



# Utility Benchmarking Program for Water Supply and Sanitation Utilities

**GAIN** practical support in  
analyzing and improving utility  
performance

**LEARN** from other utilities  
in the sector

**BE UP TO DATE** on the  
most recent tools for analyzing  
utility performance

**BENEFIT** from regional  
and global comparison with  
other utilities and experts

# Utility Benchmarking Program for Water Supply and Sanitation Utilities

If new to benchmarking, enter here



**Use Benchmarking** for structured internal and external communication on performance assessment and improvement planning

**Experience Benchmarking** as highly efficient tool for continuous improvement, preferably embedded in a yearly business planning cycle

**Join the IAWD Utility Benchmarking Program** either on (i) the national/subregional or on the (ii) Danube regional level to be part of a **Community of Practice** for performance improvement

REGIONAL LEVEL

## Danube Hub

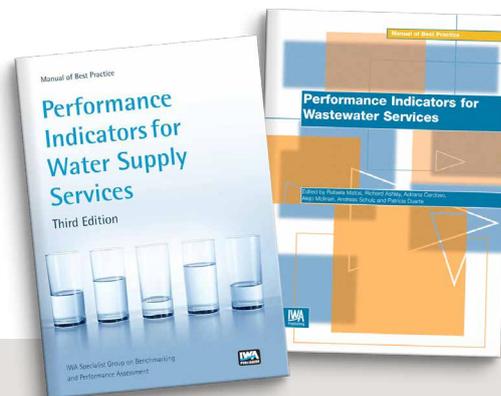
NATIONAL/  
SUBREGIONAL LEVEL

BM Hub  
Bulgaria

BM Hub  
Ukraine

BM Hub  
Albania/  
Kosovo

The **performance assessment** under the **Utility Benchmarking Program (UBP)** provides a broad overview of the water services company performance. Variables and indicators used under the UBP are mainly taken from Manuals of best practices: “[Performance Indicators for Water Supply Services](#)” by the IWA Benchmarking and Performance Assessment Specialist Group, and “[Performance Indicators for Wastewater Services](#)” by the IWA Task Force on Performance indicators for wastewater services, both published by [IWA-Publishing](#), under the umbrella of the International Water Association ([IWA](#)).



## Areas of comparison under the UBP

Approximative number of collected variables and calculated indicators distributed between: drinking water (dw) / wastewater (ww) / water utility level (utl)

**VARIABLES**  
dw / ww / utl

**INDICATORS**  
dw / ww / utl

**Context information:** Some characteristics of the service area cannot be influenced by the company, but may affect and explain performance results of the company (e.g. geographic, demographic, consumption patterns, etc.)

**33**  
8 / 12 / 13

**46**  
25 / 21 / 0

**Water (wastewater) balance:** Understanding the water (wastewater) balance between water input into the system against the sum of the revenue and non-revenue output is one of the first steps in the performance assessment of a water utility

**57**  
40 / 17 / 0

**12**  
9 / 3 / 0

**Water (wastewater) quality:** The quality of the water supplied, and quality of wastewater discharged to their environment has the highest impact on the safety of customers and their satisfaction with the water services

**27**  
15 / 12 / 0

**22**  
10 / 12 / 0

**Service reliability:** Right next to water quality, customers need service reliability, which depends on continuity of service, restrictions frequency, network failures and blockages, active leakage control, and other factors

**19**  
14 / 5 / 0

**28**  
22 / 6 / 0

**Service quality:** On top of good water quality and service reliability, customers expect high service quality, such as fair invoicing, absence of nuisances, quick complaints resolution, good customer relations, etc.

**53**  
26 / 22 / 5

**33**  
20 / 13 / 0

**Sustainability:** High performance cannot last without sustainable practices in water resources management, efficient use of water and energy, proper asset management, cost coverage, affordability, etc.

**68**  
35 / 30 / 3

**53**  
21 / 25 / 7

**Finance and Efficiency:** Finally, a high performing company is delivering high productivity and bankable improvement projects by taking care of personnel capacity, tariffs structure, commercial efficiency, reducing inefficiencies, etc.

**180**  
70 / 61 / 49

**115**  
48 / 57 / 10

**These are numbers of variables and indicators for standard level:** Some utilities choose less, other utilities choose more. Tailor your experience with the UBP according to your needs!

**437**  
208 / 159 / 70

**309**  
155 / 137 / 17

The **time needed** for standard data collection is usually **between 1 and 2 weeks of work**. Experienced benchmarking teams can do it in several days. As the data is entered into the platform, indicators are calculated, and the **first results are available immediately!**

✕ CANCEL & BACK WITHOUT SAVING
ℹ LEGEND & INFORMATION
💾 SAVE
✓ INITIATE AUTOMATIC VALIDATIONS

SEARCH 
 SURVEY ORDER 
 ASCENDING 
 25

Code	Variable	Unit	Answer	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	Validation	Info	Data Quality	
A - Water volume data <input type="checkbox"/>												
A-003	Water system input volume	m3		9,096,720	8,934,163	9,243,223	8,895,887	8,496,897			f <sub>W</sub>	
A-003.a	Abstracted raw water from own sources	m3		9,096,720	8,934,163	9,243,223	8,895,887	8,496,897			* f <sub>W</sub>	
A-003.a.1	Abstracted raw water from own upland surface water sources	m3		0	0	0	0	0				
A-003.a.2	Abstracted raw water from own lowland surface water sources	m3		0	0	0	0	0				
A-003.a.3	Abstracted raw water from own natural springs and wetlands	m3		0	0	0	0	0				

## Tailor UBP to your needs!

### Link to other national benchmarking and performance assessment activities

Since the UBP is delivered in local languages within the Danube region, we can map, add, and link UPB variables and indicators to other data collection exercises in your country, especially the data collected by water regulators, competent ministries and other relevant national or international institutions. This means that UBP could use criteria of your national regulator, to benchmark your performance against water utilities throughout the region or use criteria of regulators from other countries for the benchmarking.

