

*Aqua Publica Europea, the European Association of Public Water Operators*  
*Water Alliance, Water Operators of the Lombardy Region*  
*Viveracqua, Water Operators of the Veneto Region*

## THE NEW DRINKING WATER DIRECTIVE AND BEYOND

### Ensuring better water quality in Europe: challenges and approaches

26 October 2018

Cremona Fair  
Piazza Ennio Zelioli Lanzini, 1  
Cremona, Italy

### SEMINAR REPORT

#### CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SEMINAR

Last February, the European Commission published its proposal to revise the Drinking Water Directive. If compared to the current legislation, the Commission's proposal introduces stricter quality requirements and a risk-based approach to ensure that the water we drink is both safe and good. What is more, the text put forward by the Commission significantly expands the scope of the Directive by introducing objectives on topics such as the access to water and transparency. If, on the one hand, the Commission's proposal creates new challenges for water operators, on the other hand, their role is heightened. Water operators are indeed identified as the cornerstone of the governance framework outlined in the proposal.

Meanwhile, the European Commission is currently assessing the effectiveness of other key pieces of the EU water legislation, from the Urban Waste Water Treatment to the Water Framework Directives. The first part of the seminar was dedicated to discussing the likely effects of the evolving EU legislation on European public water operators' operations and their plans to address the new challenges. Particular attention was paid to the implications of current and forthcoming legislation from technical, organisational and financial perspectives.

The second session then focused on the evolution of water governance models in Europe, also in the light of transformations the future EU legislation is likely to produce. Proposals for a reform of the water sector currently discussed in Italy were examined together with recent regulatory developments in other European countries in order to explore analogies and differences in the reforms across Europe.

In addition to representatives of the European public water sector, the conference benefitted from the contributions of European and national legislators, financial institutions, and regulatory authorities.

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On 26 October, two hundred people attended the seminar *'The new Drinking Water Directive and beyond'* in Cremona, Italy. It was the opportunity to gather a range of stakeholders from the water sector to discuss **different perspectives and the challenges posed by evolving regulatory frameworks in Europe**. This event proved particularly timely, considering the political context – the vote in the European Parliament on the Drinking Water Directive took place earlier in the week [[read Aqua Publica's reaction](#)] and the European Commission has launched a wide review of its water legislation. These legislative developments at EU level, as well as ongoing regulatory reforms in different European countries, express the growing political focus on water. Such renewed attention can be explained with both an emerging scientific knowledge on new pollution sources in water, and a growing citizens' demand of transparency about how their water is managed.

The seminar highlighted that, in order to cope with the new requirements stemming from the evolving legislative frameworks, operators and public institutions will have to address significant challenges, which include: the introduction of new management approaches and innovative technologies, the development of more effective governance arrangements and, finally, a greater investment effort. However, the discussions showed that there is **strong commitment by all stakeholders to ensure that water in Europe is clean, safe and accessible**. The debate also contributed to pinpointing some essential elements of a successful approach to address the challenges. Such elements encompass: clear and fit-for-purpose common rules at EU level; a well-designed distribution of responsibilities amongst different governance levels based on the subsidiarity principle; a strong regulatory framework and institutions ensuring accountability and performance improvement of water operators, this representing also a condition to increase investments; and, finally effective transparency and participatory requirements facilitating the inclusion of all stakeholders. The combination of these factors represents – in discussants' view – an essential condition to mobilise all relevant actors and resources towards the achievement of the common objective, which is increasing citizens' trust in high quality tap water, whilst ensuring its equitable access and sustainable use.

**The seminar was an integral part of the current lively debates around water, taking place throughout Europe**. European public water operators are keen to give their contributions, based on their concrete, on-the-ground experience in providing everyday safe drinking water to all. But European public operators also look beyond the traditional water treatment operations to develop an holistic approach that can ensure the long term sustainability of water resources. In this perspective, public operators are increasingly becoming actors of an integrated and multi-sector approach to environmental resources management. They do so by promoting actively coordination with other public authorities and institutions, from land planning to energy recovery, and by sharing their skills and knowledge with other stakeholders.



Following the welcome note by the President of Padania Acque, **Claudio Bodini**, the Mayor of Cremona **Gianluca Galimberti** stressed that *"local authorities are key actors to address sustainability challenges and in Cremona we are direct control of our water resources through our public operator Padania Acque"*.

