



**RICOMET 2024**  
**Ljubljana, Slovenia**  
**Best Western Premier Hotel Slon**

**10 June, 16:00-17:30**

## **Panel discussion: Public participation in decisions related to Small Modular Nuclear Reactors (SMRs)**

### **Introduction**

In recent years there has been a surge of attention towards the development and implementation of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) for energy production purposes, with several (European) countries showing a special interest in pursuing its development. Although SMR's most salient characteristics and the related advantages are still fiercely discussed by scientists and policy-makers alike, it has become clear that this new technology warrants special attention. In light of a rising interest and concerns regarding the development and implementation of SMRs, the present panel discussion aims at exploring and discussing the possibilities and modalities for public participation in decision-making on this new technology. In what stage should participants ideally be involved? Is it possible to identify specific challenges and opportunities, based on prior experience in the involvement of publics in decision-making? The introduction of SMRs will undoubtedly pose new social and economic challenges in the immediate future. Hence, the present panel discussion is of timely relevance.

### **Preliminary Agenda**

**16:00-16:10** Welcome and overview of ECOSENS project | *Daniela Diaconu, RATEN, ECOSENS project coordinator*

**16:10-16:25** Selected results from the ECOSENS project | *Gaston Meskens & Robbe Geysmans, SCK CEN*

**16:25-17:15** Moderated panel discussion: *Public participation in decisions related to Small Modular Nuclear Reactors*

*Moderators: Gaston Meskens, Robbe Geysmans, SCK CEN*

*Rapporteur: Willem Brabants, University Liège & SCK CEN*

**17:15-17:30** Questions and wrap-up | *Willem Brabants, University Liège & SCK CEN*

**17:30-17:35** Closing remarks | *Daniela Diaconu, RATEN*

### **Main topics addressed:**

- Views on public participation in decisions on SMRs
  - At what moment should it start?
  - Are there specific challenges and opportunities for participation?
- Lessons learned from the past (related nuclear or other energy technologies) relevant to public participation in decision-making on SMRs

### **Panel participants**

The panel brings together a wide range of stakeholders, representing policy makers, NGOs, local communities, practitioners and researchers.



Funded by the  
European Union



## **The ECOSENS Project - *Economic and Social Considerations for the Future of Nuclear Energy in Society***

ECOSENS is a EURATOM funded project. It aims to create a neutral space where specialists in social sciences and humanities, and in nuclear energy research and policy meet, exchange views and collaborate with civil society and other relevant stakeholders in order to:

- Provide a societal perspective on the development and use of existing and new nuclear technologies, in the context of major societal challenges: climate crisis, sustainable development and energy security, by opening up the technoscientific issues to the social, political, cultural and ethical context, in order to guide policies in the nuclear field.
- Provide an assessment of nuclear energy sustainability considering the entire life cycle of the current nuclear technologies, possible evolutions of the energy markets and nuclear technologies in the transition toward climate neutrality, and the societal perspective in order to reveal and evaluate the possible roles of nuclear power in the future;
- Provide a radically new economic model, based on the System of Provision, for the assessment of nuclear energy, overcoming the key weaknesses of existing economic models, providing a suite of indicators relevant not just for the investors (e.g. equity holders) but for a broad variety of stakeholders (e.g. consumers, governments, suppliers).

The ECOSENS project partners:

- Regia Autonoma Tehnologii Pentru Energia Nucleara (RATEN) – Romania – Project Coordinator
- Belgian Nuclear Research Centre (SCK CEN) – Belgium
- Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (ISAS Cr) – Czech Republic
- Institut Symlog (Symlog) – France
- Politecnico Di Milano (Polimi) – Italy
- Elektrolnstitut Milan Vidmar (EIMV) – Slovenia
- Centro De Investigaciones Energeticas, Medioambientales Y Tecnologicas (CIEMAT) – Spain
- MERIENCE Scp – Spain
- Universiteit Antwerpen (UAntwerpen) – Belgium
- Univerzita Mateja Bela V Banskej Bystrici (UMB) – Slovakia
- Universita Degli Studi Di Cassino E Del Lazio Meridionale (UNICAS) – Italy
- The University of Exeter (UNEXE) – UK

More on <https://ecosens-project.eu/>



Funded by the  
European Union