

# Press release – MEPs call for suspension of the launch of the Belarus nuclear plant in Ostrovets



In a resolution adopted with 642 votes to 29, with 21 abstentions, Parliament criticises the hasty commissioning of the Ostrovets nuclear plant and the continued lack of transparency and official communication regarding the frequent emergency shutdowns of the reactor and equipment failure.

Despite outstanding safety concerns, the plant started to generate electricity on 3 November 2020 without fully implementing recommendations made in the 2018 EU peer review and by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), MEPs say, expressing their discontent with the rush to start commercial operation of the plant in March 2021.

They call on the Commission to work closely with the Belarusian authorities to delay launching the plant until all EU stress test recommendations are fully implemented and all the necessary safety improvements are in place.

MEPs also urge Belarus to fully comply with international nuclear and environmental safety standards, and to cooperate with international authorities in a transparent manner.

## **Background**

The Ostrovets nuclear plant, built by the Russian group Rosatom, is located 50km from Vilnius (Lithuania) and in close proximity to other EU countries such as Poland, Latvia and Estonia.

Electricity stopped being traded between Belarus and the EU on 3 November when the Ostrovets plant was connected to the electricity grid. This followed the August 2020 joint decision of the Baltic States to cease commercial

exchanges of electricity with Belarus once the Ostrovets plant started operating. However, MEPs note that electricity from Belarus can still enter the EU market via the Russian grid.