

FORSA survey: majority oppose nuclear power

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Two thirds (66 percent) of the German population want to continue with the nuclear phase-out as adopted by the government or even accelerate it. This was the result of a representative poll on the safety of nuclear power plants and the phasing out of nuclear energy, carried out by the FORSA polling institute on behalf of the Federal Environment Ministry (survey period: 20-22 April). This constitutes a considerable increase compared to 2006. In August 2006, 62 percent of Germans responded to the same question that the pace of nuclear phase-out should be maintained or increased.

12 percent are of the opinion that the pace should be slowed down. Only 18 percent are entirely opposed to the decommissioning of nuclear power plants.

Federal Environment Minister Sigmar Gabriel said: "These representative figures show that a broad majority of the population support the nuclear phase-out adopted by the government. They also show that nuclear lobbyists do not succeed in glossing over the risks of nuclear energy even if they spend millions on promotional campaigns. It turns out that the talk of a renaissance of nuclear energy is merely propaganda."

70 percent of Germans consider the risk of accidents in nuclear power plants as too high: 26 percent are of the opinion that the risk of a disaster on the scale of Chernobyl 20 years ago is as great today as it was then. 44 percent say that although nuclear power plants worldwide are safer today, they personally still consider the risk entailed as too high.

Only 4 percent believe that nuclear power plants are safe nowadays, and that the risk of accidents no longer exists. 24 percent agree with the statement that the risk of accidents has been diminished to such a degree over the last 20 years that the remaining risk is acceptable.

The majority of the population (57 percent) consider nuclear energy a great hazard or a very great hazard to themselves and their families. This opinion is shared by a majority in almost all age groups, although in the age group 18 to 29, only 49 percent consider the hazard as very great or great.