



WATER ERASMUS
AQUA PUBLICA EUROPEA



**EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION
OF PUBLIC WATER OPERATORS**
10 YEARS OF COLLABORATION
FOR THE GENERAL INTEREST

Aqua Publica Europea's Water Erasmus Initiative

WATER ERASMUS was launched by Aqua Publica Europea, the European Association of Public Water Operators in 2017, as an innovative way **to foster mutual learning amongst its network of public water operators** through bilateral staff exchanges.

In their mission to provide excellent water supply and sanitation services to people in Europe, public water operators share **many common challenges**: from the management of their infrastructure to the main external dynamics of our time such as climate change, demographic shifts or the digital revolution.

Aqua Publica Europea was created in 2009 to support the **necessary collaboration to tackle these challenges**, and has, throughout the years, been striving to propose an active platform for exchange amongst its members.



We want to show that public water management at the European level is based on human relationships, and driven by women and men that are open to the world and committed to the quality and the sustainability of public services.

CELIA BLAUDEL, President of Aqua Publica Europea and President of Eau de Paris (Paris, France)

In this perspective, **Water Erasmus was launched to facilitate European cooperation** by offering the opportunity for technical staff from member operators to **travel and meet their peers** to discuss issues of common interest, exchange expertise, visit infrastructure and launch joint projects. Focusing on the idea that knowledge circulates with the people, Water Erasmus contributes to building long-term skills, as well as a common understanding of the mission of European public services, a building block of our shared European future.

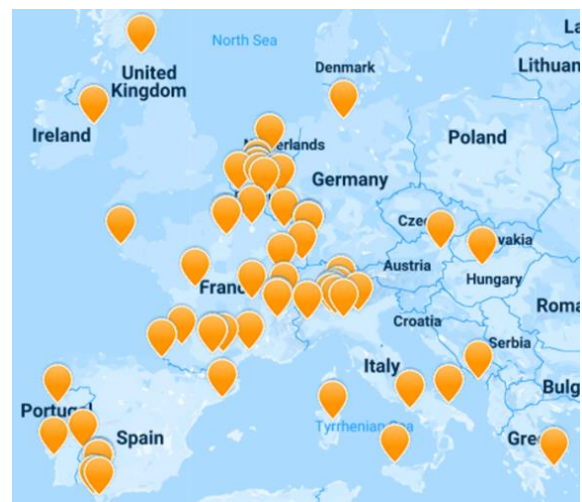
By putting the people who directly manage our water at the centre, Water Erasmus effectively creates **an interconnected network of professionals in Europe** who share a drive for excellence and enthusiasm to share their knowledge and to learn from others.

AQUA PUBLICA EUROPEA Aqua Publica Europea is the European Association of Public Water Operators

For the past ten years, it has united publicly owned water and sanitation services and other stakeholders working to promote public water management at European and international levels. Aqua Publica gathers over 60 members serving more than 70 million people, in an operator-led association that looks for efficient solutions that serve the public rather than corporate interests.

In 2019, Aqua Publica Europea celebrates its tenth anniversary.

OUR MEMBERS



Water Erasmus as told by the participants

In the Water Erasmus initiative, operators are free to shape their exchanges in the way that works best for them. Each participating operator proposes topics on which they wish to share expertise and, through Aqua Publica Europea, they find organisations with similar interests.

As public water operators are constantly aiming to improve their performance and continue a European tradition of water management excellence, some of the key topics they are addressing through Water Erasmus peer learning include network management, leak detection, waste water treatment, digitalisation or transparency.

Since the creation of Water Erasmus



17 public water operators have offered their expertise in

29 topics

6 technical teams have participated in an exchange

16.5 million people served by the participating operators

Participants found that the experience has had many benefits, both professionally and personally. Their main takeaways include:

- Learning from others' experience on common issues
- Meeting and exchanging with peers from technical teams
- Starting a long-term collaboration
- Creating a common knowledge and excellence space
- Comparing methodologies with similar structures

This document provides an overview of the exchanges that took place, **in the words of the people who participated in the exchanges.**



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ENSURING SAFE DRINKING WATER

Eau de Paris and Gruppo CAP kick-off the initiative with bilateral exchange

Eau de Paris and Gruppo CAP were, in November 2017 and February 2018, the first operators whose personnel travelled abroad to **discuss water management issues**. The main topic was **water safety plans**.

