



Newsletter No. 4

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Building a platform for enhanced societal research related to nuclear energy in Central and Eastern Europe



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PLATENSO NETWORKING WORKSHOP

A networking workshop was held in Budapest on 12 November 2015 with the aim to firstly, foster cooperation between national networks established by PLATENSO and secondly, to analyse ways and means to establish a platform to coordinate research on governance matters related to nuclear technology. The workshop highlighted that research strategies regarding social, societal and governance aspects of nuclear energy are very rarely addressed in New Member States.

However, the challenges involved

in future energy scenarios make it essential for New Member States to be proactive regarding social science research in the field of energy, particularly if countries are considering Generation IV reactors, such as Visegrad countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) and Romania.



Some of the invited speakers at the workshop

were: Mr. Akira Izumo, Public Information Specialist at the IAEA; Mrs. Larissa Titarenko, representing the Net4Society project, an international network of national contact points for the societal challenge 6 in Horizon 2020, and Mr. Johannes Reichl representing the Joint Programme on the Economic, Environmental and Social Impacts of Energy Policies and Technology of the European Energy Research Alliance (EERA).

Opportunities for collaboration between these organisations and PLATENSO were explored in the framework of the future platform enhancing research on social sciences and humanities in the nuclear field in Europe. Such a platform, proposed to be problem-driven, tries to bring together and to summarise for Central and Eastern European countries practices, thinking and lessons learned, and to point to existing tools for broadening their research approaches to be better prepared to meet the social and political challenges associated with their future energy scenarios. Generally, platforms are technology oriented and thus, not critical towards that technology. However, the platform promoted in the PLATENSO project is regarded as a think tank underlining the contribution of social sciences and humanities towards the controversial issues surrounding nuclear technology.

More information is available at www.platensoproject.eu and www.vicplatenso.eu.



Project activities in brief



Activities of the international PLATENSO network (WP2)

The aim of the WP2 is to establish an international network of research institutions, public bodies and individuals interested in research and sharing of knowledge and practices in the field of social, societal and governance issues related to the nuclear energy. After the meeting of the national contacts of 8 participating Central and Eastern European countries in February 2015 in Prague, two main activities have been going on in the network. First, national contacts and members of national networks have been participating in the work within various work packages of the PLATENSO project. Second, new meetings of the national networks have taken place, especially in Poland, Slovakia, Romania and the Czech Republic. Sometimes, both kinds of activities have been combined in one event.

Except the regular project meetings, the most important international event was the networking workshop in November 2015 in Budapest. The aim of the workshop was to attract attention of the state and public bodies, to analyse ways and means for establishing and maintaining a platform for Central and Eastern European Countries and to seek forms for future co-ordinated research activities. As the PLATENSO project gradually approaches its end, the concern of all network members is to secure a continuation of the community and benefit from the results of the work done so far. The next opportunity for national contacts to talk together and to make plans for the future will be the PLATENSO seminar and workshop on nuclear and energy from the perspective of social sciences and humanities in Warsaw on April 7 2016. While the seminar will give an opportunity to social scientists from various countries to speak about the results of their researches, the workshop will be dedicated to the discussion about a possible new joint project proposal in the Horizon 2020 programme or in the Visegrad Fund

Forming a research strategy (WP4)

A majority of the countries in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) have certain nuclear history which is due to their specific geo-political position in the time of nuclear programs development in 50-ties to 70-ties linked to ex-soviet union nuclear programs (VVER and RBMK). There are also some exceptions – like Westinghouse PWR in Slovenia and Canadian PHWR (Candu) reactors in Romania. In Poland there have been just research nuclear program without commercial



reactors in operation. Until 90-ties in all these countries, but also in the rest of the world, nuclear programmes were perceived as something positive and advanced, very technically competent and as sign of scientific expertise. Only after the collapse of previous systems in 90-ties all CEE countries were challenged with social, societal and governance (SSG) issues related to nuclear programs development. Most of the time they were not connected to nuclear power plants, but more to support programs, like radioactive waste management development or decommissioning of nuclear installation activities. In some case, changes were required due to accession to European Union after 2004 in which some NPPs (e.g. Lithuania, Bulgaria, Slovakia) were shut down due to safety concerns. The approaches to solve SSG issues were based on individual solutions in which the problem was addressed with the aim to minimize the negative impacts.

The investigation of SSG issues in WP4 related to nuclear programmes was performed systematically including Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia and Romania. Different possible scenarios of nuclear programme development were assessed and topics for a longer term research with respect to SSG proposed. The national reports on SSG issues have been discussed also with different stakeholders, like research institutes, responsible nuclear authorities representatives and civil society to define the needs for future SSG nuclear energy related research. The reports will be compared and the most important SSG topics and issues of common interest will be proposed for the future EU research activities.

Establishing a social platform for energy related issues (wp6)

The primary aim of this WP is to develop a proposal towards establishing the legal basis for a European Entity on Socio-Economic matters linked to nuclear technology. On the basis of exploratory studies focusing on Central and Eastern Europe and contacts with relevant stakeholders in all EU, this WP will analyse main aspects with regard to the implementation of such an entity (organization, legal form, communication structure, content, etc).

The next PLATENSO workshop will be held on 7th April 2016 at Collegium Civitas in Warsaw, Poland. The Seminar “Nuclear and Energy from the perspective of Social Sciences and Humanities” is addressed to social scientists from different fields and disciplines in New Member States that are willing to share the results of their research on nuclear energy and societal aspects. Additionally, Jan-Henrik Meyer from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) will provide an overview of the HoNESt project on the History of Nuclear Energy and Society, (www.honest2020.eu) and Philip Johnstone, Research Fellow from Sussex University and Tyndal Centre Sussex Coordinator will present his research on nuclear political economy. The workshop will also provide an opportunity for discussing collaboration in order to create a European network of nuclear energy research in social sciences and humanities.



