Basic information

1995/0010(SYN) SYN - Cooperation procedure (historic)	Procedure completed
Quality of water intended for human consumption. Drinking Water Directive Repealed by 2017/0332(COD) **Subject** 3.70.04 Water control and management, pollution of waterways, water pollution	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
ENVI Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection	COLLINS Kenneth D. (PSE)	22/02/1995

Former committee responsible	Former rapporteur	Appointed
ENVI Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection	COLLINS Kenneth D. (PSE)	22/02/1995

Former committee for opinion	Former rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
BUDG Budgets	DELL'ALBA Gianfranco (ARE)	01/06/1995
JURI Legal Affairs, Citizens' Rights	SIERRA GONZÁLEZ Angela del Carmen (GUE/NGL)	04/06/1996

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Environment	1956	1996-10-15
Environment	2017	1997-06-19
Environment	2033	1997-10-16
Environment	1978	1996-12-09
Consumers	2128	1998-11-03
Fisheries	2063	1997-12-18

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
10/08/1994	Additional information		Summary
04/01/1995	Legislative proposal published	COM(1994)0612	Summary
16/06/1995	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
15/10/1996	Debate in Council		
21/11/1996	Vote in committee		Summary
21/11/1996	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	A4-0394/1996	
09/12/1996	Debate in Council		
11/12/1996	Debate in Parliament		Summary
04/06/1997	Modified legislative proposal published	COM(1997)0228	Summary
19/06/1997	Debate in Council		
19/12/1997	Council position published	12767/2/1997	Summary
19/02/1998	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 2nd reading		
22/04/1998	Vote in committee, 2nd reading		Summary
22/04/1998	Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading	A4-0146/1998	
12/05/1998	Debate in Parliament		Summary
08/07/1998	Modified legislative proposal published	COM(1998)0388	Summary
03/11/1998	Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament		
03/11/1998	End of procedure in Parliament		
05/12/1998	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1995/0010(SYN)
Procedure type	SYN - Cooperation procedure (historic)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Amendments and repeals	Repealed by 2017/0332(COD)
Legal basis	EC Treaty (before Amsterdam) E 130S-p1
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/4/09626

Documentation gateway				
European Parliament				
Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary

Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A4-0394/1996 OJ C 020 20.01.1997, p. 0003	21/11/1996	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T4-0673/1996 OJ C 020 20.01.1997, p. 0084-0121	12/12/1996	Summary
Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading		A4-0146/1998 OJ C 152 18.05.1998, p. 0006	22/04/1998	
Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading		T4-0268/1998 OJ C 167 01.06.1998, p. 0078-0092	13/05/1998	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Council position	12767/2/1997 OJ C 091 26.03.1998, p. 0001	19/12/1997	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Legislative proposal	COM(1994)0612 OJ C 131 30.05.1995, p. 0005	04/01/1995	Summary
Modified legislative proposal	COM(1997)0228 OJ C 213 15.07.1997, p. 0008	04/06/1997	Summary
Commission communication on Council's position	SEC(1998)0128	11/02/1998	Summary
Modified legislative proposal	COM(1998)0388	08/07/1998	Summary
Follow-up document	COM(2014)0363	16/06/2014	Summary
Follow-up document	COM(2016)0666	20/10/2016	Summary
Follow-up document	SWD(2016)0428	01/12/2016	

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
CofR	Committee of the Regions: opinion	CDR0304/1995 OJ C 100 02.04.1996, p. 0134	20/09/1995	Summary
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES1458/1995 OJ C 082 19.03.1996, p. 0064	21/12/1995	Summary

Additional information

Source	Document	Date

European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act
Directive 1998/0083 OJ L 330 05.12.1998, p. 0032 Summary

Quality of water intended for human consumption. Drinking Water Directive

1995/0010(SYN) - 16/06/2014 - Follow-up document

The Commission presents a synthesis report on the quality of drinking water in the EU examining the Member States' reports for the period 2008-2010 under Directive 98/83/EC.

