

The importance of nuclear safety in the context of the current energy crisis

With the emerging energy crisis and the growing concern in Europe about being able to achieve the short, medium and long term balance between electricity production and consumption, and the need to address climate change challenges, WENRA recognizes the increased demands in some countries for nuclear power plants to contribute to the energy mix through review of existing closure dates, lifetime extensions of existing nuclear power plants or major nuclear new-built programmes.

WENRA also notes that the war in Ukraine has enhanced the need for some countries to reconsider their energy independence with new perspectives.

This scenario has the potential to put undue pressure and burden on nuclear stakeholders, including nuclear regulators. To avoid this:

1. WENRA recommends that energy policy decisions be taken in due time and remain stable in the long term. The absence of predictability and lack of stability are detrimental to nuclear safety.
2. Governments and other stakeholders need to recognize that licensees have the prime responsibility for safety. The licensees are expected to demonstrate the safety of their operations and activities and submit these demonstrations in a timeframe that enables an appropriate period for adequate regulatory review.
3. The continued independence of regulatory decision-making is essential. WENRA members commit to work effectively and efficiently to make regulatory decisions in a timely manner.