

■ Press Release

Spain paves the way for nuclear power plants to remain operational longer

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Spain's Sustainable Economy Law was ratified yesterday. The reference to a maximum operational duration of 40 years for Spain's nuclear power plants has been deleted from the text.

The decision by the Spanish Congress not to limit the operational duration of Spain's nuclear power plants confirms the subtle but significant political shift that is taking place in Spain away from its official nuclear phase-out policy. The recommendation that was submitted by the ruling socialist party (PSOE), the Partido Popular (PP), the Catalan political grouping (CiU) and the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV), illustrates the growing political consensus in Spain that extending the operational duration of its nuclear power plants is essential if the country is to ensure continued security of energy supply and fulfil its CO₂ reduction commitments.

Commenting on the news, Santiago San Antonio, Director General of FORATOM, the trade association representing the European nuclear industry said: "We welcome the decision taken by the Spanish government, which echoes similar developments across Europe. Indeed, an increasing number of European countries have opted to either extend the operational duration of their power plants or build new ones. This clearly shows how nuclear energy is seen as an effective and essential means of contributing to the achievement of Europe's low-carbon economy goals".

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