

PIERRE JEAN COULON

FISA 2019 – EURADWASTE '19

Keynote of Mr Pierre Jean Coulon (EESC, EU), President of the Transport Energy and Networks section, European Economic and Social Committee

Research and Innovation missions and benefits to Civil Society to tackle today's Societal Challenges

The EESC is a body representing the views of organized civil society in Europe, thereby fulfilling advisory functions to the legislating EU institutions. It can be seen as the voice of the whole organized civil society in Europe.

Since the beginning of European Union – EESC was created in 1958 - it was associated to the EURATOM treaty and its work: see EURATOM art. 31 – 40 – 41 – 96 – 98 ...

The EESC and its Section for Transport Energy Infrastructures and Information Society, I am the President have produce several opinions related to nuclear as energy source and on research programmes led in these fields: December 2018 , we adopted an opinion on the research and training programme of the atomic energy community for period 2021 – 2025. January 2019 two opinions, one about EU budget for ITER, another one on nuclear decommissioning and radioactive waste management. The EESC has also worked on opinions on the Nuclear Illustrative Programme (PIN) and called to accelerate innovation in the field of clean energy. Don't forget also that the European Commission is formally required to request and take into account/respond the Committee's opinions on nuclear illustrative program.

Beyond these opinion, EESC has contributed since its start in 2007 and myself as member of the steering committee, to the development of the European Nuclear Energy Forum (ENEF) organized under the auspices of EC, the SK and CZ governments. We also have recently fact finding missions to the ANDRA laboratory for radio-active waste storage, as well one to the ITER fusion reactor in Cadarache – France but worldwide work - in order to ensure that EESC's knowledge is updated and civil society involved in these fields.

The EESC does not take a conclusive position in favour or against nuclear power generation, but it recognizes that almost 30% of the EU-28's electricity is produced from nuclear energy in more than 14 member states. This fact will be during a forthcoming very long period a part of European Energy Mix, it is why organized civil society is very interested in the different topics as nuclear safety, radioactive waste production and management, social and climate implications, also...

Nuclear energy is one option to decarbonize economies...

Dear colleagues and friends, don't forget that without acceptance or better support of civil society – I say the whole civil society- it will be difficult to move forward: this is why we have to clearly say:

Let's work together for the citizens, with the citizens, by the citizens...