

## Press Release

7 February 2019

### EU needs nuclear energy to ensure a sustainable, low-carbon future

**Brussels, 7 February 2019: Nuclear energy can help the European Union achieve a sustainable and low-carbon future while at the same time providing people with reliable and affordable electricity. In a dedicated position paper, FORATOM highlights nuclear energy's three main advantages in this context: environmental sustainability, energy independence, and economic contribution.**

The role nuclear energy will play in Europe's pursuit of a sustainable and low-carbon future has been recently confirmed by the European Commission in its long-anticipated strategy entitled "[A Clean Planet for All](#)". In this strategy, which shows how the European Union plans to lead the way to climate neutrality by 2050, the Commission stresses that nuclear energy will form the backbone of a carbon-free European power system, together with renewables. Each of the eight possible scenarios for Europe includes a significant share of electricity generated by nuclear power.

*"The recognition of nuclear energy by the European Commission as an essential element of Europe's low-carbon future is a step in the right direction", says Yves Desbazeille, Director General of FORATOM. "It's important to keep in mind that nuclear energy is capable not only of reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, but also provides many other benefits as it ensures security of energy supply and is environmentally, economically and socially sustainable".*

In the position paper, FORATOM highlights how nuclear energy can contribute to the EU's climate-neutral and sustainable future. Nuclear not only helps countries decrease the level of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, but also allows them to limit other dangerous air pollutants such as sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) or nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>), which makes it compliant with air quality standards. Nuclear power plants produce lower amounts of waste compared with other energy sectors and it is the industry itself which takes responsibility for the entire back end of the nuclear fuel cycle. Also, thanks to significantly lower land requirements compared to other low-carbon energy sources such as wind or solar, nuclear energy limits land use change, preventing the loss of biodiversity, and reduces the visual impact of energy generation.

Another important contribution nuclear energy provides is increasing the level of energy independence, which is essential considering that the EU imports approximately half of the energy it consumes, with many EU Member States dependent on one single external supplier. Nuclear energy contributes significantly to reducing dependence upon imported fossil fuels thanks to its high energy density and availability, multiple sources of supply and the reliability and diversity it provides.

Nuclear energy is also economically and socially sustainable. In terms of electricity generation costs, it is much less affected by potential fuel prices spikes as uranium costs are only a small component of the total cost of producing nuclear energy. The OECD NEA study "[Projected Costs of Generation Electricity](#)" shows that, based on the Levelized Cost of Electricity (LCOE), nuclear energy is the most cost-effective low-carbon energy source together with onshore

wind. The nuclear industry also contributes significantly to the economic growth of the countries which chose it as it offers a large amount of long-term highly skilled jobs. Based on FORATOM's estimations, around 800,000 jobs in Europe are provided by the nuclear industry.

In order to find out more on the benefits of nuclear energy, check out the [Position Paper](#).

For more information, please contact Jessica Johnson: [jessica.johnson@foratom.org](mailto:jessica.johnson@foratom.org).