

Report on the short visit to Bucharest (Feb 2012) - Axel Gosseries - ENRI-Future

Purpose

This short visit is part of the Fairness Assessment Task Force on the Saligny Repository Sub-Project lead by Professors A.-P. Iliescu (Bucharest) and A. Gosseries (Louvain), which is part of the ENRI-Future project and especially of its WG2. Saligny is a nuclear waste repository planned in the vicinity of the Cernavoda Nuclear Power Plant (Romania) and that has led to extensive public debate. The visit aimed at interviewing officials, activists and other local people on the Saligny project as well as on a set of specific factual and normative issues identified in our draft report. Professor Iliescu established a list of contacts for this and took a set of appointments. The idea of this Saligny Sub-project is to test/assess the possible input of philosophers on an applied project that has direct connections with issues of rights of present and future generations since we are dealing with a nuclear waste repository. After a press data research, there was a need for a second phase to double-check some of the information and confront some of the arguments directly with the people who are in the field.

Work actually carried out

The very harsh weather conditions (heavy snowfalls, with most roads and train tracks closed all over the place) did not allow us to complete what we had planned. Even by walking, it was difficult to reach the different places within Bucharest. So, we had to renounce our site visit to Cernavoda/Saligny and the meeting with the Pitesti physicists – they were unable to reach us in Bucharest since the road was blocked. So,

1. I have had daily meetings in Bucharest with both Ileana Dascalu and Adrian-Paul Iliescu (monday, tuesday and wednesday at the Faculty of Philosophy and thursday morning with Ileana Dascalu only). We went through each of the components of the project extensively over these days, identifying priority subtopics.
2. We had an extensive (and very interesting) interview on wednesday 15 Feb. with 5 experts of the ANDR (National Agency for the Management of Radioactive Waste) including its head, Ion Nastacescu. This allowed us to better identify which – among the various issues – are practically the real issues.

Main results

We have now (1) gathered further data on the case study and (2) identified a set of sub-topics and allocated tasks to proceed to the production of deliverables on them:

- Ethical issues involved in the long-term funding of radioactive waste management
- Philosophical issues in the risk assessment of the project
- Climate change and nuclear production/waste
- The “job creation” argument
- Ethical issues associated with reversibility
- Accountability/independence of institutions

Future collaboration

The sub-topics identified in the previous section will require co-written deliverables. Collaboration between the Louvain and the Bucharest teams of the ENRI-Future will continue actively.

Projected publications

Articles should be published on at least some of these sub-topics and a full report is also envisaged. We will of course duly acknowledge the ESF and will keep you posted in due time.