Trust, mistrust and citizen vigilance in radioactive waste management policies: a historical analysis of four forerunner countries

Markku Lehtonen (Universitat Pompeu Fabra & EHESS & University of Sussex), Matthew Cotton (Univ of York, UK) Arne Kaijser (Kungliga Tekniska Högskolan, Stockholm)

Modern2020 Final Conference, Paris, 9-11 April 2019
History of Nuclear Energy and Society

- History of interaction between nuclear sector and society
- Historians & social scientists
- 20 countries studied
- History of public engagement since WWII
- September 2015 – February 2019
- 23 partner institutions
- Coordinator: Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Albert Presas i Puig)
- Funded by Euratom
- www.honest2020.eu
Trust and RWM policy

• Trust-building as a “silver bullet” supposed to solve the problems of local citizen acceptance & acceptability

• Partnerships

• Social Licence to Operate

• OECD-NEA: Forum on Stakeholder Confidence

RWM policy and the “participatory turn”
Key questions

1. Historical legacies
2. Interaction between various dimensions of trust in shaping RWM policy
3. Potential downsides of trust and the corresponding virtues of mistrust, especially in the form of ‘civic vigilance’
Illustrative case studies

High-trust societies

Finland

Sweden

Forerunners in repository planning and implementation

Low-trust societies

France

UK

Contrasting case, forerunner in participatory approaches
OECD 2013. Governance at glance. (percentage of “yes” answers to the question: “In this country, do you have confidence in each of the following, or not? How about national government?”)

Delhey et al. 2011. Answers to question: “Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of trust/mistrust</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Institutional</th>
<th>Ideological</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
<td>Generalised Particularised</td>
<td>Diffuse support Specific support</td>
<td>Legitimacy of and support to meta-level institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sources of trust</strong></td>
<td>Competence Sincerity</td>
<td></td>
<td>Worldviews, visions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Normative predisposition in relation to an institution or an individual (trust)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Predictability, based on previous experience (confidence)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trust-building</strong></td>
<td>Independent bodies of control and oversight Participatory governance Stepwise decision-making Voluntary opt-in and opt-out Partnerships Community benefit schemes Broadening of debate to strategic questions (e.g. energy policy)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust-building measures</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Municipal veto</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participation, dialogue</strong></td>
<td>EIA, public hearings</td>
<td>Multistakeholder dialogue projects</td>
<td>CNDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic support</strong></td>
<td>Tax benefits; modest “private” support agreement</td>
<td>No tax benefits; significant value-added programme</td>
<td>Tax benefits; mandatory economic support; industry support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent bodies of control and oversight</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>National Council on Nuclear Waste; support for counter-expertise</td>
<td>National Review Board; CLIS; HCTISN; counter-expertise organisations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Long-established institutional mistrust, including mistrust **towards** citizens (FRA & UK)
• Feelings of repeated betrayal & broken promises (FRA: Bure selection, socioeconomic benefits...)
• Accidents and suspicions of cover-up (FRA Chernobyl; UK technical difficulties & scares)
• Tradition of opacity & civilian-military link (esp. FRA)
• UK: mediocre track record of domestic nuclear industry

• Long-standing institutional and ideological trust in public and private-sector actors and institutions
• No accidents (FIN), no broken promises
• Referendum on phasing out nuclear (SWE 1980)
Interacting dimensions of trust/mistrust

Social
Generalised & Particularised

Institutional
Diffuse & Specific/particularised

Ideological
Broader beliefs of appropriate relations between state, market, democracy, authoritarianism..
Social and institutional trust/mistrust

**Particularised social trust** amongst RWM policy actors:
- foundation of a trust-based and collaborative style of regulation in Finland and Sweden
- foundation of internal cohesion within the nuclear “establishment”
- “us vs. them” perceptions and mistrust of the state among the local population (FRA)
- mistrust of “nucleocracy”

Reciprocal social mistrust between the waste management experts and local citizens (UK in the 1990s)
Success in building institutional trust
= contingent on long-established ideological trust and mistrust

Ideological and institutional trust/mistrust

Nordic trust-based democracy and consensual regulatory style:
- ideological trust in national and local-level representative democracy
- public interest collaboratively defined & defended by state bureaucracy and local authorities

vs.

UK liberal mistrust-based democracy and regulatory style
- ideological trust in the market AND ‘community’
- entrenched institutional mistrust of the ‘Big Six’ and government’s RWM policy

France: expert-centred regulatory style
- trust-based collaboration amongst an ‘inner circle’ of experts
- adversarial relations between the state and the civil society
Role of counter-expertise, NGOs = feeding mistrust, as civic vigilance

Absence of a Nordic model

Downsides of trust

Virtues of mistrust: “civic vigilance”

The Nordic paradox?
• trust in the state (bureaucracy and politics) => mistrust of deliberative democracy

Sweden
• active and vigilant NGOs and municipalities
• National Council on Nuclear Waste
• dialogue, technical counter-expertise
• dynamic interaction between trust and mistrust
• compatibility with the traditional trust-based regulatory style?

Finland
• Absence of constructive mistrust? Overtrust?
• deference to authorities, the rule of law, and the engineers in charge of the project
• mistrust of environmental NGOs
• passive municipalities
Four configurations of trust & mistrust

Finland
pragmatic trust

- repository project appears as an inevitability
- legally correct and therefore legitimate process
- (extreme) trust in safety authority (& state bureaucracy)

France
resigned trust &
radical mistrust

- deep-seated reciprocal relations of institutional mistrust
- “us vs. them” (the local vs. “the state”)
- ideological trust in the state
- repository project as the ‘only hope’ for the region

Sweden
genuine trust via
constructive mistrust

- dialogue and counter-expertise as the basis of trust
- strong national-level social and institutional trust
- ideological trust in representative politics

UK
ambiguous mistrust

- growing institutional mistrust of the ‘Big Six’
- long-standing ideological trust in “market fundamentalism” or “pro-market energy policy paradigm” and “community”
- ‘technocratic’ trust in government scientists and anti-nuclear discourses of mistrust in government scientists
The End
Figure 14.
Residents of Eurajoki disagreeing and agreeing with the view that final disposal in the Finnish bedrock is safe (%) Based on data from the annual Energy Attitudes of the Finns (1983-2008) study.
ÉVOLUTIONS 1982 À 2016

Évolution depuis 1982 des % de réponses « oui » à la question : « Accepteriez-vous de vivre près... »
Worried about waste management?

Kommentar: Vet ej svar ingår i procentbasen. Frågeformulering: "Would you say you are very worried, fairly worried, not very worried or not at all worried about the way radioactive waste is managed in country?". Balansmåttet utgör andelen ej oroade (inte alls oroade och inte särskilt oroade) minus andelen oroade (mycket och ganska oroade). Källa: International Nuclear Regulators Association (INRA), "Europeans and radioactive waste". European Coordination Office, 2002. Eurobarometer 56.2.
Institutional trust in France

Credibility and competence of nuclear-sector stakeholders