

European Conference on Nuclear Safety - General message -

The first European Nuclear Safety Conference will be held on 28 and 29 June 2011 in Brussels.

The aim of this event, organised by the European nuclear safety authorities in ENSREG, is to describe the achievements made during the last ten years on the path to improving nuclear safety in Europe.

In fact, extensive cooperation between the regulators from the 27 Member States has produced substantial common ground to improve nuclear safety.

They have contributed to giving birth to a specific regional approach to nuclear safety, fully compatible with the international framework, but with its own dynamics and ambitions inside the European Union and leading to a common European vision on nuclear safety.

Such a common vision was given firmer shape recently by the European framework on nuclear safety established on the initiative of the European Commission. The EU is the only political area to have made the main principles laid down in the Safety Convention mandatory for all its members.

First of all, this conference will present the substantial technical work undertaken by WENRA on safety reference levels for existing nuclear power plants – which are about to be implemented in all the nuclear countries in Europe in 2011 – on safe management of radioactive waste and spent fuel and, more recently, on the crucial topic of the safety objectives for new nuclear power plants.

It will also provide an opportunity to explain to what extent members of ENSREG – the consultative group of the Commission on nuclear safety and radioactive waste management – took part in drafting the directive on nuclear safety and how they are helping to implement it in every Member State.

Moreover, European regulators will provide an overview of the challenges they will have to face in the years ahead, notably on the safety of new reactors, extending the service life of existing reactors and safe decommissioning of nuclear installations.

Finally, stakeholders, NGOs, non-European regulators and international organisations dealing with nuclear safety will be given the floor to comment on how nuclear safety is organised in Europe and on recent developments in this part of the world.