



## INTERVIEW WITH DR HAB. MARIUSZ SWORA

**MEMBER OF THE ERRA STRATEGIC ADVISORY BOARD AND THE TRAILBLAZER OF THE ERRA NUCLEAR ENERGY REGULATORY FORUM “THE ROLE OF NUCLEAR POWER IN THE ENERGY TRANSITION” (ERRA NERF 2024)**



*Dr. Hab. Mariusz Swora, ERRA Strategic Advisory Board Member, Former ERRA Vice-Chair & Former President at the Energy Regulatory Office (URE) of Poland*

### **ERRA Secretariat: Where did the idea of ERRA NERF 2024 come from?**

Dr. Hab. Mariusz Swora: First and foremost, there is a need for a dialogue between energy regulators, experts, and agencies dealing with nuclear power and an exchange of experience in the field of economic regulation. What is essential here is that many ERRA countries have nuclear reactors, so exploring economic regulation is something ERRA regulators could benefit from. There are a lot of discussions on various regulatory issues related to renewables, for example, so there should be a place to explore potential regulatory aspects related to nuclear power. I am looking forward to the event, which I hope will pave the way for regulators to understand better the various implications of the broad deployment of nuclear energy. I know that the nuclear society is also interested in the outcomes of our debates.

### **Why should energy regulators care about nuclear energy?**

Regulators should care about nuclear energy in the same manner as they deal with other energy sources on the market, like natural gas, coal, renewables, or CHP, keeping technological neutrality in mind. I would describe their role towards nuclear energy as a discrete regulation focused on the economy and market, considering that the main burden of regulating these sources lies on international and national agencies taking care of the safe, secure, and peaceful use of nuclear energy. On the national level, there are also policymakers who decide about the design of nuclear programs, assigning concrete tasks to various public bodies, including sometimes energy regulators.

### **So, what exactly could the role of energy regulators be when it comes to nuclear energy sources?**

Regulators' tasks concern the promotion of competition and balancing the interests of energy enterprises and consumers, setting tariffs and licensing. They also play specific roles in long-term planning and assessing generation adequacy, where their role will increase in the future. They deal with network monopolies and various energy sources, like renewables or nuclear, in all their roles. Of course, the extent, character, and depth of regulation in the cases of grids and energy sources are different. To give a concrete example, depending on policy choices, they may be tasked

with the preparation and management of systems of financial support, like Contracts for Difference or Regulatory Asset Base. They also supervise long-term plans of energy companies, including projects for new nuclear builds within integrated resource planning.

### **What is the role of nuclear energy today?**

Nuclear energy is not just a source of carbon-free electricity; it also ensures the stability of power systems and the security of supply for consumers. Many countries have recently taken steps to extend the operation of existing nuclear power plants and build new ones, signaling a potential wave of investments in large nuclear power plants. To make this wave happen, market rules must be designed to allow the smooth operation of nuclear power plants. Moreover, promising developments in new nuclear technologies like small modular reactors and nuclear fusion are on the horizon, which could revolutionize energy systems in the mid and long run. This optimistic outlook should inspire energy regulators about the future possibilities and the potential growth of nuclear energy's role in the energy mix.

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