The Drinking Water Directive, introduced in 1980 and revised in 1998, has led to the availability of high-quality drinking water across the EU. Joint efforts from EU institutions, Member States and service providers have resulted in high compliance rates with the drinking water standards and the Directive is therefore one of the success stories, albeit not a very well known one, of EU legislation in the field of environment and public health.

This document gives a summary of the status of implementation of the Drinking Water Directive, based on the latest data reported by Member States:

Drinking water quality: in order to ensure that drinking water is safe for human consumption, the Drinking Water Directive sets out minimum water quality requirements. Reported data on these parameters show that drinking water quality in the EU is in general very good. The overall trend is also positive.

- ***For the large supplies***, the vast majority of Member States show compliance rates for microbiological and chemical parameters of between 99% and 100%. For the few Member States showing compliance rates lower than 99%, reinforced action will be required to ensure that all citizens served by the large supplies concerned can safely use drinking water.

- ***As regards the small water supplies***, the picture is more divergent. Lower compliance levels are noted for the microbiological parameters, with only three Member States achieving compliance rates between 99% and 100%. A breakdown of compliance rates for microbiological parameters shows that the compliance for small supplies is significantly lower than for large supplies.

For the **chemical parameters** for small supplies, similar high compliance levels are noted as for the big supplies. In some supply zones, problems were reported in relation to nitrate, nitrite, arsenic, and to a lesser extent, boron and fluoride. The assessment of reported data on the small supplies showed that some Member States are struggling to manage small supplies in a safe way.

Concerns in relation to small water supplies have also been recognised by the 7th Environmental Action Programme (7th EAP), which calls for increased efforts in the implementation of the Directive in particular for small drinking water supplies.

Monitoring: the Directive requires Member States to ensure that regular monitoring of the quality of water intended for human consumption is carried out. However, monitoring approaches differ between Member States and even between different water supply zones within individual Member States, resulting in different levels and availability of monitoring data. This does not necessarily amount to a failure in meeting the legal requirements as the Directive allows for adapted monitoring programmes depending on the specific characteristics of the water supply zone. The analysis suggests, however, the need to **review and better streamline the current monitoring approaches**.

To address Member States' monitoring and performance, the Commission is working on a so called "Structured Implementation and Information Framework" (**SIIF**), establishing systems at national level which actively disseminate information about how EU environment legislation is being implemented. This information is then brought together to provide an EU-wide overview. The Directive's requirement that up-to-date information on drinking water quality is made available to consumers could also be linked to such an information framework and be improved in this context. Drinking water data could also be more clearly linked to the Water Information System for Europe (WISE) which comprises a wide range of data and information collected by the EU institutions.

Information: the report also notes that it is important for the public to have access to information on drinking water quality. While often provided on national websites, it is frequently not up to date and is difficult to understand. The majority of Member States do not use comprehensive maps or other public supports. The current set-up for reporting does not provide the Commission with adequate and timely information to perform a thorough synthesis of drinking water quality developments in the European Union. This makes it difficult to provide the Council, European Parliament and the public with updated EU-wide information on drinking water policy and quality on a regular basis. In addition, the way data are collected, processed and reported differs across the EU, which makes it difficult to compare situations in different Member States with regard to their performance and compliance with the Directive. A **revised or new reporting concept** could facilitate transparent data dissemination and management at both national and EU level. Also, benchmarking drinking water quality could allow easier interpretation and visualisation of water quality data across the EU and better comparison of water quality and trends between Member States.

Derogations: the Directive allows derogations from the drinking water quality standards under very strict conditions and limited in time. The Commission has so far granted a number of derogations to the Czech Republic, Italy, Hungary and Germany, referring mainly to the parameters of nitrate and nitrite, fluoride, boron, arsenic and nickel. It has refused one request for a derogation, from Estonia. Derogations and other possible exemptions in exceptional circumstances could **jeopardize a consistent EU-wide implementation of the Directive** if not applied prudently.

