments.

- One of the most important is in **Ispra**, in Italy. Situated on the edge of Lake Maggiore, the Ispra Centre, which was granted to Euratom by Italy, is becoming an immense building site. A thousand workers will soon be working there. The fact that so many people will be working there, making Ispra one of the largest building sites in Europe, should not surprise us once we realise that forty buildings have to be built and fitted-out between now and 1962. On that date, the Ispra Establishment will boast 1 500 researchers, technicians and auxiliary staff.
- Another of the Joint Research Centre's Establishments set up by Euratom is the **Mol Central Bureau for Nuclear Measurements**. Mol is also home to a reactor that Euratom will use jointly with Belgium: it is the renowned BR2 atomic pile.
- The two other Establishments will be located at **Petten**, in the Netherlands, and at **Karlsruhe**, in Germany. Euratom is conducting negotiations with the countries that are interested in this subject.
- **In order to speed up and expand some research topics**, Euratom is concluding more and more contracts. It recently signed one with Italy for the study of controlled thermonuclear reactions (the taming of the H-Bomb for peaceful purposes) and is negotiating others, including a very significant one with the Netherlands on the use of atomic energy in the agricultural sector. Furthermore, as part of its agreement with the United States, Euratom has signed twenty research contracts which will be of interest to large European firms involved in nuclear operations.

An 'amphibious' nuclear power station

- **Euratom is helping industry and electricity generators to become involved in the construction of large nuclear power stations.** To that end, it has concluded an important agreement with the United States for the construction of certain types of nuclear power stations. As a result, two power stations will be built. The first is situated 60 km north of Naples. Work has already begun. The second will be built at Chooz, close to Givet, in the French Ardennes.
- **The safety of workers is a significant concern for Euratom. In order to take account of all existing legislation, it organised, in early September, an 'international conference on the legal and administrative problems of protection in the peaceful use of nuclear energy'.** 250 specialists from 14 different countries took part in this colloquium. The first lesson to be drawn from this meeting is that it would be a good idea to create one or two Chairs in Atomic Law in Europe.