

Austria

Nuclear regulatory authority

The legislative and regulatory framework regarding nuclear safety comprises the legal areas of radiation protection, installation safety, safeguards and physical protection of nuclear material and nuclear facilities as well as radioactive waste management. As Austria constitutes a Federal State, a number of federal (Bund), provincial (Länder) and district authorities (Bezirksverwaltungsbehörden) are involved in the regulation of these matters. The Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (BMLFUW) is responsible for radiation protection, but not for radiation matters in the medical field and foodstuff. The Minister is also responsible for issues relating to the long-term storage of radioactive waste, including the siting, construction and operation of storage facilities. Finally, the BMLFUW is responsible for general affairs of nuclear co-ordination.

For the single Austrian research reactor, the TRIGA Reactor of the Institute of Atomic and Subatomic Physics (Atominstitut - ATI), the Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy (BWF) is the competent authority. Likewise, the competent authority for the Austrian radioactive waste management facility "Nuclear Engineering Seibersdorf" is the BMLFUW.

Nuclear activities

Austria has no nuclear power plants. As a result of a public referendum in 1978, Austria follows a strictly non-nuclear energy policy.

One research reactor (TRIGA Mark II, owned by the Technical University of Vienna) is in operation.

Radioactive waste and spent fuel management

Austria operates one central radioactive waste management and interim storage facility ? Nuclear Engineering Seibersdorf GmbH (NES) ? for pre-disposal management including treatment, conditioning and interim storage of all low and intermediate level radioactive waste (LILW) of Austria. Waste originates primarily from medicine, research, industry and decommissioning in Austria. High-level radioactive waste does not arise in Austria. There is no final repository for disposal of radioactive waste currently in operation. Austria considers an international or regional cooperation as a possible option for radioactive waste management.

Main legal instruments

The main legal texts, the Radiation Protection Act (BGBl. No. 227/1969: Strahlenschutzgesetz), with major amendments in 2002 and 2004 and further amendments in 2006, 2013 and 2015 taking into account recent EU legislation and the corresponding ordinances on radiation protection and nuclear safety (e.g. the General Radiation Protection Ordinance) contain detailed provisions concerning radiation protection, installation safety, emergency preparedness and the handling of radioactive waste.

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