



» JOINT STATEMENT

Calling for a swift implementation of the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive and the Extended Producer Responsibility

July 2025

We, the undersigned representatives of local and regional authorities and wastewater treatment operators from Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Poland, Spain, and Sweden, express our strong support for the **swift and full implementation** of the revised Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (UWWTD), including the provisions on **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)**.

The revised UWWTD represents a crucial step forward in protecting our water bodies, public health, and the environment. At the same time, implementing the various new requirements will be extremely challenging for urban wastewater treatment plants across Europe. The timelines are ambitious, and the technical and financial demands are substantial. **Any further delays in transposition and uncertainty around key provisions—particularly EPR—will pose**

a serious risk to our ability to plan, invest, and deliver the necessary infrastructure adjustments. In the wastewater sector, infrastructure adjustments are long-term investments. They require early planning, legal certainty, and stable financing frameworks.

Most critically, **the EPR mechanism is essential to ensure a fair and sustainable financing model for quaternary treatment.** This is a milestone in European water policy to hold polluters financially responsible for pollutant discharges for the first time and to create incentives to prevent pollution at source. **Without EPR, the burden of removing micropollutants would fall disproportionately on the citizens.** These citizens already bear the main burden of reducing environmental pollution through wastewater tariffs.

If EPR is removed or significantly weakened, the mandatory provisions on quaternary treatment must be withdrawn as well. The two are inseparable. One cannot stand without the other.

The option to include **further sectors** under EPR is already embedded in the directive's framework. It **does not require reopening or delaying** the legislative process. It is also important to clarify that EPR does not disadvantage EU-based pharmaceutical manufacturers. The directive applies equally to all producers – regardless of where the products are made. Any company placing pharmaceutical or cosmetic products on the EU market must contribute financially, whether it is based inside or outside the EU.