Announcements

SENIX 2016

The conference SENIX 2016 will take place from 13-15 June 2016 with the title The Role of Social Sciences in a Low-Carbon Energy Mix. The link between scientists/engineers and policymakers needs to become stronger. The conference will help bridging the gap between present day conditions and full recognition of the necessity to bring in the social issues up-front. Major areas of social, societal and governance issues will be addressed. Preliminary topics of the conference include social and political challenges, decision-making processes (governance), local and regional socio-economic impacts and concerns and ethics.

Abstracts can be submitted until end of March 2016 at the conference web site www.delegia.com/senix2016 where registration can also be made.

In conjunction with SENIX, on Monday June 13 in a venue just adjacent to SENIX, the Swedish National Council for Nuclear Waste will host a **seminar Ethical Perspectives on the Nuclear Fuel Cycle**. Participation is free of charge. Seminar participants can attend the opening session of the SENIX conference and also register for the following days (June 14-15) for a reduced fee. The seminar will be held in English language. A detailed programme will be available on the Council web site from April 15 at the latest. If you are interested to take part in this seminar you are welcome to contact Holmfridur Bjarnadottir, holmfridur.bjarnadottir@gov.se. Further information will be provided on the Council's homepage www.karnavfallsradet.se.



RICOMET 2016

Risk perception, communication and ethics of exposures to ionising radiation



The Second International Conference on Risk Perception, Communication and Ethics of Exposures to Ionising Radiation (RICOMET) will take place from 1st to 3rd of June 2016 in Bucharest–Romania. The conference is organized under the auspices of the four Euratom Projects: EAGLE, OPERRA, PLATENSO and CONCERT and intends to continue the dialogue started by RICOMET 2015 on social and ethical issues, as well as stakeholder and public participation in nuclear science, technology and innovation.

The focal points of this year are:

- Creating a Strategic Research Agenda on Social Sciences and Humanities in Radiation Protection
- Policy making related to different applications of ionizing radiation.

Details on the conference topics, dates for abstract and paper submission, venue and accommodation will be available on January 20th, 2016 on <http://ricomet2016.sckcen.be/en>.



NENE 2016

Nuclear Society of Slovenia invites to attend the traditional already **25th meeting** of professionals from nuclear research organizations, educational institutions, nuclear utilities, industrial companies and regulatory bodies. The NENE –New Energy for New Europe 2016 conference will be held in the sea resort of Portorož, Slovenia from 5-8 of September 2016. Special attention will be paid to: **50 years of the Slovenian TRIGA reactor and role of research reactors to support nuclear energy.**

The conference is a traditional annual meeting of professionals from nuclear research and educational institutions, nuclear vendors, utilities and regulatory bodies. It attracts around 200 participants from more than 20 countries. The topics discussed include reactor physics, thermal hydraulics, probabilistic safety assessment, severe accidents, nuclear fusion, nuclear power plant operation, nuclear materials, waste management and new reactor designs. Details on the NENE 2016 are available at <http://www.nss.si/nene2016/index.html>, the abstract should be submitted electronically until 30th of April 2016.



Radiation Protection Week - RPW 2016

For the first time, RPW 2016 will bring together complementary strands of radiation protection research, with the established European platforms MELODI, EURADOS, NERIS and ALLIANCE as co-organisers, along with other relevant areas. Building on and extending the highly successful MELODI workshops and in the light of greater integration of European research on Radiation Protection demonstrated by the CONCERT European Joint Programme, you are invited to participate in this first Radiation Protection Week.

RPW2016 will be held in Oxford from 19 to 23 September 2016, UK; the meeting will be held in the Mathematical Institute located in the recently re-developed Radcliffe Observatory Quarter of Oxford University; accommodation will be available in nearby St Anne's College. More info on <http://www.melodi-online.eu/RPW2016%20Flyer%208.pdf>.

RPW
RadiationProtectionWeek
Oxford 2016
19 – 23 September



Project partners

The project consortium consists of nineteen organisations from twelve different countries, see them listed below:

Karita Research AB (KARITA), Sweden



The Belgian Nuclear Research Centre (SCK•CEN), Belgium



The Center for the Study of Democracy (CSD), Bulgaria



Galson Sciences Limited (GSL), United Kingdom



Institute of Sociology Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (ISAS CR), Czech Republic



ÚJV Řež, a.s. Nuclear Research Institute (NRI), Czech Republic

Energiaklub Climate Policy Institute Applied Communication (EKL), Hungary



ENERGIAKLUB
CLIMATE POLICY INSTITUTE
APPLIED COMMUNICATIONS

Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC), Hungary/Slovenia



REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER
Slovenia

Lithuanian Energy Institute (LEI), Lithuania



Collegium Civitas (CV), Poland

Collegium Civitas
SOCIAL AND POLITICAL STUDIES

Nicolaus Copernicus University (NCU), Poland



Institute of Nuclear Chemistry and Technology (INCT), Poland

University of Ljubljana (UL), Slovenia

University of Ljubljana

Matej Bel University (MBU), Slovakia



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FUTURUM

Slovak Academy of Sciences – Institute for Research in Social Communication (UVSK SAV), Slovakia



Environmental Social Science Research Group (ESSRG), Hungary



environment,
research,
science & society
essrg

Merience Strategic Thinking (MERIENCE), Spain

merience
strategic thinking

University of Bucharest (UB), Romania

Institute for Nuclear Research Romania (INR), Romania



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