

## RESEARCH PROJECT

# Challenges and Success Factors for Transboundary Public Participation in the Context of the Site Selection Procedure (HERüber)

The Site Selection Act (StandAG) regulates the individual procedural steps for a science-based, participatory and transparent search and selection of a site for the safe final disposal of high-level radioactive waste. The site decision should be supported by a broad social consensus; those affected should be able to tolerate the result.

The Federal Office for the Safety of Nuclear Waste Management (BASE) coordinates and supervises the search for this location and is responsible for public participation. It creates the basis and general conditions for how citizens, as contributors to designing the procedure, are involved in the search for a repository site via formal and informal participatory procedures.

The site selection procedure takes place in three phases: 1) Determination of sub-areas and site regions on the basis of existing geoscientific data; 2) above-ground exploration; 3) underground exploration and site decision. For Germany, as the European state with the highest number of neighboring countries, it is likely that some of the subareas, site regions and possible sites defined in the course of the selection process are at or in the immediate vicinity of one or several national borders. However, when it comes to the construction of a repository for high-level radioactive waste, being “affected” does not stop at national borders, so that stakeholders from the neighboring countries have to be involved in the participation processes continuously, beginning from an early stage.

In order to adequately involve the stakeholders of the neighboring countries in the formal and informal participation processes, the BASE must know the specific requirements and challenges of cross-border

participation processes and be able to take them into account in its participation concepts.

Thus, the BASE has initiated the research project “HERüber” which task it is to work out the specific challenges and success factors of cross-border formal and informal procedures for public participation and to transfer these to the specific case of the search for a repository site.

The project has been launched in July 2020 and will run until July 2022.

Further information on the research project in German language can be found on the BASE-website via:

<https://www.base.bund.de/DE/themen/fa/sozio/projekte-aktuell/projekte-aktuell.html>