



EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

Community Research

KA, 2009-01-28

ARGONA End Users Conference

How can recent research improve the governance of nuclear waste management in Europe?

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Nuclear waste management has entered a phase with increasing focus on stakeholder participation, transparency and engagement of social sciences. Waste management organizations and public bodies have progressively changed their attitudes towards more interaction with concerned publics. New approaches to participation and transparency have emerged in this sector that are also now being disseminated to other fields. However, much is still to be done to meet stakeholder needs, implement participatory methods and to understand how they can be adapted to different cultural contexts within Europe.

The ARGONA project investigates how different approaches to transparency and deliberation relate to each other and how they link to the political system in which decisions, for example on the final disposal of nuclear waste, are ultimately taken. To achieve this, ARGONA includes both theoretical analyses and practical implementation. Recommendations will be given for future implementation. Fourteen organizations from eight countries are involved in ARGONA. Some participants are from nuclear waste management programs, others are researchers or represent non-governmental organizations, public interest groups and local authorities.

The first objective of the Uppsala conference in March 2009 is to provide an opportunity for active communication and dissemination of preliminary results from ARGONA and to give the project feedback on its preliminary results and recommendations. The intention is also to give a wider view of the state of knowledge about participation and transparency in radioactive waste management in Europe by the active participation of three other major on-going or recently ended projects – CARL, OBRA and CIP.

The conference takes place at a point in time when the CARL and OBRA projects have been completed and when ARGONA has only seven months left to finalize. For these projects it is a suitable time to explore results, as well as values and assumptions that lie behind the research approaches and to discuss the future of participation and transparency in European radioactive waste management programmes. Especially, the conference intends to “stretch”¹ the research community with respect to values, assumptions and applicability of results in order to facilitate for the end users, including communities, to form their own opinions about future application. The CIP project methodology will be presented as well, although in March 2009 it is not yet appropriate to explore results as these are currently being elaborated by the five national stakeholder groups.

The Conference then also provides a forum for municipalities, other end users and researchers to discuss the outcome of research in the field, and to reach their own respective positions about their needs for participation and transparency in the future.

The focus is thus on practical implications of research. The project participants and others are welcome to give more in depth scientific presentation of results in conferences such as the VALDOR 2009 symposium and other scientific conferences.

The conference will be held with simultaneous translation between Czech, Dutch, English, Slovene, Spanish and Swedish.

Practical information:

- Registration can be done at the conference web site
- Conference hotels in Uppsala are all situated nearby the conference venue. Hotels can be booked following the registration link at the conference web site:
<http://www.argonaproject.eu/argon-a-end-users-conference.php>
- Uppsala is easily reached from the Stockholm Arlanda Airport by bus, train or taxi. Information will be sent to conference participants

The ARGONA (Arenas for risk governance) project is coordinated by the The Swedish Radiation Safety Authority and managed by Karita Research, Sweden. It is part of the sixth Euratom research and training Framework Programme on nuclear energy. ARGONA was launched in November 2006 and will last for three years. The project is intended to explore how new approaches to dialogue can be implemented in nuclear waste management programmes and how participation and transparency link to the political system. It includes both theoretical analyses and practical implementation of different participatory approaches and an investigation of how good risk communication can be organized taking cultural aspects into account. In the end the project will provide guidelines for participation and transparency for use in nuclear waste management programmes.

¹ In this case “stretching” means that the research approaches and results are challenged by independent researchers and end users



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Date March 17 –18, 2009

Venue Pingstkyrkan, S:t Persgatan 9, Uppsala
(Pingstkyrkan- Pentecostal Church - is one of the major conferences venues in Uppsala)

PRELIMINARY AGENDA

March 17

09.00 Welcoming remarks, Arne Sandemo, Chairman of the Uppsala Regional Council Board, and Jacob Spangenberg, Mayor in Östhammar Municipality

09.30 The ARGONA Project²

Background and objectives, preliminary conclusions and recommendations
Josefin Päiviö-Jonsson, Swedish Radiation Safety Authority, ARGONA Coordinator
Kjell Andersson, Karita Research, ARGONA Project Manager
Work package leaders and Czech participants

Stretching (panel)

The panel, consisting of a few researchers and stakeholders, not taking part in ARGONA, ask questions about the ARGONA approach and results with focus on their future practical applications

Questions from the floor

² Arenas for Risk Governance - A research action part-funded under the 6th Framework Programme of the European Commission

10.50. Coffee

11.20 The CARL Project³

CARL Key findings (Anne Bergmans, University of Antwerp, CARL Project Coordinator)

Stretching (panel)

The panel, consisting of a few researchers and stakeholders, not taking part in CARL, ask questions about the CARL approach and results with focus on their future practical applications

Questions from the floor

12.10 Lunch

13.30 The OBRA Project⁴

OBRA Vision and results (Meritxell Martel, Amphos21, OBRA Coordinator)

Stretching (panel)

The panel, consisting of a few researchers and stakeholder, not taking part in OBRA, ask questions about the OBRA approach and results with focus on their future practical applications

Questions from the floor

14.30 The CIP Project⁵ (COWAM in Practice)

Claire Mays, Symlog, CIP Work Package Leader

Questions from the floor

15.10 Coffee

15.30 An Internet Forum for Public Discussion on Nuclear Waste Management – An Uppsala Regional Council initiative (Lucie Riad, Uppsala Regional Council).

The discussion forum is to be found on the Swedish part of the website www.finaldisposal.com.

³ CARL is an independent, self-supporting consortium of organisations from countries that have experience of stakeholder involvement in radioactive waste management.

⁴ Feasibility study for a European Observatory for long-term governance of radioactive waste management - A coordination action under the 6th Framework Programme of the European Commission

⁵ COWAM in Practice - A research action part-funded under the 6th Framework Programme of the European Commission

15.50 Working groups - what shall we do now?

Working groups will be organised separately for municipalities, NGOs, other end users and researchers

Having been given a picture of the state of knowledge with regard to participation and transparency and with better clarity of research approaches and available results from the four projects, stakeholder groups discuss between themselves the outcome of research in order to reach their own respective positions about their needs for future work on participation and transparency. The municipality groups will be supported by simultaneous translation.

17.15 End

19.00 Dinner at Uppsala Castle hosted by Uppsala Regional Council

March 18

09.00 The Transparency Programme of the Swedish National Council for Nuclear Waste (Eva Simic)

This is the first time the RISCO Model has been implemented as an established component in a radioactive waste management programme. It is thus a case of application of research in participation and transparency.

09.30 Working group presentations

10.30 Coffee

11.00 European Commission comments and plans

The European Commission is invited to comment on the situation with regard to participation and transparency and its plans for implication of the research results achieved in Framework Programmes.

11.30 Discussion

12.30 End

Participants

ARGONA partners
Czech municipalities
CARL participants with municipalities
GMF
CIP participants
OBRA coordinator and selected participants
European Commission
Implementers
Government agencies
NGOs