Challenges: EU policy on drinking water has led to the development of high drinking water quality across the EU over the past decades. However, in order to keep these high quality standards and address specific remaining challenges, there may be a need to **further adapt the EU legal framework**.

Main conclusions: although enforcement of the Drinking Water Directive is satisfactory and progress has been made in many areas, the following issues and challenges have been identified:

- the supply of high-quality water, in particular in **remote and rural areas**, should be improved. Small water supplies in these areas require specific risk-based management approaches and the role of the Drinking Water Directive in this context should be explored;
- **risk-based approaches** to the management of big water supplies would allow for more cost effective monitoring and parameter analysis in relation to identified risks and provide better guarantees for the protection of human health;
- methodologies for **monitoring** and analysis should reflect the latest scientific and technological developments;
- new scientific information about chemical and other parameters in relation to the drinking water parameter list should be considered in line with the on-going revision of the WHO drinking-water guidelines, including emerging pollutants;
- modern information technology and easier **access to environmental information** should be used to provide more up-to-date information for consumers, and to explore how to link different monitoring data with reporting and consumer information;
- implementation **timescales and derogation mechanisms** are out- of-date and would benefit from a general update and overhaul;
- an **EU-wide public consultation** will be a first step towards a further in-depth assessment of the above mentioned challenges and how they could be best addressed. It may also identify additional issues to be tackled in order to ensure and further improve high drinking water quality standards across the EU.

Quality of water intended for human consumption. Drinking Water Directive

1995/0010(SYN) - 08/07/1998 - Modified legislative proposal

In its re-examined proposal following Parliament's second reading, the Commission has incorporated a few of the amendments. In general, the Commission has not incorporated those it considered unworkable or which would have made implementation of the directive excessively onerous. It has, however, incorporated the amendments which clarified the text, removed doubts or improved the transparency of the text. These are in particular the amendments concerning: - the concentration in water of chemical products which disrupt the human endocrine system, - provision for further measures with regard to lead pipes following a report by the Member States on this subject, - contamination of drinking water by disinfection by-products, - preparation of a report on areas with high THM concentrations, - addition of an (unquantified) radioactivity parameter in the annex. All the other amendments (16 in all) were not incorporated either because they were irrelevant (in particular: derogations, lowering the THM parameter to 80 g /l., 10 year period for complying with the lead standard etc., were rejected) or were rendered redundant by the rest of the proposal.

Quality of water intended for human consumption. Drinking Water Directive

1995/0010(SYN) - 19/12/1997 - Council position

In its common position, the Council has adopted a large number of amendments (39 in total) proposed by the European Parliament. The discussions centred on parameters regarding lead and provisions concerning it. The main changes or renovations introduced by the Council relate to the following points: 1) Notion of 'wholesome and clean': because of the broadening of the qualification for water intended for human consumption (wholesome and clean), the Council defined the concept by adding that the water must be free from any substances constituting a potential danger to human health; 2) Definition of 'domestic distribution system': this definition has been modified so as to apply to private premises only while excluding premises and establishments where water is supplied to the public such as schools, hospitals and restaurants. Appropriate measures must be taken to reduce or eliminate the risk of non-compliance with parametric values and ensure that consumers are informed or advised on any possible additional remedial action they should take; 3) The lead parameter: the Council must manage to reach agreement on the following aspects of this controversial issue: - a parametric value and timetable are accepted as in the Commission proposal; - an adequate sampling method at the tap which is representative of a weekly average value ingested by consumers needs to be elaborated and added to the directive; Member States must take account of the occurrence of peak levels that may cause adverse affects on human health; 4) Derogations and exceptional circumstances: the common position limits in time with derogations envisaged under the general scheme and the prolongation of the timescale in exceptional circumstances, which must not exceed three years; 5) Transparency: the Council has systematically adopted provisions seeking to ensure that consumers or populations concerned are properly informed and advised; 6) Quality standards and parametric values: the Council has: - changed some of the names of the parameters to render them more precise (e.g. enterococci, clostridium perfringens) and added certain parameters; - set tighter values, e.g. for acrylamide, epichlorohydrine, tri- and tetrachloroethane; - changed the standard for antinomy, boron, nitrite at the tap and PAH; - added the WHO guideline as an interim guideline for bromate; - replaced bromodichloromethane and chloroform by the sum of 4 THMs. Finally, to ensure that monitoring results are reliable and accurate, the Council made the minimum sampling frequencies more proportional to the volume of water supply and entered a provision on quality control for laboratories. As far as analytical methods are concerned and where at all possible, the Council introduced internationally-accepted ISO/CEN standards.

