

# EU water legislation and relevance for rural water services provision and management in rural areas

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# The European Water Association



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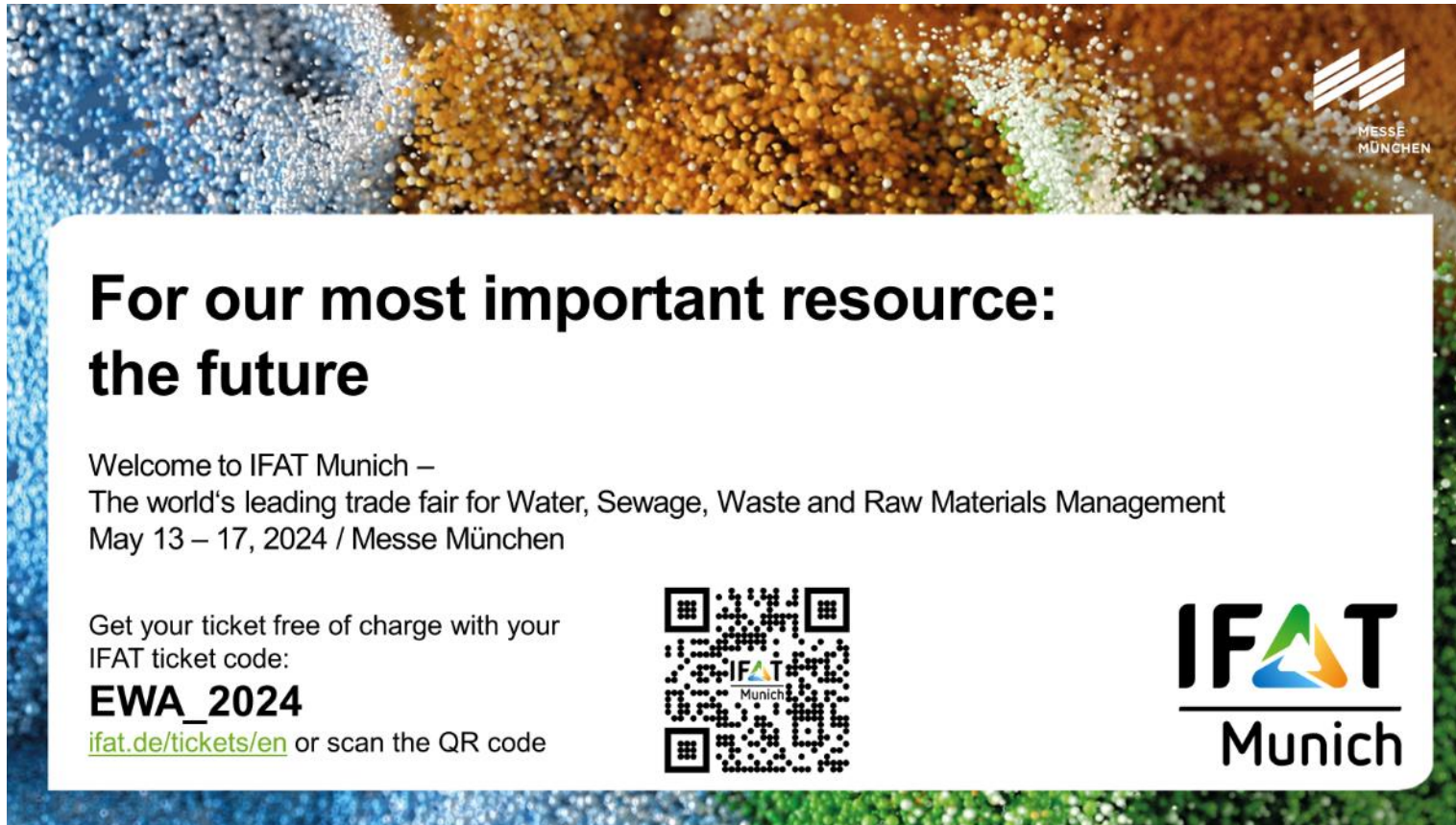
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Water Reuse Ordinance

Drinking Water Directive

Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive

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L 177/32

EN

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5.6.2020

**REGULATION (EU) 2020/741 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL**  
**of 25 May 2020**  
**on minimum requirements for water reuse**  
 (Text with EEA relevance)

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 192(1) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

After transmission of the draft legislative act to the national parliaments,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee <sup>(1)</sup>,

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions <sup>(2)</sup>,

Acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure <sup>(3)</sup>,

Whereas:

## Article 1

### Subject matter and purpose

1. This Regulation lays down minimum requirements for water quality and monitoring and provisions on risk management, for the safe use of reclaimed water in the context of integrated water management.
2. The purpose of this Regulation is to guarantee that reclaimed water is safe for agricultural irrigation, thereby ensuring a high level of protection of the environment and of human and animal health, .....

