

Lithuanian experience regarding obstacles for public participation in decision-making in a transboundary context

Meeting of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-Making, 15-
16/12/2016, Geneva

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Lithuania's geographical location



Reasons of the challenges related to public participation in decision-making in a transboundary context:

1. Different interpretation of the provisions of the Aarhus and Espoo Conventions;
2. Country is not a Party to the Conventions in question.

Public participation procedures during the planning and implementation of the Belarus NPP

Distance
from:

Lithuanian
Capital
Vilnius – 50
km;

Lithuanian
border – 20
km;

Belarus
Capital
Minsk –
140 km.



Major problematic issues related to the public participation procedure:

- ***Timing*** (not adequate)
- ***Language*** (translation and interpretation problems)
- ***Public hearings*** (formal gathering of people)
- ***Substance*** (requested information was not provided)

Public participation procedures during the planning and implementation of the Kaliningrad NPP (1)

NUCLEAR PROJECTS IN BELARUS AND KALININGRAD



Source: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/energysource/2011/03/24/lithuania-agitates-against-russian-nuclear-projects/#1318669b4c12>

Public participation procedures during the planning and implementation of the Kaliningrad NPP (2)

- In June 2008 and June 2009 Lithuania requested to provide information according to the Espoo Convention;
- Couple rounds of comments between Russian corporation Rosatom and Lithuanian competent authorities followed;
- Last response from Rosatom received in 2016; requests regarding transboundary EIA procedures are ignored (including request to co-organize public hearings).

Implementation of the provisions of the Aarhus Convention depends only on a good will of a country

Conclusions

- Aarhus Convention is a cornerstone of the environmental democracy.
- The need of uniform interpretation of the provisions of the Aarhus Convention between the Parties and other stakeholders is undeniable.
- Share of experience between the countries and implementation of international obligations is extremely important in order to guarantee effective public participation in the decision-making in a transboundary context.

Thank you for your attention!