Quality of water intended for human consumption. Drinking Water Directive

1995/0010(SYN) - 12/12/1996 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Ken COLLINS (PSE, UK) Parliament set out six principles on which Community legislation on the quality of water intended for human consumption should be based: - there should be no repeal of water protection legislation without guarantees that provisions will be taken up in other directives; - there should be a hierarchy of water policy priorities to ensure safe water supplies, to arrest further decline of water quality and to restore polluted water; - there should be consistency of definitions and comparable data to ensure effective auditing of compliance; - the public should have access to information; - the most appropriate techniques and technologies should be used and there should be open and democratic procedures at all stages. Parliament stresses the following points: respect for the subsidiarity principle; the establishment of Community rules to ensure the supply for households at all times; protection measures to ensure that surface and groundwater is kept clean; the adoption of a framework directive on water; the reduction of lead and pesticide levels in the water supply. Parliament adopted several amendments on the microbiological parameters and the radioactive limits to be adopted.

Quality of water intended for human consumption. Drinking Water Directive

1995/0010(SYN) - 20/09/1995 - Committee of the Regions: opinion

The Committee of the Regions felt that it was important to ensure that the Directive continued to focus on human health, consumer protection and environmental conservation. The Committee welcomed the simplification of the parameters chosen to guarantee the general quality of water intended for human consumption, but felt that the range should be extended to require analysis of the microbiological parameters that were generally reckoned to provide an indication of whether water intended for human consumption contained harmful bacteria. The Committee regretted that the proposed directive did not include the parametric value for the total pesticide content of water intended for human consumption. It approved the Commission’s proposal to reduce the concentration of lead in water intended for human consumption but this required the replacement of pipework, resulting in high costs to local and regional authorities and to householders. The Committee called for EU funding to be made available to encourage the replacement of such pipework. It also proposed that the analysis parameters for total pesticide content be retained and that pesticide degradation products also be covered by the Directive. In addition, it recommended that emphasis be placed on the precautionary principle when setting the parametric values for trichlorethene and tetrachlorethene. EU citizens should have adequate information on this issue.

Quality of water intended for human consumption. Drinking Water Directive

1995/0010(SYN) - 04/01/1995 - Legislative proposal

The proposal seeks to completely revise the "drinking water" directive (80/778/EEC) with a view to updating it in the light of technical progress. The revised directive defines the general parameters considered essential in order to guarantee the quality of drinking water and the consumer's health, while giving Member States the possibility of adding secondary parameters if they so wish. - The Commission proposes to reduce the number of compulsory parameters from 67 to 48. 13 new parameters have been added in order to take account of progress in scientific knowledge. - The revised parametric values apply to lead, nitrates and pesticides: . for pesticides and nitrates, the parametric values will be maintained at current levels as a precautionary measure (0.1 microgramme per litre for each pesticide); . the lead content will be reduced from 50 to 10 microgrammes per litre, an 80% reduction which corresponds to the quality recommendations of the WHO. A period of 15 years should be allowed for complying with the new parameter, in order to enable Member States to gradually make the investments needed in order to replace lead pipes and fittings. The Member States will also be able to decide on the speed at which pipes are replaced in private buildings and may postpone financial implementation if they so wish. - The proposal gives the Member States a flexible framework which will allow them to intervene if the values set in the directive are unexpectedly exceeded. It also guarantees suitable public information in such cases. The Member States are required to give preference where possible to preventive action. - The Commission proposes to make restrictions or a ban by Member States on the free movement of water for human consumption which complies with the minimum values prescribed in the directive illegal. - As far as systems for monitoring water are concerned, the Commission proposes a new series of minimum requirements which will allow Member States to adapt the extent and nature of controls to local conditions.