**Célia Blauel**, President of Aqua Publica and Deputy-Mayor of Paris highlighted the **timeliness of the seminar to discuss water legislation**. She reminded that Aqua Publica has been following the evolution of the Drinking Water Directive from the very beginning and welcomed the Commission's proposal as it recognised that providing drinking water to all at an affordable cost is not just a technical matter but it is also a political issue. Ms. Blauel mentioned the other pieces of legislation undergoing review – *the Water Framework Directive, the Floods Directive, the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive* and expressed that they need to be linked coherently but also to be linked with other laws in other areas: chemicals, agriculture, and plastics. Ms. Blauel addressed the potential revision of the Water Framework there are several things that can be improved in the implementation, but there are some principles that are key and must remain such as the **polluter-pays principle, the protection of water bodies to reduce the level of treatment, the recovery of costs through an equitable distribution amongst the different water use, the participation and transparency**.




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***"We see the challenges but we also see the clear role and responsibility assigned to water operators by the directive and we, as public operator working for the general interest, we are ready and happy to take up the challenge."***

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**Célia Blauel, President of APE and Deputy-Mayor of Paris**

Since the Municipal elections of March 2014, Célia Blauel is Paris Deputy Mayor in charge of the Environment, Sustainable Development, the Climate Plan for Energy, and Hydric resources and counselor of the City of Paris. In June 2014, she was elected President of "Eau de Paris", the public water operator serving French capital. Celia Blauel obtained a degree from the Strasbourg Institute of Political Studies in 2003. A member of the Green Party since 2006, she is particularly active in matters such as housing, health, and environment. In addition, during two years she has worked for the INPES, the National Institute for Health Prevention and Education, as the responsible for national communication campaigns relating to the use of alcohol, psychoactive substances, and addictions.



## Renewing EU water legislation: what is at stake?

**Veronica Manfredi**, from the European Commission, opened the roundtable by sharing the Commission's perspectives and rationale behind the legislative work on the new Drinking Water Directive. It is urgent to find the right formula to managing resources sustainably and, she says *"all stakeholders need to work together to achieve this objective."* Ms. Manfredi gave an **overview of the main pressures on water resources and emphasised that providing sustainable access to water is a key challenge.** In Europe, water is largely clean and can be safely drank from the tap. **The vote in the European Parliament has seen a big debate on the level of ambition to have on the right to water; a debate that will now continue in the negotiations with Member States.** She further explained that, with its proposal for a recast of the Drinking Water Directive, the European Commission aimed to update relevant parameters for water quality and worked closely with the World Health Organisation (WHO) to have a future-proof framework to ensure water quality. She also stressed the importance of citizens' trust in tap water; she explained that improving transparency and access to information on water quality and management – as the new proposal aims to do – will be a key to achieve this objective. Ms Manfredi also reminded that an increased consumption of tap water through stronger quality requirement and more transparency will also contribute to our sustainable future, by the consumption of plastics. Ms. Manfredi then mentioned other legislative proposals on the table – such as the Regulation on Water Reuse to tackle water scarcity, and she gave an outline of the wide fitness check exercise on key Directives.

**Ms. Manfredi concluded on the importance for all stakeholders to provide their inputs** to get the Commission's actions and proposals right and to make water management across EU more effective, sustainable and enforceable.



***"All stakeholders need to work together."***



**Veronica Manfredi, Director, Directorate General for Environment – European Commission**

Since February 2018 Veronica Manfredi is the Director for Quality of Life in DG Environment in the European Commission. She oversees the correct implementation and development of key EU law in Water Quality, including the protection of river, lake and marine environments.

Between 2011 and 2018, she was Head of the Consumer and Marketing Law Unit in DG Justice, overseeing the effective implementation and development of no less than 10 EU Consumer Law Directives and preparing the 2018 New Deal for Consumers package. Between 2002 and 2011 she worked as a Cabinet member in the Prodi, Barroso I and Barroso II Commissions. Before joining the European Commission in 1999, Veronica worked for the Italian and European Chambers of Commerce, providing support to SMEs on a broad range of topics.

She is a lawyer by background, who deepened her knowledge of International and EU law in Rome, Turin, Kiel, Bruges and Brussels.

