



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

## PRESS RELEASE

### WATER REUSE: PUBLIC WATER OPERATORS WELCOME EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT'S POSITION BUT MORE TO BE DONE TO ENSURE EFFECTIVENESS

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*Public water operators welcome the legislation and the improvements proposed by the European Parliament but emphasise the need to adequately distribute responsibilities to achieve a functioning water reuse system*

**Brussels, 12 February 2019** – Aqua Publica Europea, the European Association of Public Water Operators, **welcomes the European Parliament's plenary vote on the [Water Reuse Regulation](#) as a crucial step towards a harmonised framework for the reuse of treated water for irrigation purposes** but highlights key elements that need to be addressed to allow for an efficient and appropriate implementation.

Such a legislation is necessary to ensure a clear framework which benefits all involved actors: by setting common quality standards for reclaimed water, the regulation will support responsible circularity in **regions suffering from water scarcity and droughts** and **more sustainable uses of a finite yet essential resource**, whilst also ensuring the **protection of human health and the environment** and fostering **consumers' trust** in agricultural products from all over Europe.

Members of the European Parliament have taken an additional step forward today by strengthening the provision on the **effects of water reuse practices on the environment**, notably the impact on ecological flows. However, public operators in charge of water reclamation plants stress that the text still insufficiently acknowledges the **importance of coordination between all actors**.

By definition water is a shared resource and requires the responsibilities in reuse processes to be adequately distributed to ensure effectiveness and avoid uncertainties. With the **'cost-recovery' obligation**, existing EU water policy makes it mandatory for water operators to recover their costs through tariffs to promote sustainable use of water. Consequently, when water reuse implies new investments, a proper coordination of the processes by competent authorities **prevents an unfair and unbalanced cost transfer to households' water bills**.

Therefore, whilst the vote in the European Parliament marks a positive step towards better consideration of environmental aspects, **the text still needs to go further in adequately distributing responsibilities to fully deliver its benefits for our societies. Public water operators call institutions to take this crucial element into account in their negotiations on the legislation.**

*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.*

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