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\* Council Decision (EU) 2020/2187 of 22 December 2020 on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union within the Regional Steering Committee of the Transport Community as regards the adoption of the budget of the Transport Community for 2021 ..... 73

## Drinking Water Directive

- Published 23 December 2020
- EU member states had to transfer the regulations until 12 January 2023 in their national law
- Basis for further delegated acts from the EU-Commission

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On 19 January 2022, [the first watch list](#) was adopted. This means that drinking water across the EU will have to be monitored more closely for the potential presence of **two endocrine disrupting compounds (beta-estradiol and nonylphenol)** throughout the whole water supply chain.

On 23 January 2024, the European Commission adopted new [minimum hygiene standards](#) for materials and products that come into contact with drinking water. They will apply from 31 December 2026 to materials and products used in new installations or when older ones are renovated or repaired.

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On 11 March 2024 the Commission adopted a [Delegated Decision on a methodology to measure microplastics in water intended for human consumption](#) (available in all languages). This methodology will allow Member States to measure microplastics in drinking water in a harmonised way. The establishment of an EU harmonised methodology by the Commission will support Member States in gaining knowledge about the presence of microplastics in their water supply chain.



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## EU Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive and its recast

The Directive aims to protect human health and the environment from the effects of untreated urban wastewater. It ensure that domestic and industrial wastewater is effectively collected, treated and discharged.

- Council Directive 91/271/EEC of 21 May 1991
- On 26 October 2022, the Commission published the revised proposal for the Directive; start of the political discussion
- January 2024 Trilogue agreement
- 10 April 2024 formal approval by the European Parliament
- Formal approval by the Council is pending
- End of 2024 the new Directive will enter into force

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UWWTD recast:

Article 3 Collecting systems and calculation of the load expressed in p.e.

1. Member States shall ensure that all agglomerations of 2.000 p.e. and above comply with the following requirements:
  - (a) they are provided with collecting systems;
  - (b) all their sources of domestic wastewater are connected to the collecting system.
2. Member States shall ensure that agglomerations between 1 000 and 2 000 p.e. comply with the requirements of paragraph 1 by 31 December 2035.

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## Article 4 Individual systems

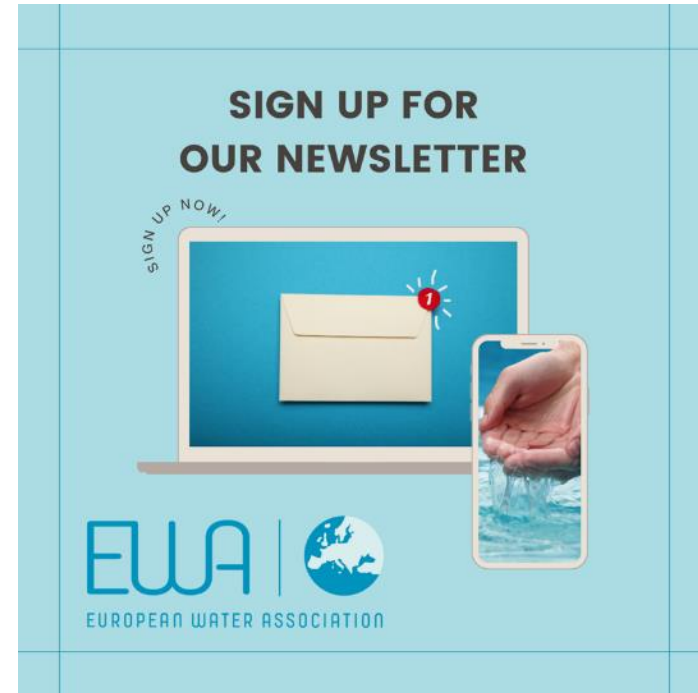
1. Member States may derogate from Article 3 only if the establishment of a collecting system or the connection to a collecting system is not justified either because it would produce no environmental or human health benefit, or it is not technically feasible, or because it would involve excessive costs. If derogating from Article 3, Member States shall ensure that individual systems for the collection, storage and/or when applicable, treatment of urban wastewaters are used in agglomerations of 1 000 p.e. and above, or part of these agglomerations.
2. Member States shall ensure that the individual systems referred to in paragraph 1 are designed, operated and maintained in a manner that achieves the same level of human health and environmental protection as the secondary and tertiary treatments referred to in Articles 6 and 7.
3. Member States shall ensure that individual systems that are used in agglomerations of 1 000 p.e. and above are registered in a registry and that regular inspections or other means of regular checks or control of those systems, on the basis of a risk-based approach, are carried out by the competent authority or other body authorised at national, regional or local level.

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The revision aims to improve water quality:

- improve water quality by addressing remaining urban wastewater pollution – Tertiary treatment (Article 7; > 10 000 p.e.) and Quaternary treatment (Article 8 > 150.000 p.e.)
- industry has to pay for the treatment of the micropollutants - Extended producer responsibility (Article 9)
- reduce pollution, energy use and greenhouse gas emissions – Article 11 Energy Neutrality
- Article 15 Water reuse and discharges of urban wastewater
- Article 17 - Urban wastewater surveillance requires EU countries to monitor pathogens in wastewater
- improve access to sanitation especially for the most vulnerable and marginalized groups – Article 19
- lead to a more circular sector – Article 20 Sludge and resource recovery



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