## Roundtable I

### Possible responses to technical and economic challenges stemming from EU water legislation

*The first roundtable has a strong focus on EU water legislation and its implications for water operators, in particular how they need to adapt their operations and how they can secure the investments that will become necessary to respond to new requirements.*



Moderated by **Nicola De Sanctis**, CEO, Acquedotto Pugliese



Nicola De Sanctis is Chief Executive Officer at Acquedotto Pugliese and has been working for Acquedotto Pugliese since 2016. Between 2005 and 2015 he held the position of Chief Executive Officer at of, Iren and Edison Energie Speciali, Iren and E.ON Italia –some of the biggest multi-utilities in Italy – focusing on energy markets and renewable energy production. Mr De Sanctis professional background also encompasses a long experience in the waste management sector. He holds an MBA and a BSC in Nuclear Engineering.

The first roundtable was opened by the newly appointed President of WAREG, the European Network of Water Regulators, who introduced the network of 26 members – national and regional authorities, governmental bodies or legal entities dealing economic regulation. WAREG works with 3 pillars: **research**, including on tariffs comparison in Europe to know which cost components are covered, **dialogue with governments and with EU institutions** and **services to members**.

His presentation focused on the **different areas where WAREG can support the decision-makers** – with key data, through sharing the practical experience of those who work on utilities and by participating in the development of solutions. **The network's point of view can help improve legislation with cost saving for authorities and utilities.** He stressed the **role of regulators in ensuring compliance with legislation and, consequently, the need for legislation to better acknowledge their role**, which WAREG works to achieve. Mr. Guerrini gave the example of the **different interpretations of what 'cost-recovery' is**, the role WAREG can play in supporting the clarification, or the lack of identification of who pays and what tariff to apply for water reuse. He further expressed the view that the Drinking Water Directive is a revolution also for transparency and accountability and the **regulators can support the Commission in finding a reporting scheme**. He concluded that regulators agree that the role of regulators will be crucial in estimating the costs to comply with the Directive. To comply with the highest frequency of monitoring, many utilities have higher costs and regulators have to measure these costs.

Following Mr. Guerrini's presentation, Gábor Till from Budapest Waterworks and Eric Smit from Belgian SWDE provided insight into **how operators are preparing to adapt to expected new requirements**.



**Andrea Guerrini, President, WAREG - European Network of Water Regulators**

Andrea Guerrini is Commissioner of ARERA, the Italian Regulatory Authority for Energy, Networks and Environment, and President of WAREG, the Association of European Water Regulators. From 2016 until his nomination in ARERA in August 2018, he was President of the Public Operator of the City of Livorno. Mr. Guerrini is professor of Performance Management, Planning and Control in the Department of Business Economics at the University of Verona, where he has been researching and teaching water utilities and regulation. He is the author of numerous publications, including monographs and articles for international reviews. In 2014 he wrote a book on "Water management in Italy: Governance, Performance and Sustainability" and in 2018 a book on "Management of water services companies. An operational manual for management and control". He has been leading research projects financed by the EU, and was one of the founders of the Water Management and Technology Research Centre. Prof. Guerrini has been drafting the tariff methodology for drinking water services for the City of Bolzano.



First, **Mr Till presented the situation for Budapest Waterworks** and emphasised that Budapest has the cheapest tariffs in the European Union although it has increased since the 1980's, which led to lower consumption. He further presented the three authorities in Hungary that regulate the operator – the capital/county government offices, the national public health and medical officer service and the national center for public health. **Mr. Till explained how Budapest Waterworks expects to be affected by the new Drinking Water Directive** and the changes that will need to be made to comply with quality requirements. Considering its particularities, the operator will be highly affected. The important element is to prepare the laboratories and the infrastructure and treatment options. And investments will need to be made. Finally, the question of the right balance between investment needs and tariff increase needs to be addressed.

**Mr. Smit discussed the SWDE's (Société Wallonne des Eaux, Belgium) perspective and focused on explaining that innovation is not only about technology** but also, and maybe first and foremost, about new ways of looking at how the operator is managed. As the Drinking Water Directive is expected to make Water Safety Plans (WSP) mandatory, Mr. Smit discussed **how it can go from being a methodology tool to control and minimise the health risk towards supporting a model of good governance**. He argued that the concept of 'water supply zone', (a geographical area) should be redefined to have 'functional zones' based on network interconnections, which would allow technical, financial and operation optimisation. In addition, it is necessary to break silos and to involve different company departments in WSP as a good way to put people together and make them think of solutions together, as the introduction of the WSP approach implies a change of mind-set.



