

## Beyond Utility Reach?

# How to Close the Rural Access Gap to Wastewater Treatment and Sanitation Services

- Date:** 19 – 20 January 2021
- Location:** Online, [register here!](#)
- Target Audience:** Senior technical staff from national and local governments and utility professionals at technical management level



### Background and objective

For most of the countries in the Danube region, managing wastewater remains an important challenge to reach water resources protection targets, especially in the context of EU accession and harmonization processes. Approximately 22 million remain without flush toilet access in the region. However, Goal 6 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) underlines the countries' commitment to achieving universal access to water services for all by 2030.

In that context, the issue of providing adequate wastewater collection, treatment and disposal in *rural* areas is often a neglected topic, being overshadowed by wastewater management and compliance requirements of much larger agglomerations in urban areas. In many areas of the Danube region, the construction of adequate sewage collection systems and treatment facilities in small rural communities is lagging, with a lack of financial, technical and staff resources, but also a lack of awareness in the society.

Building upon previous work on this topic by the World Bank, under the Danube Water Program, and the ICPDR, this workshop aims to contribute to understanding, issue awareness, potential approaches to overcome constraints and to create an enabling framework for sustainable and decentralized solutions for wastewater treatment in rural areas. The workshop will focus on issues of wastewater management in small agglomerations (below 2,000 PE), with an emphasis on decentralized sanitation and wastewater treatment systems in rural areas, individual (IAS) and low-cost solutions, and will bring together policy makers, government and utility representatives, academia, consultants and international institutions engaged in field of rural wastewater.

## Program outline

<b>Tuesday, 19 January</b>	
13:30	<b>Start of Day 1 - Welcome and introduction</b>
13:40	<p><b>Session 1: Setting the scene – policy context and regional analytical work in field of rural wastewater management</b></p> <p>Presentation of status overview, existing EU framework and requirements, findings and recommendations from advisory and analytical works on the topic of rural wastewater</p>
15:00	<i>Break</i>
15:15	<p><b>Session 2: The enabling environment - approaches to wastewater management at national level (legal, financial, regulatory)</b></p> <p>Presentation of rural wastewater management experiences from individual countries, including policy and regulatory-related challenges</p>
16:30	<i>End of Day 1</i>

<b>Wednesday, 20 January</b>	
13:30	<b>Start of Day 2</b>
13:30	<p><b>Session 3: Good practices at municipal level</b></p> <p>Showcasing examples of good practices in the development of rural wastewater projects/systems at municipal level from different countries</p>
14:45	<i>Break</i>
15:00	<p><b>Session 4: Technical solutions and developments in rural wastewater management</b></p> <p>Review of experience in the implementation of different technical solutions, including small scale, compact, low-cost and nature-based technologies</p>
16:15	<p><b>Session 5: Wrap-up and closing</b></p> <p>Key take-away messages from the event</p>
16:45	<i>End of Day 2</i>