### Exchange of the existing data

After mapping variables and indicators between the UBP and the benchmarking and performance assessment exercise of your choice, we can enable download and upload of variables between the UBP platform and the exercise of your choice (e.g., using Excel).

### Confidence grades

According to the IWA Manuals, a complete variable or performance indicator consists of the value expressed in a certain unit, and the confidence grade of the variable or the indicator. In this way, we distinguish between reliable and less reliable results. Moreover, confidence grades are directly linked to the assessment of the investments needed for data confidence and other performance related improvements. Confidence grades also impact the values of composite indicators.

### Composite indicators

Comparisons by individual performance indicators are still needed and very useful but can be time consuming and disengaging for many decision makers – the higher the decision-making level, the greater the distance from individual performance indicators level. The UBP therefore also compares participating UBP water service companies using Composite indicators, i.e., index values. For example, an index value (ranging from 0 to 100) can combine 10 or more KPIs, which are standardized on the scale from low or initial performance (0) to high or targeted performance (100), and combine them into an index value, using appropriate weight for each KPI.

### Index level comparisons

When an index value is calculated for your water company, UBP can compare your index-based performance with the performance of the other water companies using the same index. In this way, UBP can perform utility matchmaking to identify utilities most suitable for Utility-2-Utility activities (U2U), what can be adjusted to your specific selection of KPIs.

### Narrow your benchmarking group

In addition to comparison within a hub, participating utilities can choose a sub-group of water utilities to be compared with (e.g., only medium size utilities, and utilities with WWTP, other criteria could also be added).

### Better communication with institutions

In addition to the reports intended for water utilities, UBP is also developing dedicated benchmarking reports to be shared with institutions and decision makers externally. Currently, the UBP benchmarking report for local government units is being developed.



Gain constant support from the Benchmarking Coordinator of your respective Hub and the IAWD UBP team



Join an online orientation training on utility benchmarking and receive access to the e-learning materials on the D-LeaP Academy



Use the IAWD Utility Benchmarking Platform to collect, validate, analyze and archive your data



Receive your own individual Benchmarking report to check your data and identify performance gaps



Compare your performance with other utilities and monitor your performance improvement



Join the Benchmarking workshops to exchange knowledge and to network with the UBP family



Select KPIs most suitable for your own company, set the goals around the selected KPIs and track the performance of your utility against the goals you have set



Identify potential mentor or mentee utilities based on your selection of KPIs to allow for peer support



Get to know your peers by joining the yearly UBP Danube Hub CEO Dinner in the frame of the Danube Water Conference or Danube Water Forum (for UBP Danube Hub members only)

„Data are the fuel of management. Don't enter the race with an empty tank – join the Utility Benchmarking Program.”



**Evis Gjebrea**  
Deputy General Director,  
Tirana Water and Sewerage Utility

„Weak managers surround themselves with those who know even less. Strong managers join those who know a lot more. Join a network of utilities dedicated to productive knowledge exchange - the Utility Benchmarking Program.”



**Lyubomir Filipov**  
Director, Sofia Water

„87% of Europe's utility managers feel that they perform above average. 100% of our UBP members know the facts. To learn more, join the Utility Benchmarking Program.”



**Walter Kling**  
President, IAWD

„The mirror may tell you that you look fine, but to find out if you are doing great you need to compare with others: Join a network of utilities dedicated to continuous improvement - the Utility Benchmarking Program.”



**Darius Bor**  
CFO, Apaserv Satu Mare S.A.

# Utility Benchmarking Program for Water Supply and Sanitation Utilities

## Program description and covered topics

The Utility Benchmarking Program is one of the Foundation Programs within the Danube Learning Partnership. This Program helps participating utilities and staff to establish their own diagnostic of high-impact issues affecting the performance of their utility companies by benchmarking the utility performance against other similar companies and international benchmarks and facilitating dialogue among practitioners on good practices.

### Set-up of Program

With the technical support of Macroconsulting IAWD established its own IT platform based on the methodology

provided by IWA. The Program currently offers the standard assessment level with the option to upgrade to the advanced level. Which level best fits a utility depends on the availability of reliable data, benchmarking experience and ambition. The Hub concept ensures that participating utilities follow the same assessment methodology and receive comparable results.

### Learning goals

Why to compare performance with other utilities?

How to collect and manage utility performance information?

How to develop an improvement plan to address performance issues?

### Hubs



**National Benchmarking Hub for Bulgaria** (hosted by the Bulgarian Water Association, BWA)



**National Benchmarking Hub for Ukraine** (hosted by the Danube Water Centre Ukraine)



**Subregional Benchmarking Hub for Albania & Kosovo** (hosted by the Water and Wastewater Works Association for Kosovo, SHUKOS)



**Regional Danube Hub** (hosted by IAWD)

### Technical Partner



### Contact

**D-LeaP Secretariat**  
office@iawd.at