

## Case Study // Round Table SDG 6: Making universal access to water and sanitation a reality in the UNECE region

### **Bridging environment and health to ensure access to water and sanitation**

**France**

*Level: national*

#### **Summary**

*After a law on public health policy was adopted on 9 August 2004, France has developed a national plan on environment and health every 5 years. The third national plan PNSE 3 (2015-2019) aims at reducing, as much as possible and in the most efficient way, impacts of environmental factors on health, in order to enable anyone to live in an environment favorable for health. It is built on the base of priority health issues, issues of knowledge on exposures and their effects, issues for research and issues for local information. PNSE 3 defines several important actions on “water and health”, such as the promotion and the implementation of health safety plans for drinking water supply and equitable access to drinking water and sanitation. A link will be made with the declaration from the 6<sup>th</sup> Ministerial conference on environment and health, Ostrava 2017, and the National strategy for health 2018-2022 which has been published by the French government.*

#### **Situation**

*France is a Party to the Protocol on Water and Health (UNECE-WHO Regional Office for Europe -) and is a leading country in the field of activities on equitable access to water and sanitation in the UNECE region. Since the 3<sup>rd</sup> session of the Protocol Meeting of the Parties in November 2013 in Oslo and the 4<sup>th</sup> session of the Meeting of the Parties in November 2016 in Geneva at the Palais des Nations, 3 important publications have been prepared thanks to the constant support in France of the Ministry of Solidarity and Health.*

*In France, access to water is a fundamental right and the vast majority of homes are connected to the public networks for drinking water distribution. Water is not always in conformity microbiologically for 13.2% of the population residing in the areas of water supply feeding less than 500 inhabitants, but this rate is only 0.3% for areas with more than 10,000 inhabitants: there are still geographical disparities.*

#### **Strategy**

*Cross-sectorial and multi-stakeholder strategy based on the legislative governance frameworks: national water committee and national or regional health-environment plans*

#### **Results and impact**

*Focus on the main achievements and the links with French operators or regional health agencies regarding:*



- *experimentation of social water pricing in territories with different characteristics, such as rural areas or very huge urban areas;*
- *national action plan for sustainable services of drinking water and sanitation in French overseas regions (Guadeloupe, Guyana, Martinique, Reunion, Mayotte and St. Martin);*
- *distribution of the evaluation tool related to equity in access to drinking water and sanitation developed within the framework of the Protocol on Water and Health.*

### **Challenges and lessons learned**

*The great diversity of drinking water supply in France, given the diversity of its territories: strength but also a challenge to improve the situation of universal and fair access to water in our country.*

### **Potential for replication**

*The need for a close and constant link between the services of the ministries responsible for health and the environment, their operators responsible for the implementation and control of health and environment policies in the French regions, environmental health staff and sanitary engineers, and the scientists or economic sectors and citizens.*

### **Contact**

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