

**Laura Lapina from Riga in Latvia presents quotes from two Latvian politicians, one scientist and one representative of an environmental movement concerning their attitudes towards the nuclear energy.**

A planned new nuclear reactor in Lithuania to serve all three Baltic States and Poland will not be ready for at least 16 years. "What we see is that this project is off schedule. Probably by the most optimistic forecasts we could have a new nuclear power plant in 2025."

Valdis Dombrovskis, Prime minister of Latvia

'Currently, many national energy policies within the EU are not sustainable. Individual member states alone decide on their energy policy. The Commission encourages member states to consider carefully the nuclear energy option in contributing towards a balanced energy mix. The spring 2007 European Council endorsed the Commission proposal to cut CO2 emissions by 20% as well as to increase energy efficiency in the EU by the same amount by 2020. Nuclear energy currently has an important role to play in this fight against climate change: it generates two thirds of the EU carbon free electricity. Abandoning nuclear generating capacity may lead to higher CO2 emissions since renewable energy sources and energy efficiency measures are by far not sufficient to substitute a phasing out of nuclear plants across the EU.

Moreover, nuclear energy increases the security of energy supply in Europe, since uranium sources are widely distributed around the globe, in geopolitically stable areas. It is also less vulnerable to fuel price changes, thereby protecting EU economies against raw material price volatility."

Andris Piebalgs, European Commissioner for Development;  
2004 – 2009 European Commissioner for Energy

"At this point we will have to decide whether to purchase energy or produce it ourselves, but it has to be taken into account that all the neighboring countries are already weighing construction of nuclear power plants," Ekmanis underlines. He believes that if Latvia wishes to start producing nuclear energy, even if the state cannot afford it at the moment, such a goal should be set at the political level. From the moment a decision is made to build a nuclear power plant, at least 15 to 20 years will pass until it starts operating, therefore Latvia should start considering building the plant already now, the scientist believes. Former staff members and experts of the Salaspils nuclear reactor (built for scientific purposes) could assist in training new experts – the Riga Technical University has expressed interest about the proposal, Ekmanis added."

/The President of the Latvian Academy for Sciences Juris Ekmanis

No, nuclear energy is not discussed in the context of climate change policies in Latvia. It is linked to the fact that a large share of electricity is produced using renewable resources. Moreover the primary challenges for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions are related to transport, heating, waste management, and agriculture sectors; nuclear has no role to play there. However, Latvia is considering joining the joint project of three Baltic countries and Poland to build a new NPP in Lithuania.

/Alda Ozola, Latvian Green movement (NGO)