



Norwegian Ministry
of Foreign Affairs

Highlights

Meld. St. 30 (2023–2024) Report to the Storting (white paper)

International cooperation on nuclear safety and security in a changed Europe



The white paper

The white paper on international cooperation on nuclear safety and security in a changed Europe (Norwegian only) describes the profound changes that have taken place in Norway's policy on nuclear safety and security cooperation with Russia and Ukraine in recent years. Norway has consistently condemned Russia's violations of international law since Russia's illegal annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and destabilisation of eastern Ukraine in 2014. As a direct result of this, Norway's cooperation with Russia was scaled back and its cooperation with Ukraine was strengthened. Following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Norway suspended all cooperation with the Russian authorities on nuclear safety and security. At the same time, Norway has significantly increased efforts to support Ukraine.

The white paper provides an overview of Norway's bilateral and multilateral work in this field since 2010 and the results achieved. It also sets out Norway's future approach to international nuclear safety and security cooperation. The white paper highlights Norway's efforts in Ukraine, and also discusses Norway's work with other countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Primary objectives for Norway's international work to promote nuclear safety and security:

- reduce the risk of serious accidents and radioactive contamination;
- prevent nuclear and other radioactive material from falling into the wrong hands.

Geographical scope:

In addition to Ukraine, the geographical scope will continue to include Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Project cooperation with Russia and Belarus was suspended in 2022.

Funding

Norway has allocated close to NOK 2.5 billion under the Government's Action Plan for Nuclear Safety and Security since the early 1990s. This includes NOK 250 million in 2023 under the Nansen Support Programme for Ukraine. Of this, NOK 100 million was provided to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and NOK 150 million was allocated to projects under the Norwegian Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority.

Results

Norway's international cooperation on nuclear safety and security over the past three decades has enhanced our understanding of, and reduced the risks posed by, nuclear and other radioactive materials in Russia and other countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. It has also helped secure and dispose of substantial quantities of legacy material from the Cold War era. Mutual cooperation with the regulatory authorities in Russia, Ukraine, and Central Asia has improved

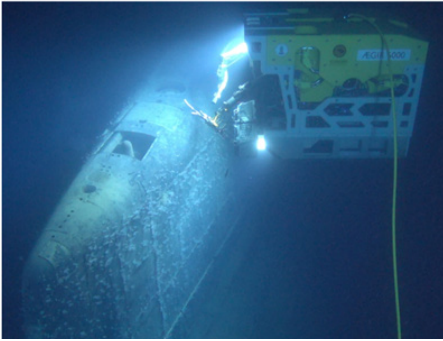


Photo: 'Ægir' /Norwegian Institute of Marine Research. Mapping of possible pollution from Komsomolets in 2019.

capacity building and enhanced regulatory frameworks, including through the establishment of joint emergency preparedness and response arrangements and environmental monitoring initiatives.

Norway's cooperation with **Northwest Russia** helped reduce the volume of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel from the Cold War by more than 50 %, including spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste in storage facilities, old submarine bases and decommissioned nuclear submarines, as well as radioactive sources in lighthouses. Cooperation also included safety projects at nuclear power plants.

Norway's cooperation with **Ukraine** on nuclear safety and security began after the Chernobyl accident in 1986. These efforts have helped to reduce the risk of radioactive releases from nuclear power plants and prevent nuclear and other radioactive material from falling into the wrong hands. Priority has been given to safety at nuclear power plants, enhanced border control and control of radioactive sources and waste.

In **Central Asia**, Norway has cooperated with the authorities in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to strengthen regulations on nuclear safety and radiation protection. Norway has also contributed to the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development's (EBRD) fund to reduce the risks from uranium legacy sites in Central Asia.

Way forward

The primary objectives and geographical scope for Norway's international work to promote nuclear safety and security remain unchanged. Norway will strengthen cooperation with Ukraine, and continue cooperation in other parts of Eastern Europe, the Black Sea region and Central Asia. However, in light of the changed security situation, we will need to develop new ways of working and consider entering into new partnerships.



Photo: Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Chernobyl Shelter in 2019

Due to the complexity of the projects, many require multilateral cooperation to ensure effective coordination and sound use of funds. We will continue our cooperation with the EBRD, IAEA, the G7 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, and the Information Sharing Initiative on nuclear security

cooperation in Ukraine. Cooperation with the other Nordic countries is also important.

The recipient country's needs and priorities are key to ensuring long-term sustainability, and these form the basis for Norwegian support. Bilateral cooperation is essential and contributes to mutual capacity building as well as knowledge and information exchange.

Key priorities of Norway's international work to promote nuclear safety and security are:

- strengthening dialogue and cooperation with relevant authorities;
- reintroducing radiation protection control and rehabilitating facilities and sites affected by hostilities, including Chernobyl and, in the longer term, the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant;
- increasing the safety of nuclear power plants and other nuclear facilities;
- preventing the smuggling of nuclear and other radioactive material;
- mapping and enhancing control of radioactive sources and pollution;
- providing information on nuclear safety and radioactive contamination.

The suspension of cooperation with Russia will inevitably reduce access to knowledge about nuclear safety and environmental impacts in the Arctic. Norway will continue to address unresolved challenges in this area. Priorities for future efforts include enhancing environmental monitoring and impact assessments of potential accidents and incidents involving sunken and dumped objects in the Kara Sea, nuclear-powered



Photo: Norwegian Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority Exercise in the use of measuring equipment to detect smuggling of radioactive material in Ukraine, 2019.

vessels and nuclear power plants. Norway will seek to maintain the bilateral Agreement on Early Notification of Nuclear Accidents with Russia, although the degree to which Russia is willing to follow up the agreement remains uncertain. Norway will continue to prioritise risk reduction, in close cooperation with the Nordic countries and other allies.

Norway seeks to promote flexibility and a long-term perspective. Predictability is vital in international nuclear safety cooperation in general and in relation to Ukraine in particular. We will continue our efforts in close cooperation with Ukrainian authorities and other international partners. The Norwegian Government will draw up a new action plan for international cooperation on nuclear safety and security based on the white paper.