

The Ethics of Radiological Risk Governance – The Justice of Justification as a Central Concern

G. Meskens

Science & Technology Studies Unit, SCK CEN, Mol, Belgium & Centre for Ethics and Value Inquiry, Faculty of Arts and Philosophy, University of Ghent, Belgium

Due to the specific character of radiological risk, judgements on whether or not the use of nuclear technology would be justified in society have to take into account knowledge-related uncertainties and value pluralism. The justice of justification, thus, not only informs the right of the potentially affected to participate in decision making, but it also implies the responsibility of concerned actors to give account of the way they rationalise their interests and beliefs in knowledge generation and decision making. From this perspective, the presentation argues that there is a need for a 'performative' understanding of ethics in order to give ethical values or virtues a practical meaning in a socio-political context. Consequently, it proposes the concepts of 'reflexivity as an ethical experience' and 'intellectual solidarity as an ethical commitment' and elaborates on the way they could inform the methods of justification, optimisation, and the ratio of dose limitation in radiological risk governance.