Quality of water intended for human consumption. Drinking Water Directive

1995/0010(SYN) - 03/11/1998 - Final act

PURPOSE: the protection of human health from adverse effects of any contamination of water intended for human consumption by ensuring that it is wholesome and clean.

COMMUNITY MEASURE: Council Directive 98/83/EC on the quality of water intended for human consumption.

CONTENT: The Directive seeks to simplify, consolidate and update Directive 80/778/EEC in the light of scientific and technical progress and with account being taken of the subsidiarity principle. Experience gained from implementing Directive 80/778/EEC has shown that it is necessary to create an appropriately flexible and transparent legal framework for Member States to address failures to meet standards relating to the production and distribution of water. The Directive also takes into consideration the new scientific findings of the WHO concerning the quality of drinking water and the opinion of the Commission's Scientific Advisory Committee to examine the toxicity and ecotoxicity of chemical compounds. In comparison with the existing Directive, the number of quality parameters has been reduced so that the only ones retained at Community level are those which are essential to guarantee a high level of health protection.

Member States are required to take the necessary measures to ensure that water intended for human consumption is wholesome and clean and, thus, free from any micro-organisms and parasites and any substances which, in numbers or in concentrations, constitute a potential danger to human health. Member States are also required to take all necessary measures to ensure that regular monitoring of the quality of water intended for human consumption is carried out in order to check that the water available to consumers meets the requirements of this Directive and, in particular, the

parametric values set in accordance with Art. 5. Samples should be taken so that they are representative of the quality of the water consumed throughout the year. Member States are obliged to ensure that any failure to meet the parametric values set in accordance with Art. 5 is immediately investigated in order to identify the cause. The Member States have to take the necessary remedial action as soon as possible to restore its quality. Whether or not any failure to meet the parametric values has occurred, Member States shall ensure that any supply of water intended for human consumption which constitutes a potential danger to human health is prohibited or its use restricted or such other action is taken as is necessary to protect human health. In such cases, consumers shall be promptly informed thereof and given the necessary advice. Member States may provide for derogations from the parametric values set out in Annex I, Part B, or set in accordance with Art. 5(3), up to a maximum value to be determined by them, provided no derogation constitutes a potential danger to human health and provided that the supply of water intended for human consumption in the area concerned cannot otherwise be maintained by any other reasonable means. Derogations shall be limited to as short a time as possible and shall not exceed three years. The most important change from the existing Directive is the reduction from 50 to 10 micrograms/litre (µg/l) of the maximum lead concentration in drinking water. The value applies to a sample of water intended for human consumption obtained by anadequate sampling method at the tap and taken so as to be representative of a weekly average value ingested by consumers. Member States must take account of the occurrence of peak levels that may cause adverse affects on human health. The parametric value for lead from five years after the entry into force of this Directive until 15 years after its entry into force is 25µg/l.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 25/12/1998.

DEADLINE FIXED FOR TRANSPOSITION: 25/12/2000.

