



Nuclear phase out in Belgium without further delay

Greens all over Europe support a radical improvement of energy efficiency and a transition from nuclear energy to renewable energy. But in some countries the nuclear phase out is postponed. In this way unacceptable risks are taken for the safety of many European citizens in different countries.

In many European countries people are very worried about the life extension of nuclear plants. A lot of incidents in nuclear plants for instance in Spain, France, Belgium or the Netherlands, clearly indicate that the decision to extend the life span of these nuclear installations, is irresponsible.

Many people in Belgium, but also in The Netherlands, Luxembourg, Germany and other EU countries are greatly concerned about the way Belgian (nuclear) authorities respond to the safety standards concerning the nuclear plants of Doel and Tihange and the way the potential safety risks posed by cracks in the nuclear reactors, leakages even in the nuclear part of the installation, or unexplained acts of sabotage, are followed up. The fact that the Chernobyl was disaster was detected in Sweden, more than 1000 kilometres away, reminds us that nuclear safety in every European country is important for all Europeans. It is not a coincidence that with the Greens in government the Swedish Parliament on May 16th decided to ban uranium mining in that country.

Recently, at the beginning of May 2018, a leak occurred in plant Doel 1. This is not an isolated incident, as leaks and cracks occurred regularly in previous years¹. While the previous times the incidents happened in the non-nuclear parts of the plant, this time the incident occurred in the nuclear part. Despite these clear security concerns, successive previous Belgian governments, have been very ambiguous on the close of the outdated nuclear installations. They have been advocating to postpone the phase out of nuclear energy and only put low effort to encourage investments in renewable energy. On Thursday 17th of May, Bart De Wever, mayor from Antwerp and president of the biggest party in the federal government, repeated his critique on a nuclear phase out that he considers as 'unrealistic'. This despite the Belgian law on the nuclear phase out that foresees a complete phase out in 2025. This law was a result of greens in government in 2003.

Therefore, the European Green Party demands that the Belgian government

1. Closes down immediately Doel 3 and Tihange 2 that in the opinion of international nuclear experts, poses major safety risks,
2. Reaffirms their commitment to implement the law on the nuclear phase out in Belgium by 2025, as decided by the Belgian parliament in 2003, all while simultaneously cutting down net carbon emissions from the energy production, in line with the climate targets,
3. Decides for once and for all not to extend the life span of any of the reactors that are in service now,

and demands that other European governments take similarly decisive steps to phase out nuclear power as soon as possible.

¹ <https://www.euractiv.com/?s=nuclear+Belgium>