



THE EXTENSION OF THE UNDERGROUND LABORATORY HADES IN MOL IS A GREAT SUCCESS

In EURIDICE_[flash] number 1, the construction of the connecting gallery – that links the existing underground laboratory HADES to the second access shaft – was announced. It is now a fact. The work started on the 23rd January 2002, and ended on the 7th March 2002.

The execution of the connecting gallery can be without doubt called a great success. The clay massif behaved as the modelling calculations had predicted. The adaptations made to the tunnel dredger before the start of the works following the results of these modelling calculations, were as a result optimal. The tunnelling advanced quickly, in fact faster than planned. The required execution speed in the specifications (2 metres excavated and lined per 24 hours) was largely exceeded (sometimes even by 100 %).



The crucial moment: the access of the tunnelling machine to the underground labo HADES

In addition, the clay massif was – even before the start of the works – equipped with instruments around the connecting gallery to be dug in order to study the behaviour of the massif during the digging. In this way it was possible to obtain many extra informations during the execution of the connecting gallery on the behaviour of the clay massif. This is why several universities were also interested in this project, since few or no geotechnical works are accompanied by such a vast instrumentation programme.

The construction of the connecting gallery shows that the execution – on an industrial scale – of underground infrastructure works in clay, is possible at great depths. This information constitutes an important contribution to the studies concerning the possibility to dispose of radioactive waste of any category in clay.

The connection between the existing underground laboratory HADES and the second access shaft was done under the management of the EIG EURIDICE, which called in the help of the research consultant BELGATOM for the design. The works were carried out by the temporary association SCM, of which the firm Smet Tunneling is the pilot and spokesperson. The control office SECO was in charge of the technical control of the studies and the execution of the works.



A picture of the underground labo as he looks like at the moment, except for the small horizontal PRACLAY gallery left on the picture.

It is always possible to visit the EIG EURIDICE with a group. Please contact Mrs Brigitte Pitz at the following number: 014/33.27.84.

ONDRAF/NIRAS stands for :	Belgian Agency for Radioactive Waste and Enriched Fissile Materials
SCK•CEN stands for :	Nuclear Research Centre
EURIDICE stands for :	European Underground Research Infrastructure for Disposal of nuclear waste In Clay Environment