In the first leg of the exchange, in Paris, the Italian delegation met with Benjamin Gestin, General Manager of Eau de Paris and the technical teams, and gained insight on the many aspects of Eau de Paris' activities with visits at infrastructure, laboratories and central control command room but also the customer service centre and the public visitors' centre.

Then, the technicians of Eau de Paris immersed themselves for four days in the reality of Gruppo CAP and AMIACQUE, where they participated in targeted meetings with expert staff members and visits to infrastructure of particular interest, such as the Italian Paderno Dugnano structure, characterised by a reverse osmosis treatment system for the production of drinking water.

The visits provided a complete look on both operators' activities.



WATER SAFETY PLANS

European legislation sets **safety standards for the quality of water destined for human consumption**.

Water Safety Plans redefine the model for monitoring drinking water and transform it into a **global risk management system extended to the entire water supply**, from collection to end-use. The result is a **well-monitored system** and a **high quality water supply over time guaranteed by measurable parameters**.

*"The expectations regarding the visit were very high but they were fully respected. The reality visited is very different in some infrastructural aspects but also with **many technical points in common**. Colleagues from Eau de Paris were very willing to welcome us and **show us the most interesting and technological aspects of the service**. What was very passionate about us was a different approach to security plans for a goal that remains common: **the guarantee of quality of service**."*

ANTONELLO SALA, Chief of Water Safety Plan Office at Gruppo CAP

*"It was an **intense, fast-paced week, but very enjoyable**, rewarding and full of ideas for further collaboration that promises to be constructive. Despite all the differences we pointed out about the infrastructure we manage and how we operate them, **we are driven by the same great values** : public water management, integrated model (from raw water to tap), quality of the service oriented towards consumers, industrial efficiency, economic performance and above all, **very strong involvement of staff in their work**, at all levels. We hope to be able to welcome a new Italian delegation soon and extend our exchanges to themes such as detection of emerging pollutant substances, 3d modeling of groundwater resources, etc."*

CELINE DURAND, Chief of Industrial Activities Optimisation Service within the Water Resources and Production Department

GRUPPO **CAP**

Eau de Paris
L'eau. Un service public

ACCESS TO WATER IN CITIES

Scottish Water learnt from Eau de Paris on the deployment of public water fountains



“The exchange that Scottish Water’s Top Up Tap team had with Eau de Paris was **enjoyable and very useful**. At the time of the visit we were yet to decide how to take forward a proposal to **install public water bottle filling points** across Scotland and the learnings from our exchange enabled some **key decisions**. The knowledge and experience of the Eau de Paris team, particularly those directly involved in the installation of new drinking fountains, was an enormous benefit to our team and the support of the Eau de Paris team and Aqua Publica Europea is greatly appreciated.”

BRIAN LIRONI, Corporate Affairs Director at Scottish Water

Members of **Scottish Water’s personnel** travelled to Paris in August 2018 to exchange on the supply of water in public spaces.

As Paris is currently deploying forty new water fountains in the city, Scotland is also planning the **installation of drinking points** in ten cities. Objectives of these initiatives include increasing access to water and promoting sustainability through reduced use of plastic bottles.

The exchange allowed Scottish Water to draw from Paris’ long experience on the matter and use concrete practices in its decision-making.

TOP UP FROM THE TAP

Top up from the Tap is Scottish Water’s campaign to **encourage people to carry a refillable bottle** and top up from the tap, launched in June 2018.

The aim is to **reduce plastic consumption** and raise awareness on the **quality, safety and economic benefits of tap water**.



INNOVATIVE METHODS

SMAT & SWDE find synergies in developing their methodologies to address new requirements

In October 2018, professionals from the Belgian operator **SWDE** (Société Wallonne des Eaux) travelled to Turin, Italy to exchange with **SMAT's** (Società Metropolitana Acque Torino) local team on **innovation** and the needs to find new ways to address future challenges efficiently.

The in-depth discussions were pragmatic, concrete and evidence-based, and they allowed both operators to **compare and challenge their approaches and methodologies**, in particular the Water Safety Plans developed by SMAT's Research Centre and the Predictive Models developed by SWDE.

Both **teams were enthusiastic about this exchange**, which was the opportunity to continue building their bilateral cooperation and to discuss future projects in the framework of the Aqua Publica platform.

Following the first workshops, teams identified common issues and **launched a process of developing new approaches together** to improve their abilities to face upcoming regulatory changes.