**Gabor Till, Senior Advisor, Budapest Waterworks**

Gábor Till is senior consultant at Budapest Waterworks since 2014. He is responsible for international relations, EU-funded projects, and research and innovation activities. He graduated as engineer from the Technical University of Budapest and has a diploma in management studies from the Buckinghamshire Chilterns University. During the past thirty years, Gábor Till worked in different technical and managerial positions within Hungarian and multinational companies. Its main fields of activities are water and waste water management, heating, ventilation and air-conditioning, machinery industry and energetics, and co-generation. He also spent several years in the municipal sector and has experience in project management, international relations and consultancy in various fields and industries.



**Eric Smit, President, Société Wallonne des Eaux – Aquawal**

Eric Smit is the President of Aquawal, the federation of public water operators of Wallonia Region, Belgium. He is a member of the Executive Committee of *Société Wallonne des Eaux*, the main water supply operator in Wallonia. Eric Smit graduated in physics and economics at the Belgian universities of UCL and ULB. He worked as Inspector-General of Finances and is Former Deputy Chief of Staff of the Belgian Federal Vice-Prime Minister as well as Former Chief of Staff of the Regional Minister of Budget and Finance in Wallonia.

Next, **Thomas Van Gilst** explained the role of the European Investment Bank, the world's largest multilateral lender and borrower, as it is the **largest source of loan financing to the global water sector**, lending to public and private utilities, as well as national or local authorities. For private companies, they have to have obtained concessions compliant with regulations and have a good regulatory system. Mr. Van Gilst presented the different types of instruments available and explained that the EIB can lend up to 50% of investment costs per project. He gave an overview of the conditions that a project needs to fulfil to obtain a loan and highlighted that **regulation is an important aspect for a lender**. As **the EIB is mandated to support EU policy objectives**, all the Directives currently being reviewed are included in the EIB's framework. Finally, Mr. Van Gilst, presented some reflections on the **cost impact and opportunities of the Drinking Water Directive**.

The moderator then opened the debate, which saw the following reflections:

- **Andrea Guerrini:** *"investments are a relevant issue for citizens and for water utilities and they have to increase in order to comply with the standards. It is important to ask citizens how much they are willing to pay for water and if they are willing to accept tariffs increases to measure the increase"*.
- **Nicola De Sanctis** expressed that the European Parliament's vote on the Drinking Water Directive was pretty shy, with 300 votes.
- **Thomas Van Gilst** explained that if an entity is not sure whether it can have or maintain investment, that becomes a problem for the EIB.
- **Gábor Till** gave an overview of the innovation projects that Budapest participates in, at EU and national levels.
- **Eric Smit** explained that it is also necessary to communicate on the WSP and deal with it with the population, to reassure the population that it will help to maintain a good quality of water.
- On block chain technology for transparency and innovation, answering the audience, **Nicola De Sanctis** answered that his company has innovation projects but not much with block chain and **Veronica Manfredi** added that there is still unexploited potential but it can play an important role.



**Thomas Van Gilst, Head of Water Division, European Investment Bank**

**Thomas van Gilst** is Head of the Water Security and Resilience Division (previously "Water Management") within the European Investment Bank's Projects Directorate since 2016. The Bank finances some EUR 3 to 4 billion worth of water & wastewater as well as flood protection projects annually and follows the investments from preparation up to completion of works. Trained as a water resources engineer at the Technical University of Delft, the Netherlands, he first worked with Royal Haskoning, a Netherlands based Engineering Consulting firm as consultant in the fields of irrigation, water and wastewater and urban drainage. He later worked in business development with Enron and Thames Water, both in London. With Thames Water, he was heavily involved in setting up WSUP (Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor), a private sector-NGO-academia based partnership focusing on providing sustainable water and sanitation services in peri-urban areas in developing countries. Since joining the EIB in 2006 he has been in charge of a broad portfolio of water sector projects financed by the Bank both inside and outside Europe through a variety of financial products. [vangilst@eib.org](mailto:vangilst@eib.org).





## Legislative proposals for water governance reform in Italy

The second part of the seminar started with Members of the Italian Parliament Federica Daga and Chiara Braga introducing two different legislative proposals on water management and governance, currently debated jointly in the Parliament's Environment Commission.

**Federica Daga** (*Five Stars Movement*) introduced the proposed law that she is responsible for. She explained that, in the drafting process, she consulted with a range of stakeholders dealing with water. The draft law aims to change the way water can be managed and introduce the possibility of increased local territories participation in the management of water. The text is aimed to better realise the results of the **last referendum, which abolished a law imposing the privatisation of the water sector and restabilising water a public good**. She expressed her view that operators should provide service without focusing too much on profits. Text also aims at enabling all the entities that manage and supply water to know what investments are required. Having an open dialogue will be very important.

