

## **Social acceptability assessment in the context of identification of potential sites for LILW repository in Slovenia**

**Nadja Železnik<sup>1</sup>, Metka Kralj<sup>1</sup>, Marko Polič<sup>2</sup> and Drago Kos<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Agency for Radwaste Management ARAO, Slovenia

<sup>2</sup> University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, Slovenia

<sup>3</sup> University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences, Slovenia

*E-mail: Metka Kralj, metka.kralj@gov.si*

Amendment to the *Act on Ionizing Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety* (2003) prescribes that the site for the LILW repository in Slovenia has to be authorized by 2008, and the repository has to be in operation by 2013. The administrative procedure for site authorization started in November 2004 with the 1<sup>st</sup> public conference. This procedure runs in parallel with the siting procedure in order to save the time and insure that the authorized site will be publicly accepted. The siting procedure follows the mixed mode approach, combining site or area volunteering by the local communities, and the technical screening of the volunteered sites or areas.

In December 2004, ARAO invited 193 local communities in Slovenia to participate in the procedure. The call for applications finished after four months and eight local communities volunteered. Two of them resigned due to the opposition of the interested public, and the third because no suitable site could be identified on its territory. According to the administrative procedure of preparing the detailed plan of national importance for the LILW repository, only three potential sites can be taken into account. A pre-feasibility study was performed in the first half of 2005, and three the most promising sites were selected. The study comparatively assessed the potential sites from the technical, safety, economical, environmental, spatial, and social point of view.

The social acceptability assessment was performed on the level of the local community. Objective parameters (demographic data, industrial and market conditions, education level) and subjective parameters (personal standpoints of opinion- and decision-makers, municipality council support, reports and comments in local media) have been assessed.

The results had been presented in two matrices and a methodology for their evaluation was developed. Objective and subjective parameters had the same weight and the local communities were appointed integrated ranks from 0 – not acceptable to 3 – very acceptable. We did not exclude any of the local communities on the basis of the social aspects.

Social acceptability was the highest in the local community that is hosting the nuclear power plant. The second on the list was the industrial local community near the capital town in Slovenia which volunteered with the condition that an industrial repository of toxic waste would be remediated during the siting procedure of the LILW repository. Local communities from rural areas either withdrew from the process very early, or had low public acceptability.

ARAO is going to established local partnership with the three local communities most promising from the social aspect and having a suitable potential site for the LILW repository. This will facilitate further negotiations on the repository siting.