Quality of water intended for human consumption. Drinking Water Directive

1995/0010(SYN) - 04/06/1997 - Modified legislative proposal

The amended proposal incorporates, in full or in part, 30 amendments adopted by the European Parliament at first reading. The Commission accepted amendments which improve transparency and the degree of protection without reservation. It also accepted in principle amendments relating mainly to the following points: - the scientific basis of the proposal, i.e. recommendations on the quality of drinking water adopted by the WHO in 1993 and the opinions of the scientific committee on the examination of the toxicity and eco-toxicity of chemical compounds; - a reference to endocrine disrupting substances; - restrictions on the exemption proposed in the event of failure to comply with standards for water sampled at the tap: the exemption currently provided for would be limited to the parameter for lead and the members of the household only; - the deadline granted under special derogations for complying with the parameters laid out in Annex I, part B: the Commission has introduced compulsory control after two years, with the possibility of renewal for two years; - new scientific data available: these should be analyzed in order to ensure that Community standards are completely in line with prevailing scientific opinion. As far as chloroform is concerned, this should also apply to parameters such as trichloroethane and nickel, nitrates and nitrites, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) and trihalomethanes (THM). Other amendments accepted by the Commission relate to the following aspects: - harmonized controls of lead concentrations; - measures for protecting the purity of ground and surface water; - disinfection and the obligation to ensure that drinking water is not contaminated by disinfection by-products; - the introduction of a total parametric value of 80+g/l at the tap for four trihalomethanes (THM); - the need to coordinate measures taken in the directive on the placing on the market of plant protection products.

Quality of water intended for human consumption. Drinking Water Directive

1995/0010(SYN) - 21/12/1995 - Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report

The Economic and Social Committee broadly endorsed the Commission proposal to amend the Drinking Water Directive and confirmed that the Directive was primarily a health policy measure. It particularly welcomed the dropping of the incorrect and obsolete parameters, the abolition of indicative values and the adoption of rules to deal with situations where values are exceeded. A ‘horizontal’ comparison of different EU water policy measures, however, revealed that in some areas Community legislation had clearly not been harmonised. The ESC hoped that the communication and new framework directive on water policy recently announced by the Commission would effectively resolve the present lack of coherence. The ESC was pleased that the Commission had largely followed the recent recommendations of the World Health Organisation (WHO). For levels of plant protection products, however, the Commission had kept to the previous overall limit value of 0.1 microgram/litre of drinking water. This limit value could only be justified by the fact that it was a precautionary measure. The ESC broadly supported the Commission’s efforts to increase transparency in the application of the directive. The measures to protect and improve drinking water that were associated with the proposed Directive would involve considerable additional costs. The ESC called for aid programmes in the Member States to make the costs of replacing lead pipes bearable and reasonable for low-income households.

Quality of water intended for human consumption. Drinking Water Directive

1995/0010(SYN) - 11/02/1998 - Commission communication on Council's position

The Council text is the result of long and difficult negotiations. Parameters for lead were at the centre of discussions throughout the negotiations. The Commission considers that the text, while not perfect, is an acceptable compromise since it takes account of the main wishes expressed by the Commission and Parliament.

Quality of water intended for human consumption. Drinking Water Directive

1995/0010(SYN) - 13/05/1998 - Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading

In adopting the recommendation for second reading by Mr Ken COLLINS (PSE, UK) Parliament welcomed the inclusion in the common position of many of Parliaments proposals at first reading. At second reading it tabled amendments providing for restrictive derogations and authorized the Member States to impose more stringent standards than those set out in the directive. Parliament called for the water quality monitoring programmes established by the Member States to be submitted regularly to the appropriate Commission departments which should keep Parliament informed of the situation in the Member States. Water intended for human consumption should also be free from endocrine disrupting chemicals and the catchment areas should be protected, taking full account of the precautionary principle and the polluter pays principle. Another amendment required Member States to come forward within five years with a plan to replace lead piping in homes. Member States should also ensure that supplies of clean water for domestic requirements were maintained at all times. Parliament also called for the parametric value for lead to be 25µg/l within five to ten years from the entry into force of the directive. Lastly, it called for the Commission to be assisted by a committee of an advisory nature.

