



EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

Community research

OBRA

European Observatory for Long-term Governance on Radioactive Waste Management

Contract FI6W-CT2006-036473

First annual activity summary

Reporting period: November 2006 to October 2007

Start date of project: 1 November 2006

Duration: 24 months

Project co-funded by the European Commission under the Euratom research and training programme on nuclear energy within the Sixth Framework Programme (2002-2006)

Dissemination level

PU	Public	PU
RE	Restricted to a group specified by the partners of the OBRA project	
CO	Confidential, only for partners of the OBRA project	



PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the coordination action OBRA is to assess the feasibility of creating an observatory for long-term governance on radioactive waste management in Europe. The OBRA project explores whether such an observatory is a useful mechanism for all stakeholders – firstly, to access to the knowledge generated by successive EU research programmes, both in scientific and social sciences fields; secondly, to promote the most appropriate forms of interaction between them; and thirdly, to jointly define how results from research, training and development in radioactive waste management and disposal are formulated and how their dissemination is managed.

The key objectives of OBRA are: (1) to establish a European networking platform between universities, implementers, stakeholders and civil society in general, (2) to develop a model of a European observatory for long-term governance in radioactive waste management, (3) to test the efficiency of a pilot training package as a mechanism for the transfer and dissemination of knowledge, and (4) to make recommendations on how the model of the observatory could be implemented.

LIST OF PARTNERS

The project presently has 10 partners from 7 European countries:

Partner N°	Partner name	Partner short name	Country
1	Amphos XXI Consulting	AMPHOS	ES
2	ITC School of Underground Waste Storage and Disposal	ITC	CH
3	Posiva	POSIVA	FI
4	Agency for Radwaste Management	ARAO	SI
5	Radioactive Waste Repository Authority	RAWRA	CZ
6	Group of European Municipalities with Nuclear Facilities	GMF	ES
7	Oeko-Institut	OKO	DE
8	Empresa Nacional de Residuos Radioactivos	ENRESA	ES
9	Lund University	LUND	SE
10	Kungliga Tekniska Högskolan	KTH	SE

WORK PERFORMED AND RESULTS ACHIEVED SO FAR

The activities proposed in the OBRA project are developed through five work packages (WPs):

WP1. Setting the baseline

As an exploratory study, the first step was to synthesise the different results achieved in European projects analysing governance of radioactive waste management in order to identify a set

of success factors to enable us to set the baseline of the observatory. In this regard, a set of success factors have been identified and may be applied to the level of OBRA activities and organisation.

WP2. Strategic elements of OBRA

The different activities undertaken within the framework of WP2 in the OBRA project – a creative workshop held on 1-2 February 2007 in Eurajoki (Finland), the project meeting held on 1-2 October 2007 in Prague and a master thesis – have provided an opportunity to discuss the vision and strategy proposed for the observatory and analyse in depth stakeholders information needs and the preferred ways of access to information on radioactive waste management.

The observatory has been envisioned to become a central point of reference for knowledge acquisition in the decision making related to the siting process. A realistic implementation of the observatory could be undertaken through gradual phases and focus initially on the governance process concerning the siting of nuclear facilities. The observatory would be set up initially as a user-friendly web site, providing an independent view through the engagement of different stakeholders groups. Aspects regarding the financing of the observatory need further discussion.

WP3. Implementation and testing of a pilot observatory

Training focused on assisting local community representatives, who are faced with the possibility of hosting a geological repository for radioactive waste, was initially considered as an activity that the observatory could undertake. Therefore, WP3 focused on assessing whether training for local stakeholders would be feasible. A trial training information package was produced and tested in a seminar held on 7-8 April 2008 in Meiringen, Switzerland. The seminar showed the need of community members, especially from local representatives, to obtain information on radioactive waste management issues to address their concerns and information needs. The seminar also indicates that a fully implemented observatory would need to expand the range of materials available to users. Nevertheless, the workshop has also revealed several difficulties, such as the lack of economic resources of local authorities and language issues, which will need to be further considered.

WP4. Knowledge management and assessment

In order to ensure a truly integrated dissemination of OBRA activities and strengthen public awareness regarding the governance of radioactive waste management the following activities have been undertaken: (a) A web portal to provide information on events, results and publications; (b) a virtual forum to enhance participation and gather different points of view of a wide audience; (c) dissemination of the project has been also supported by distribution of a project presentation, brochures, newsletters and presentations in conferences to a wide range of stakeholders. The dissemination activities have been carefully arranged following the guidelines of a communication action plan and a strategy for using and disseminating knowledge.

WP5. Consortium management

General management and co-ordination activities of the project are undertaken within this WP. In addition, active contacts have been undertaken to related EC projects on governance of radioactive waste management, such as CIP and ARGONA, to ensure transfer of information.

EXPECTED END RESULTS

The expected results of OBRA will be (1) the provision of a significant and innovative contribution to the current model of governance of radioactive waste management (2) the development of a more harmonised approach for addressing societal concerns and perceptions of radioactive waste management, (3) the promotion of a new and improved networking and coordination tool to improve the scientific and social activities regarding radioactive waste management and disposal.

Preliminary conclusions of the project show that the creation of an observatory for long-term governance on radioactive waste management is feasible. However, developing all fundamental elements required to actually build up an observatory for long-term governance on radioactive waste management will entail to move from the theoretical concept of the vision and strategy of the observatory developed during the OBRA project to practice.

INTENTIONS FOR USE AND POTENTIAL IMPACT

Expected contributions of this project are: (1) the definition and application of a reference model in the field of governance of radioactive waste management, (2) the promotion of a greater role for citizens at different territorial levels of governance by improving the knowledge base of all stakeholders and in particular, regional and local communities, (3) the creation of a network consisting of local and regional communities, implementers and qualified researchers from universities with the provision of active training, (5) maximising the output from existing efforts, (6) increasing Europe's competitiveness in radioactive waste management by leading an initiative for networking in social and technical sciences and (7) stimulating further collaborations between different stakeholders.

USING AND DISSEMINATING KNOWLEDGE

A specific work package (WP4) has been included to specifically address knowledge management and dissemination. Dissemination activities such as the website, dissemination of the project in conferences and the development of a joint newsletter between OBRA, CIP and ARGONA, distributed among relevant stakeholders, provide an effective interface of the project to a broad range of stakeholders. In addition, the meetings undertaken within the project and the training seminar, provides stakeholders with knowledge on aspects of governance on radioactive waste as well as promotes dissemination of the project.

Project website address

Project website: www.obraproject.eu.

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