



How equitable access concerns are included in the recast EU Drinking Water Directive and what are the challenges encountered so far by Member States with regard to equity.

Bert Leemans

ENV C.2 Marine Environment and Clean Water Services

*REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON EQUITABLE ACCESS TO WATER AND SANITATION
UNDER THE PROTOCOL ON WATER AND HEALTH
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Recast Drinking Water Directive - overview

- Adoption by Council and European Parliament – 16 December 2020
- Publication in the Official Journal (OJ)
<http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2020/2184/oj> – 23 December 2020
- Entry into force 20 days after publication in OJ – 12 January 2021
- Member States have to transpose the Directive into national law and comply with its provisions by 12 January 2023

Recast Drinking Water Directive – objectives

- To **protect human health** by ensuring the quality of water intended for human consumption.
- To **improve access to water** intended for human consumption

Recast Drinking Water Directive – main provisions

- **Update** existing safety standards + ‘**watch-list**’ mechanism
- Introduction of ‘**risk-based approach**’ (RBA) covering whole supply chain
- **Access to water**: obligation for MS to improve or maintain access to safe drinking water for all, in particular to vulnerable and marginalised groups and provisions regarding the promotion of the use of tap water
- **More transparency** for consumers on water suppliers’ efficiency and effectiveness and measures for their improvement → leakages
- Provisions on **substances/materials in contact with DW** (Article 11 of DWD)

Access to water provisions (Article 16)

- MS **shall** take necessary **measures to improve or maintain access** to clean drinking water for all, in particular to vulnerable and marginalised groups
 - ✓ *Identify* people without or limited access, in particular vulnerable and marginalised groups and assess possibilities for improving access + **assess possibilities for improving access** for such people.
 - ✓ *Inform* about the possibilities for connecting and **take measures** MS consider necessary and appropriate to ensure access

Access to water provisions (Article 16)

- To **promote** the use of tap water:
 - ✓ *MS shall ensure that outdoor and indoor equipment is set up in public spaces (technically feasible + proportionate to the need + taking into account specific local conditions)*
 - ✓ *MS may also take measures to promote the use of tap water*
 - *Raising awareness of nearest indoor/outdoor equipment*
 - *Launching campaigns to inform citizens on the quality of tap water*
 - *Encourage the provision of tap water in public administrations and public buildings*
 - *Encourage the provision of such water, for free or for a low service fee, for customers in restaurants, canteens and catering services*

Access to water provisions (Article 16)

- MS **shall ensure** that the **necessary assistance**, as defined by the MS, for competent authorities is facilitated in order to implement the measures referred to in Article 16

Information on monitoring of implementation (Article 18)

- MS assisted by the European Environmental Agency (EEA) shall set up by 12 January 2029 a data set on :
 - ✓ *Measures taken to improve access to and promote the use of water intended for human consumption*
 - ✓ *Share of the MS' population that has access to water intended for human consumption*
 - ✓ *Update every 6 years*

Assessment of water leakage levels (Article 4(3))

- MS shall ensure an **assessment of water leakage levels** within their territory and of improvements in water leakage reduction by **January 2026**
 - ✓ *Cover at least large suppliers (10 000 m³/day or 50 000 people)*
 - ✓ *COM will set a threshold value by **January 2028 (Delegated Act)***
 - ✓ *MS shall present an action plan (measures) by **January 2030** if threshold is exceeded*

Evaluation of the recast DWD (Article 19)

- **Evaluation** on the recast DWD in **2035** with particular attention to the provisions related to access to water intended for human consumption (ref. Article 16)

Challenges encountered so far by Member States with regard to equity.

- Governance (transposition national legislation)
 - ✓ *Different competent authorities could be involved (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Affaires, Ministry of Environment) → alignment needed*
 - ✓ *Appropriateness of existing legislation vs. the requirements in the provisions of the recast DWD → updates needed and consistency checks*
 - ✓ *Institutional cooperation*
 - ✓ *Appropriate measures to target the right groups*

Challenges encountered so far by Member States with regard to equity.

- Geographical disparities
 - ✓ *DWD has contributed to the protection of human health in EU, however 23 million people (4% of EU population) are potentially at health risk due to no or limited access to safe drinking water*
 - ✓ *Geographical differences: MS level, regional level, rural & urban*
 - ✓ *Challenge for MS to target equity measures at the right level*
 - ✓ *New challenges due to climate change that impact (enhance) geographical disparities → challenge to forecast impact*

Challenges encountered so far by Member States with regard to equity.

- Ensuring access for vulnerable and marginalised groups
 - ✓ *Identification of groups (tools)*
 - ✓ *Assessment of measures for improving access*
 - ✓ *Regional differences within a MS*

Challenges encountered so far by Member States with regard to equity.

- Keeping water affordable
 - ✓ *Tariff policies and social measures are not included in the provisions of the recast DWD*
 - ✓ *Implementation of the recast DWD could give rise to costs for water suppliers, hence raise water tariffs → estimation EC max. 4%*
 - ✓ *About 95% of population in most EU countries would not face an affordability issue (OECD, 2020) → challenge to well target the remaining 5% population (probably more related to access than to affordability)*
 - ✓ *Recast DWD: raises awareness of consumers by means of ensure more transparency towards consumers (Article 17)*

Thank you !



Bert Leemans – Bert.Leemans@ec.europa.eu