

# REGIONAL FORUM

## ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE UNECE REGION

GENEVA | 1-2 March 2018



### MAKING UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO WATER AND SANITATION A REALITY IN THE UNECE REGION

Geneva, 1 March 2018

(CICG, room 15, 15:00-16:30)



### Objectives

The objectives of this round table are:

- To provide a **forum for discussion** on the main challenges related to ensuring universal access to water and sanitation in the UNECE region for policymakers and other relevant stakeholders
- To share **approaches and solutions** that support attainment of this ambitious objective

### Core questions:

- Understanding the needs: how can countries assess existing gaps in the **equity of access to water and sanitation** considering its key dimensions - geographical differences, discrimination in access to services by vulnerable groups, such as women and girls, and financial affordability? (6.1, 6.2)
- Translating **priorities into actions**: which social and economic measures are proving effective to address problems of equity in access to water and sanitation? (6.1, 6.2)
- **Involving all actors**: how can all relevant stakeholders and sectors, such as finance, education, housing and health, provide solutions to the challenge of universal access to water and sanitation? (6.1, 6.2, 6.A, 6.B)

### Background:

The focus on equity and access to safe and affordable drinking water and to adequate sanitation and **hygiene “for all”** is the main innovation of the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development on these areas**, compared to the past global ambitions, and essentially its main challenge.

While the pan-European region has a high level of access to water and sanitation, equity problems are common in all countries, from developing to the most developed states. These are linked to rural-urban

disparities, affordability and access by vulnerable groups, such as women and girls, and in specific settings (schools, hospitals, etc). Inequalities in access to water and sanitation trigger further inequalities and have broad socio-economic impacts, starting from impacts on human health.

The **concept of inclusiveness** that is inherent to the objective of achieving a universal coverage with water and sanitation requires implementation of the five dimensions of the human rights to water and sanitation: availability of service, physical accessibility, quality and safety, affordability and acceptability. Access “for all” also means that “all” need to be involved in tackling this complex challenge, which requires the involvement of different actors for its successful attainment.

The roundtable will focus on **showcasing and analyzing through the equity lens** different solutions – from legal frameworks and policy formulation to supporting its implementation and concrete action on the ground through specific projects. It will provide a platform for peer discussion on the main challenges related to ensuring universal access together with approaches that facilitate attainment of this ambitious objective. Some useful background documents include:

- [No one left behind: Good practices to ensure equitable access to water and sanitation in the pan-European region](#)
- [A healthy link: The Protocol on Water and Health and the Sustainable Development Goals](#)
- [Progress on drinking water, sanitation and hygiene. Joint Monitoring Programme 2017 update and SDG baselines](#)
- [WASH in the 2030 agenda. New global indicators for drinking water, sanitation and hygiene](#)
- [UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water \(GLAAS\) 2017 report. Financing universal water, sanitation and hygiene under the Sustainable Development Goals](#)

### Linkages with other SDGs:

The roundtable addresses links between clean water and sanitation (SDG6) and other water and health related SDGs: on eradicating poverty (SDG1), good health and well-being (SDG3), quality education (SDG4), reduced inequalities (SDG10), and sustainable cities and communities (SDG11).

### Target audience:

This round table will be of interest to policymakers involved in the water, sanitation and health sectors, and to the civil society representatives active in the field of water and health and human rights to water and sanitation.

### Proposed case studies:

Country	Title and area of case study	Presenter	Status
France	Bridging environment and health to ensure access to water and sanitation	Yannick Pavageau, General Directorate of Health, Ministry of Solidarities and Health	Confirmed

Portugal	Introducing social tariffs following an equitable access self-assessment	Ana Albuquerque, Water and Waste Services Regulatory Authority	Confirmed
Romania	Ensuring participation of public in water and sanitation related matters	Gheorghe Constantin, Director, Waters Resources Management Directorate, Ministry of Waters and Forests	Confirmed
Serbia	Assessing equitable access situation in Serbia at regional level	Natasa Djurasinovic, International Cooperation Group Manager, Ministry of Health	Confirmed
European Environment and Health Youth Coalition	Findings of the survey on pupils' perceptions on WASH in schools in Lithuania, Republic of Moldova and Romania	Valentina Grossi, European Environment and Health Youth Coalition	Confirmed

## Participants

- Country representatives involved in work on water, sanitation and health
- Country representatives from Permanent Missions to the United Nations Office in Geneva
- Other regional or sub-regional organizations
- Non-governmental organizations
- Academia and private sector

**Organizers:** UNECE and WHO Regional Office for Europe

**Moderator:** Oliver Schmoll, Programme Manager, Water and Climate, European Centre for Environment and Health, WHO Regional Office for Europe

**Rapporteur:** Thomas Stratenwerth, Head of Water Management Division, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety, Germany

## Outcomes and next steps:

In addition to the exchange of experiences and peer-learning, the main outcome and recommendations of the roundtable will be presented by the rapporteur to the **plenary session on 2 March 2018**.

The outcomes and main messages of the discussion will be reflected in the **Chairperson's summary** to be transmitted to the High-level Political Forum as a contribution from the UNECE region.

*For more information on this round table please contact [Nataliya.Nikiforova@un.org](mailto:Nataliya.Nikiforova@un.org)*