Quality of water intended for human consumption. Drinking Water Directive

1995/0010(SYN) - 20/10/2016 - Follow-up document

Under Directive 98/83/EC on drinking water, the Commission presents a synthesis report on the quality of drinking water in the Union.

Member States are obliged under the Drinking Water Directive to monitor on a regular basis the quality of the drinking water that is supplied to consumers. They have to report triennially the monitoring results to the Commission.

This synthesis report **gives a summary of the drinking water quality in EU Member States in 2011-2013**. The Directive makes a distinction between large and small water supplies. Large water supplies provide either more than 1,000 m³ drinking water per day as an average or serve more than 5,000 persons.

During the data collection exercise, 15 Member States provided on a voluntary basis also information on small water supply zones (supplying less than 1,000m³/day). An overall EU assessment of compliance in small supplies was not considered meaningful as the data available was not fully representative for the entire EU and therefore this information is not included in the present report. According to the information provided by these 15 Member States the overall compliance is on average 98% high and no major problems are indicated.

The main conclusion of the synthesis report shows that compliance rates for parameters directly reflecting the quality of the drinking water supplied to consumers reached with one exemption **at least 99 % for the first time in all Member States** during the 2011-2013 reporting period. This is a positive achievement that reflects the efforts made by all concerned for the correct implementation of the Drinking Water Directive.

Drinking water quality – Compliance: to assess drinking water quality in a water supply zone, a very large number of analyses have been carried out within the 2011-2013 reporting period in Member States: 4.1 million on microbiological parameters, 7.1 million on chemical parameters and 17.5 million on indicator parameters:

- **as regards the microbiological parameters**, all Member States reported between 99-100 % rate of compliance;
- **concerning the chemical parameters**, 26 Member States reported compliance of between 99-100 %, and only Hungary reported compliance just below 99 %;
- **for the indicator parameters**, three Member States had a compliance rate between 98 % and 100 %, three Member States show a compliance rate of less than 98 % and 21 Member States reached a compliance level of over 99 %. For indicator parameters, Malta reported a rather low mean compliance rate of 90.1 % because of very low compliance rates on chloride.

Remedial actions: the report presents these measures for three important parameters coliform bacteria, arsenic, and lead:

- for **coliform bacteria contaminations** detected, the majority of the remedial actions taken (67 %) were related to the public distribution network or treatment infrastructure and operation (i.e through better disinfection);
- remedial actions to minimise high **concentrations of arsenic** in drinking water were mostly related to treatment (46 %) or catchment (29 %);
- in the case **concentration of lead** exceeds the parametric value, 67 % of all reported remedial actions consisted of the replacement or disconnection of lead pipes in the domestic distribution network.

The report noted that problems in relation to specific drinking water quality parameters or groups of parameters find their cause at different points of the drinking water supply chain: water source, treatment, distribution and end of pipe - the consumer. This suggests that useful **monitoring programmes should be set up considering these different causes of non-compliance at different points**.

The Commission recalled that when continuing non-compliance due to structural problems is observed, and remedial action was not sufficient to restore the quality of drinking water, the Commission can take action on a potential case of violation of Union law.

The Commission attempts to quickly resolve the underlying problem with the Member State concerned by means of a **structured dialogue**, and if the Member State concerned fails to implement a solution to rectify the suspected violation of EU law, the Commission may launch a **formal infringement procedure**. Due to the overall high compliance this has been necessary in only a few cases so far.

Next steps: the Commission stated that at the time of publication of this report, a **detailed evaluation report on the Drinking Water Directive is being drafted**, which assesses inter alia also the reporting system. In parallel, a **Fitness Check** of EU environmental monitoring and reporting is being carried out. Both these initiatives are likely to include further conclusions and follow-up to improve the reporting process under the Drinking Water Directive.