

CHINA
EUROPE
Water Platform

Joint Steering Committee Meeting

The impact of COVID-19 in the
European Water Sector

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The impact of COVID-19 in the European Water Sector

- COVID-19 pandemic affected the majority of EU Countries, with different impacts and consequences;
- Water is at the centre of the response to this virus, with handwashing with soap and water being the most effective preventive measure;
- water supply, sanitation and hygiene being crucial in overall health sector functioning;
- Like another sectors, the water, sanitation and hygiene services were impacted by this pandemic; Workforces had to adapt to a new reality of online work; digitalization of services became even more relevant;
- Additional efforts have to be made to guarantee adequate wastewater treatment with a special focus on the safe use of solid and liquid by-products.

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- Studies are carried on in Europe to evaluate the possibility of the virus to be transmitted through drinking water or wastewater treatment, until now no such evidence exists;
- Water supply, sanitation and hygiene services play an essential role in detecting the presence of SARS-CoV-2 in wastewater, enabling to prevent future epidemics/pandemias.
- Monitoring of pharmaceuticals used in the medical treatment is also valuable and efficient tool to monitor virus circulation, helping to control the spread of the pandemic, or serving as early warning for re-emergence.
- Pandemic had an impact also in CEWP activities. JSC had to be postponed and some activities within Focus Areas had to be rescheduled. On the other hand, new areas of common work can arise from this Pandemic.

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- Recovery and sectoral reconstruction is an opportunity for a greener and more sustainable future. Europe is committed with a recovery with the European New Green Deal at its centre.
- The universal access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene has to remain highest priority on all the new development models to be implemented.
- New paradigm shift needed, towards a Water-smart society, from crisis management to risk management and prevention. Innovative solutions “from the source to the sea” and integrating an overall and coherent management of surface, underground and sea waters are needed.

Thank
You!

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