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*"We are very satisfied with the results of the exchange and the **long-term expectations envisaged**. The two-day workshop has been an important chance for facing with **other international contexts on topics currently addressed by our Research Center**, mainly focusing on main criticalities and positive aspects resulting in the application of Water Safety Plans."*

LORENZA MEUCCI, Research Centre Managing Director at SMAT

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*"Working directly with technical staff has allowed us to have very **concrete exchanges** which led us to identify shared challenges and set the basis for a continued, **forward-looking collaboration**. Through discussions, tangible examples and visits to installations, we were able to **identify common issues and we are now working together to find an innovative model** to adapt our methodologies for Water Safety Plans so that we can tackle challenges and anticipate our future obligations."*

MARC RUELLE, Technical Division Director at Société Wallonne des Eaux (SWDE)

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EFFICIENT WASTE WATER TREATMENT

Gruppo CAP (Italy) and HAMBURG WASSER launch new collaboration



In November 2018, **Gruppo CAP (Milan, Italy)** and **HAMBURG WASSER (Hamburg, Germany)** started a **bilateral exchange** to work together on waste water treatment, as well as renovation plans, rainwater, and energy efficiency programmes.

First, the Italian team travelled to Germany, and a reciprocation is planned for 2019.

Colleagues from CAP were particularly interested in Hamburg's **rehabilitation techniques** for centuries old network, with a visit to the Eilenau site, where they viewed the construction site with work in progress. In the busy city of Hamburg, new rehabilitation techniques are set up to avoid causing disturbances to road mobility.



*"I enjoyed a lot getting in contact with Italian colleagues with similar duties like mine and share together knowledge and technical information. I found **many similarities** in the organisation of our companies and in the way of working and solving technical problems. It was a nice experience that gave me the chance to **know better my own company** and develop a deep awareness of belonging to Hamburg Wasser. I can **fully recommend** this experience from the **personal and technical point of view.**"*

SARA TREVISAN, Hydraulic Engineer at HAMBURG WASSER

*"I enjoyed the discussions during our plant tour on the wastewater treatment plant in Hamburg. It is good to see that biogas upgrading from digester gas **is also implemented** at plants in other European countries such as Italy and that this technology is seen as a key component for energy efficiency in wastewater treatment."*

HENDRIK SCHURIG, Process Engineer sludge and gas treatment at WWTP Hamburg, HAMBURG WASSER

*"Everything that we have seen in the 4 days has given **different perspectives** that we then reported to the various sector managers so as to try to **replicate** the different projects that had struck us, for example the analysis of risk for planning interventions in plants or management of rainwater. It was certainly an **intense and very formative experience** that I would **certainly recommend to my colleagues** because it allowed me to see a **different type of management** and to be able to **take ideas for new projects.**"*

CECILIA PARIS, Energy Manager coordinator at Gruppo CAP

Aqua Publica Europea



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**Aqua Publica Europea is the European Association of Public Water Operators**

In 2019, Aqua Publica Europea, the European Association of Public Water Operators, celebrates its tenth anniversary and with it ten years of working to establish strong collaboration both with the utilities who provide us with indispensable water services and with EU and international institutions to inform decision-making that meets the public interest.

Back in 2009, a handful of operators from Belgium, France, Italy and Switzerland, realised that public utilities had **many values in common**. They joined their efforts to formalise a **shared vision for water management** with the creation of Aqua Publica Europea and its founding charter based on the view that **water is a common good that needs to be managed for the general interest by efficient public services**. Since then, this vision gathered growing support and over 60 operators have endorsed it.

With members **providing water supply and sanitation services to over 70 million people in Europe**, Aqua Publica is **now looking at the future**. Many challenges and new opportunities will affect water operators in the years to come, from climate change and population growth to technological progress. At the same time, the **EU also focuses on strengthening the management of this precious resource** through an ongoing wide review of its water policy, including cornerstone pieces such as the Drinking Water Directive or the Water Framework Directive, and tabling new legislation.

In this unique context, **collaboration between all actors is crucial** to secure sustainable and responsible management of a finite yet essential resource for both ours and future generations. Aqua Publica Europea's role will continue to be **to support public water operators' efforts by representing their voice** on key issues and provide a **platform for peer-to-peer exchanges for continuous improvement**, notably with the landmark Water Erasmus initiative.

*Aqua Publica Europea (APE) is the European Association of Public Water Operators. It unites publicly owned water and sanitation services and other stakeholders working to promote public water management at both European and international level. APE is an operator-led association that looks for efficient solutions that serve the public rather than corporate interests.*

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