**Chiara Braga** (*Partito Democratico*) presented the second draft law, a continuation of the work started in the previous government. The idea is to organise in a better way the public entities that manage water, **in order to address the entire water management cycle**. She highlighted the differences with Ms. Daga's proposal:

- Defining the nature of the water utilities in compliance with EU law. The water management service is economically relevant.
- Organisation of water: the need to clearly establish water management as a service with industrial characteristics.
- Italy shall not step back from the existing work on identifying water bodies, which should be managed by a single operator, although several local authorities can be part of this operator: this approach is also needed to ensure the needed level of investment.
- Quality should be sustainable

She further mentioned investments and the need to secure funds for water, as well as measures for transparency, which must be guaranteed.

## Roundtable II

### Evolving national and European regulatory frameworks: increasing convergence?

*The second roundtable gave an overview of national contexts, starting with the law proposals currently in debate in Italy to regulate water management, and expanding to look into other regions, including Scotland and Ireland, to provide insight into how water is regulated and what changes are introduced.*



Moderated by **Paolo Romano**, President, **Società Metropolitana Acque Torino**



Paolo Romano graduated in engineering from at the Polytechnic school of Torino. He has worked for years in water services management companies as Director and Chief Executive Officer. He is currently Chairman of SMAT - Società Metropolitana Acque Torino S.p.A., a fully public-owned company that manages the Integrated Water Service in 292 Municipalities for over 2.2 million inhabitants. He is member of numerous expert-groups at national and international level in the water sector, including: member of the Board Aqua Publica Europea, President of Nord Ovest Servizi, member of the Board of Utilitalia (the Italian association of service utilities), Vice President of Hydroaid, Spokesperson for the Public Water Network "Water Alliance - Piedmont Waters" and represents Utilitalia in the Po River District Observatory.

Opening the second roundtable, **Alberto Villa**, Mayor of Pessano con Bernago and Chair of the Environment Commission of the Italian National Association of Municipalities, introduced the work that the Lombardy region has been doing on the water conservation - from a management point of view but also an environmental one and for drinking water. In this sense, it is essential to combine water management with land planning policies, as the two are strictly connected. He stressed that the most important is **that citizens want tap water that is good and affordable**, and they are accustomed to a certain quality or want services to improve. It is important to set minimum quality standards that every

supply company needs to have and decision-makers need to be brave regardless of their private or public nature, they need to be able to take action towards water providers when necessary.

**Jon Rathjen** presented Scotland's Hydro-Nation programme, which aims to develop the value of water resources, and Scottish Water, the public company providing water services to 5.3 million people. **The system is fully public** and Scottish Water's costs are fully recovered through tariffs. He **expressed Scotland's strong government commitment in water, as a political priority**. The government supports public ownership, sets the overall strategic direction, supports independent regulation and demands stability and long-term thinking. The 2018-2019 Programme for Government confirms the government's commitment to the Hydro-Nation agenda, notably through work to grow Scotland's water economy Scottish Water International consultancy, innovation, world-class research and overseas development. Finally, Mr. Rathjen noted that Scottish Water performs well, which allows Ministers to be supportive and take a long term view.



**Jon Rathjen, Water Industry Team Leader, Scottish Government**

Jon has over 25 years' experience as a Public Servant having worked for Customs and Excise and now the Scottish Government.

Jon Rathjen is the team leader of the Water Industry Team in the Scottish Government with policy responsibility for the Scottish Water Industry including sponsorship of the public corporation Scottish Water and the new Hydro Nation agenda. Scotland the Hydro Nation focuses on the economic, social and environmental development of the value of water resources in Scotland and the raising of Scotland's international profile through its performance on global water issues.

**Paola Briani** presented the experience of Viveracqua in Italy's Veneto region, which serves 4.8 million people. She started by emphasizing that **the new Directive is crucial for operators** due to the elements of transparency, risk-based approach, quality requirements. It is a strong challenge which required significant investments. She expressed that **public operators are there to provide a service, without using water resources to make profits, and they need to address both investments and affordability**. Viveracqua was born to respond to this need and to address financial challenges. The company fosters cooperation amongst different existing companies. Ms. Briani explained some of the actions taken. For affordability, a solidarity fund was created and transparency is promoted. Viveracqua responds to the citizens and also ensures representation before institutions. Viveracqua also aims to develop financial projects and initiatives to guarantee the best services for citizens. It was able to realise investments through **the first large scale investment project in the water sector co-financed by the European Investment Bank through the issuing of a hydrobond by a consortium of water utilities**. The group is also involved in innovation projects.



