

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002418/25
to the Commission
César Luena (S&D)
(16 June 2025)**

Subject: European water resilience strategy

The European water resilience strategy proposes an overall improvement in water efficiency of 10% by 2030, but does not set binding targets for individual sectors (e.g. agriculture, industry, tourism or energy).

1. How will the Commission ensure that the most water-intensive sectors effectively reduce their abstractions — especially in water-stressed regions — if clear and mandatory sectoral targets are not set, in line with the prevention principle and the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)?
2. Some 81% of the water consumed in the EU goes to users who abstract water directly at the source using private systems, and many of these are not properly registered or controlled by the national authorities. In view of this, why has the Commission not announced in its European water resilience strategy specific legislative measures to improve the control and monitoring of these abstractions, in line with the requirements laid down in Article 11(3) of the Water Framework Directive?

Submitted: 16.6.2025

**Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission
(1 September 2025)**

1. While the European Water Resilience Strategy ⁽¹⁾ sets no binding targets for individual sectors, the Water Framework Directive ⁽²⁾ obliges Member States to achieve a good quantitative status of groundwater bodies and good ecological status of surface water bodies. Where abstractions put these objectives at risk, Member States must adopt in their river basin management plans measures to reduce pressures from all relevant sectors. The Commission Recommendation on Water Efficiency First ⁽³⁾ also encourages Member States to set water efficiency targets at the most suitable level, taking into account national circumstances. Various sectoral EU policies and legislation contribute to promoting water saving and efficiency in areas such as agriculture, energy and industry.
2. Existing EU legislation provides a comprehensive and solid regulatory framework for sustainable freshwater management. This is why the strategy focuses on enabling action that can accelerate implementation by Member States, as well as on better enforcement.

The Commission has already launched a horizontal investigation with all Member States to verify compliance with controls on abstractions. As a result, several infringement procedures have been launched ⁽⁴⁾ and more could follow for Member States that are not regularly reviewing abstraction permits, to ensure they do not lead to over-abstractions affecting water body status.

The subject will also be addressed — where relevant — in the context of the Structured Dialogues ⁽⁵⁾. Furthermore, the Commission will continue to cooperate on the subject with Member States in the context of the Common Implementation Strategy for the Water Framework Directive ⁽⁶⁾.

⁽¹⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/topics/environment/water-resilience-strategy_en.

⁽²⁾ Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p.1.

⁽³⁾ Commission Recommendation (EU) 2025/1179 of 4 June 2025 on guiding principles of water efficiency first, OJ L, 2025/1179, 16.6.2025.

⁽⁴⁾ As of June 2025, infringement procedures have been launched against the Netherlands (INFR(2022)2161) Austria (INFR(2024)2162), Slovenia (INFR(2024)2170), Finland (INFR(2024)2196), Cyprus (INFR(2024)2227), Belgium (INFR(2024)2231), Sweden (INFR(2024)2236), Czechia (INFR(2025)2027), Lithuania (INFR(2025)2028) and Portugal (INFR(2025)2042). For further information: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/inf_24_3228 (NL, AT and SI), https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/inf_24_4561 (FI), https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/inf_24_5223 (CY and BE), https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/inf_24_6006 (SE), https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/inf_25_982 (CZ and PT), and https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/inf_25_1241 (LT).

⁽⁵⁾ to take place in 2025 and 2026.

⁽⁶⁾ In particular, within the Working Groups on Water Reuse and on Water Scarcity and Droughts.