European Drinking Water (EDW) position on the Revision of the Drinking Water Directive (DWD)

The Commission proposal on the revision of the DWD should lead to the development of a harmonised regulatory framework on materials and products in contact with drinking water.

The European Drinking Water (EDW) supports the Commission’s ongoing work on the Revision of the Drinking Water Directive 98/83/EC (DWD). The legislative proposal that the Commission will publish by the end of 2017 should particularly address the lack of EU-wide harmonised provisions on materials and products in contact with drinking water.

As highlighted by the Commission evaluation of the DWD, materials and products in contact with drinking water are currently subject to a non-harmonised European regulatory framework. They must therefore meet national-specific requirements and provisions that differ from one Member State to another.

To move towards the development of EU-wide harmonised provisions ensuring the same high degree of human health protection for all European consumers, the EDW believes that the Commission proposal should:

- Empower the Commission to propose legally binding measures to harmonise EU requirements on the hygienic safety of materials in contact with drinking water.
- Ensure the development of common European test methods and procedures for conformity assessment of the hygienic safety of materials and products in contact with drinking water.

What is the issue?

The current lack of harmonised requirements on materials and product in contact with drinking water is the result of:

- Multiple national requirements aiming at ensuring protection of consumers’ health and the quality of drinking water.
- Different national test methods and procedures for conformity assessment of the safety of materials and products in contact with drinking water.
This situation stems from the current article 10 of the DWD which allows Member States to have different national approval systems for materials and products in contact with drinking water.\footnote{According to the European Commission Evaluation of the Drinking Water Directive (December 2016), ‘the Article 10 provisions do not work well and represent a long term challenge to the provision of clean and healthy drinking water in the EU’ (p.42).} This has led to:

- Potentially different levels of consumer protection across EU Member States.
- A fragmentation of the EU internal market worsened by ineffective application of the mutual recognition principle.
- Significant obstacles to the market uptake of innovative products, such as products with a longer lifetime. As companies do not have the legal certainty that new products in contact with drinking water will be accepted by other EU Member States, they often lack appropriate incentives to invest in innovative products.
- High administrative and financial burden, especially for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Companies need to test and assess the conformity of the same material or product multiple times when so required by different Member States. This situation results in higher costs for consumers and has a major impact on SMEs which, due to their limited resources, are at a competitive disadvantage in fulfilling the multiple requirements set by different Member States.
- Competitive disadvantage of European manufacturers vis-à-vis third countries in the competition for extra-EU markets. The existence of a harmonised regulatory framework and a EU product safety mark could be accepted by extra-EU countries, enhancing export opportunities for European companies.

**European Drinking Water Recommendations**

For all the above reasons, the EDW believes that the Revision of the Drinking Water Directive should lead to the development of a harmonised regulatory framework on materials and products in contact with drinking water ensuring that all European citizens benefit from a high level of human health protection.

The EDW recommends the Commission to revise the Drinking Water Directive to ensure that the safety of materials and products in contact with drinking water is regulated at the EU level.

This requires:

- The development of common European requirements ensuring protection of consumers' health and the quality of drinking water. In this respect, the Drinking Water Directive should empower the Commission to propose specific legally binding measures on the
hygienic safety of materials and products in contact with drinking water. These legally binding measures should ensure that all European citizens benefit from the same high level of human health protection. Such measures should, ultimately, lead to the progressive development of an EU-wide harmonised list of substances allowed in the production of materials and products in contact with drinking water.

- The specification of common European test methods and procedures for conformity assessment of the hygienic safety of materials and products in contact with drinking water. The Commission should issue a mandate for the development of EU-wide common procedures for conformity assessment and test methods on the hygienic safety of all materials and products in contact with drinking water. The DWD should then contain an explicit reference to the above-mentioned documents: test results for materials and products in contact with drinking water which are tested according to EU-wide procedures for conformity assessment and test methods should be presumed to be compliant with the provisions of the DWD.

About the European Drinking Water (EDW)

The European Drinking Water (EDW) is an alliance of currently 28 European trade associations representing industries involved with the supply of products or materials that are used in drinking water applications and connected to municipal drinking water supplies within the European Union (EU). This ranges, from raw materials suppliers to producers of pumps, water meters, pipes, valves, taps, fittings, water treatment, water heaters, catering equipment industry, seals, etc. and all types of materials, such as elastomers, metals, plastics, etc. The alliance is open to any industry association relevant to drinking water contact applications.

---

2 These test methods could be based on harmonised test methods already produced by CEN/TC164.

3 Specific procedures for conformity assessment and test methods should be developed at least for the 4 most common material categories used in drinking water applications (plastics, metals, elastomers and cement) and for assembled products composed of different materials.
# European Drinking Water – Member associations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANIMA</th>
<th>AQUA</th>
<th>AQUA EUROPA</th>
<th>BMA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federation of Association of Mechanical and Engineering Industry</td>
<td>European Association of Water Meters and Heat Meters Manufacturers</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bathroom Manufacturers Association</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BRANCHEHUŚ</th>
<th>BRITISH WATER</th>
<th>CEDEC</th>
<th>CEIR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>European Committee of Domestic Equipment Manufacturers</td>
<td>European Association for the Taps and Valves Industry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CES</th>
<th>CESA</th>
<th>DKI</th>
<th>EADIPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silicones Europe</td>
<td>Catering Equipment Suppliers Association</td>
<td>Copper Alliance</td>
<td>European Association for Ductile Iron Pipe Systems</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EFCEM</th>
<th>EHI</th>
<th>ELISANA</th>
<th>ESA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>European Federation of Catering Equipment</td>
<td>European Heating Industry</td>
<td>European Light Stabilisers and Antioxidants</td>
<td>European Sealing Association</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ETRMA</th>
<th>Europump</th>
<th>EVA</th>
<th>EWTA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>European Tyre &amp; Rubber Manufacturers’ Association</td>
<td>The European Pump Manufacturers Association</td>
<td>European Vending Association</td>
<td>European Water Treatment Association</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

European Drinking Water  
Office Avenue de Cortenbergh 71, B - 1000 Brussels  
Phone +32-2-741.82.87  
Email info@europeandrinkingwater.eu  
Web www.europeandrinkingwater.eu
# European Drinking Water

**Position Paper**

**FCA**
- Food Contact Additives (a Cefic Sector Group)

**Figawa**
- Association of Companies for Gas and Water Technologies

**KRV**
- Fachverband der Kunststoffrohrindustrie

**PlasticsEurope**

**SOIA**
- Synthetic Organic Ion Exchangers and Adsorbents

**TEPPFA**
- The European Plastic Pipes and Fittings Association

**VDDW**
- Association of German water- and heat meters industry

**VRH**
- Association for Piping Systems Inside Buildings

**WQA**
- Water Quality Association

**ZVEI**
- German Electrical and Electronic Manufacturers’ Association