**Paola Briani, Vice-President, Viveracqua**

Paola Briani is a lawyer with a long experience as a trustee of public bodies. She is the author of scientific articles for legal journals, such as Iura Civitatis. Ms Briani has acquired an advanced experience in the water sector and is a member of Acque Veronesi's Management Board since July 2015, as well as a member of Aqua Publica Europea's Management Board since October 2015, where she sits as representative of Viveracqua. She is also a member of the Water Committee of the Italian association of utility utilities, Utilitalia. Ms Briani has collaborated with Members of the Italian Parliament on legislative proposal on water and environment-related issues. She also collaborated with Members of the European Parliament, with particular reference to the topic of emerging pollutants in water.



**Gerry Galvin** provided the perspective of Irish Water, which delivers 1.7 billion litres of drinking water per day and introduced Ireland's set of strategic documents which clearly show the **government's policy on water**. The water services policy statement for 2018-2025 relies on 4 key principles: *one water authority, priority on health and environment, participation, efficiency*. Three themes are outlined: *quality* (water and waste water), *conservation* (leakage reduction, environment protection), *future proofing* (capacity and resilience, economic growth). Mr. Galvin then presented the **complex governance framework around Irish Water**, including the government, different departments within the government. Irish Water is regulated by two main regulators: the Environment Regulator and the Economic Regulator, which focuses on performance. Although tariffs are abolished, the economic regulator ensures that water charges are fair and reasonable for the consumers. Two advisory bodies – the Water Forum, representing stakeholders, and the Water Advisory Body, chaired by the commission for regulation, – make recommendations to Irish Water. Advisory bodies advise the Minister to increase public confidence in Irish Water. Finally, Mr. Galvin concluded that **the customer is central to how Irish Water delivers services**.



**Gerry Galvin, Chief Technical Officer, Irish Water**

Gerry Galvin is a civil engineer who joined Irish Water on its establishment in 2013 as Chief Technical Officer where he maintains a strategic technical oversight of a range of functions across the business, advising the management team on key business risks with a strong focus on Health & Safety, R&D and innovation, including forming and maintaining links with research bodies, enterprise agencies and international water organizations. Having worked for a local authority and a consulting engineering firm in his early career, Gerry previously worked for over 20 years in the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government, the last 10 of which as Principal Adviser (Water) where he headed up the Water Inspectorate Unit responsible for providing professional and technical advice on all matters relating to water including the Water Services Investment Programme (WSIP). Prior to the establishment of Irish Water, the WSIP funded water and wastewater infrastructure upgrades.



At the end of the session, **Alessandro Russo**, Aqua Publica's Vice-President, closed the seminar explaining that Aqua Publica was born out of the need to counter privatisation in Europe. The idea came from Milan, Paris and Brussels which decided to work together in a network that has grown much larger over the last 9 years. Since then, a political shift towards public management of water has been observed in Europe and worldwide, with important cities deciding to bring back water management in public hands. Nevertheless, although the current conditions are more favourable to public management, they are not to be taken for granted. The public sector now has to demonstrate its capacity to respond to the great challenges of the future. And, in order to do so, it is crucial to understand the nature of the service and accept challenges, outside ideological grids. Mr. Russo outlined three key principles for public water operators for the future :

- **Participation:** given the need for investments, it is necessary to speak with citizens and explain service costs.
- **Sustainability:** *"we need to start drinking tap water again"*.
- **Holistic approach:** water management is intertwined with broader territorial management. Public ownership is better positioned to cooperate with other public administrations and sectors, as it naturally more connected with the local context and because it does not have any economic constraints in sharing skills and information with other stakeholders.

Mr. Russo concluded that if Aqua Publica is able to face challenges in a holistic manner, the next ten years will see the reinforcement of its role. ***"We'll be able to provide a quality service to all."***



***"Water is again at the centre of debate"***



**Alessandro Russo, Vice-President of APE**

Since 2014, Alessandro Russo is President at CAP Holding- Gruppo CAP, the leading 100% public water service management company of the Metropolitan City of Milan. Mr Russo is also Vice-President of Aqua Publica Europea and Confservizi Cispel Lombardia, the Association of Companies and Local Government Services of Lombardy Region. He has been recently elected Vice-President of Utilitalia, the Italian Federation of service utilities. Mr Russo holds a degree in Political Science and a Master in Business Administration

