

3<sup>rd</sup>

# EFRWS

EUROPEAN FORUM ON THE REGULATION OF WATER SERVICES

**Better  
regulation  
for climate  
neutrality**

**6<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2023**

Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium  
Place du Musée/Museumplein, 1000 Brussels



# Introduction

The European Forum on the Regulation of Water Services (EFRWS) is a unique symposium of institutions, national authorities, sector stakeholders and academia, aimed at raising public awareness of the main gaps and responses in EU Countries towards the EU zero-pollution ambitions, with a specific focus on drinking water and wastewater policies and the role of national water regulatory Authorities.

Organised by WAREG, the European association of 34 public Authorities with tariff-setting and monitoring powers in the water sector, the first two editions of the EFRWS in 2019 and 2021 set the stage for an EU green transition, emphasising the role of economic regulation in promoting water resources protection, innovation and efficient cost-recovery ([www.wareg.org/efrws](http://www.wareg.org/efrws)).

This year, the 3<sup>rd</sup> EFRWS comes at a pivotal moment, as weather extremes and insecurity have been increasingly affecting water resources in the European continent. In her State of the Union speech last September, EC President von der Leyen has announced a Water Resilience initiative as a key 2024 deliverable for the European Green Deal. The Forum will thus dive deep into the EU's Green Deal ambitions, stressing some key implications for the water industry and citizens in EU Countries.

The Forum's panels will also emphasise the interconnectedness of water and energy and the potential economic implications of the ongoing EU reforming process in the wastewater sector. As we move forward and new initiatives develop, cooperation between water regulatory authorities and national governments remains paramount to ensure universal access to water services at fair prices, promote innovation, and uphold the principles of transparency, fairness and environmental stewardship.

This year's EFRWS will take place in the heart of Brussels and wants to keep serving as a meeting point, also for institutions and stakeholders of those EU neighbouring countries that are Members of WAREG and are approximating EU environmental standards. In fact, WAREG is engaged in the Western Balkans to promote European integration and exchange of regulatory solutions for good-quality drinking water and wastewater services to local communities.

Finally, I wish to stress that the EFRWS is a public event, and that like the previous editions it will be for free and open to the public, in presence or online, simply by registering at [www.wareg.org/efrws/efrws-2023](http://www.wareg.org/efrws/efrws-2023). I invite you to engage actively, share your insights, and contribute to the collective wisdom of this Forum, which we hope will be enlightening and thought-provoking.

**Andrea Guerrini**

*WAREG President  
and ARERA Commissioner*

# Better regulation for climate neutrality

**8:00**

REGISTRATION AND WELCOME COFFEE

**8:45**

## **INSTITUTIONAL OPENING SESSION**

**Andrea Guerrini**, WAREG President and Commissioner for Italian Regulatory Authority for Energy, Networks and Environment

**Virginijus Sinkevičius**, European Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries

**Ricardo Mourinho Félix**, Vice President, European Investment Bank

**9:15**

PANEL 1

## **THE NEW EU URBAN WASTEWATER TREATMENT DIRECTIVE: POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR WATER CUSTOMERS AND INDUSTRY IN THE EU**

The proposal for a revised urban wastewater treatment directive constitutes an ambitious but necessary document that sets the path for the water sanitation sector in the following decades. The discussion will revolve around the economic and social sustainability of the proposed Directive and the role that Economic regulators can play in promoting operational cost-efficiency, limiting the impact of potential additional costs on the final consumers and maintaining the affordability of the service.

**KEYNOTE PRESENTATION "THE EU PROPOSAL FOR A RECAST URBAN WASTEWATER TREATMENT DIRECTIVE: POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON TARIFFS IN EU MEMBER STATE", BY**

**Vera Eiró**, President, Water and Waste Services Regulation Authority of Portugal and WAREG Vice President

**MODERATOR** **David Alves**, Head of International Affairs, Water and Waste Services Regulation Authority of Portugal

**DISCUSSANTS** **Xavier Leflaive**, Team Leader, Resilience, Adaptation to Climate Change and Water, OECD

**Vania Paccagnan**, Senior Economist Water Team, European Investment Bank

**Oliver Loebel**, Secretary General, EurEau

**Hon. Maria da Graça Carvalho**, Member of the European Parliament, EU Parliament



**10:15**

**COFFEE-BREAK**

**10:30**

**PANEL 2**

## **THE EU VISION FOR CLIMATE NEUTRALITY AND THE WATER-TO-ENERGY NEXUS**

The EU aims to be climate-neutral by 2050. This objective is at the heart of the European Green Deal. The water supply and sanitation service sectors remain large consumers of energy. More stringent and additional treatment targets on pollutant removal may require more energy consumption, hindering energy neutrality targets. The discussion will encompass strategies, innovations, and regulatory measures to harmonise water resource management with energy efficiency and sustainable practices.

**KEYNOTE PRESENTATION "FROM ENERGY  
NEUTRALITY TO CLIMATE NEUTRALITY:  
STAKES, REQUIREMENTS AND  
CURRENT PRACTICES AT EU, NATIONAL  
AND LOCAL LEVELS", BY**

**Maria Salvetti**, Director of the Water Area, European University  
Institute-Florence School of Regulation

**MODERATOR** **Karen Kavanagh**, Director of Networks and Economic  
Regulation, Commission for Regulation of Utilities in Ireland

**DISCUSSANTS** **Michel Sponar**, Deputy Head of the Clean Water Services Unit,  
DG ENV.C2, European Commission

**Hans Goossens**, President, Water Europe, Director-General,  
de Watergroep

**Lyubomir Filipov**, Vice President, International Association  
of Waterworks in the Danube Catchment Area

**Fabio Pulizzi**, Chief Editor, Nature Magazine/Water

**11:30**

**COFFEE BREAK**

**11:45** PANEL 3

## **TOWARDS WATER RESILIENCE IN THE EU AND NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES**

Unprecedented droughts and floods are plaguing the EU and its neighbouring countries. Addressing water scarcity and desertification but also more frequent storms and floods requires tackling unsustainable freshwater management and fostering the efficiency and resilience of our water supply and sanitation (WSS) services. The discussion will gravitate around the efficiency and robustness of the WSS sectors in the face of increasing water insecurity. Participants will explore the role of economic regulators, the adoption of innovative solutions, and the importance of international collaboration and capacity-building to ensure water resilience.

**KEYNOTE PRESENTATION "HOW DO ECONOMIC REGULATORS MEASURE QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF WATER AND SANITATION SERVICES? PERFORMANCE MONITORING OF WATER RESILIENCE", BY**

**Ivaylo Kastchiev**, Director, Energy and Water Regulatory Commission of Bulgaria and WAREG Vice President

**MODERATOR** **Donatas Jasas**, Deputy-Chair, National Energy Regulatory Council of Lithuania

**DISCUSSANTS** **Claudia Olazabal**, Head of the Sustainable Freshwater Management Unit, DG ENV.C1, European Commission  
**Bernard Van Nuffel**, President, Aqua Publica Europea  
**Raimund Mair**, Senior Water Resources Management Specialist Water, Europe and Central Asia, World Bank  
**Elisabeta Poci**, Board Member, International Water Association and Executive Director, Water Supply and Sewerage Association of Albania

**12:45**

## **CLOSING SESSION**

**Andrea Guerrini**, WAREG President and Commissioner for Italian Regulatory Authority for Energy, Networks and Environment

**Veronica Manfredi**, Director, Zero Pollution Directorate C, European Commission

**13:15**

## **END OF THE FORUM**