(English version)

Question for written answer E-002286/26
to the Commission
Nikolaos Anadiotis (NI)
(3 June 2026)

Subject: Transboundary pollution of the River Evros by the Ergene and protection of the Evros Delta

The River Evros is a transboundary water system of Greece, Türkiye and Bulgaria, with an important ecological, agricultural and economic role for the Evros border region. ([1]) The Turkish River Ergene, part of the same basin, passes through heavily industrialised areas, and scientific publications record serious pollution by heavy metals and other chemicals, with potential impacts on public health and ecosystems. ([2])

Given that the Evros Delta is part of the Natura 2000 ([3]) network and that directive 2000/60/EC imposes good water status objectives and cooperation in transboundary basins, ([4]) the possible transfer of pollutants via the Ergene to the Evros is a matter of European interest.

On the basis of the above:

1. Does the Commission have data or an assessment of the possible transfer of industrial or chemical pollution by the Ergene to the Evros and the Evros Delta?

2. How does the Commission monitor the implementation of Directive 2000/60/EC in transboundary basins involving a non-EU country, such as Türkiye?

3. Does the Commission intend to support a permanent, transparent and publicly accessible water quality monitoring system in the Evros, in cooperation with Greece, Bulgaria and Türkiye?

Submitted: 3.6.2026

Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission
(25 August 2026)

Türkiye is not an EU Member State and there is no Water Framework Directive (WFD) ([1]) reporting obligation on the Turkish side. An ad hoc joint committee on Evros cooperation has been in place since 2010 and recently Greece and Türkiye have decided to reactivate it as part of a broader effort to deepen cooperation on sustainable water management in the Meriç/Evros River Basin.

Under Article 3(5) of the WFD, for international river basin districts extending beyond EU borders, the Member States concerned shall endeavour to establish appropriate coordination with the relevant non-Member States.

Under Article 13, Member States sharing an international river basin with non-Member States shall endeavour to produce a single river basin management plan (RBMP) and, where this is not possible, to have a plan for the portion of the river basin district lying within their own territory.

Transboundary cooperation is assessed by the Commission as part of its assessment of Member States' RBMPs. For transboundary river basins involving Türkiye, the Commission does not monitor Türkiye directly under the WFD.

Instead, Türkiye reports on its alignment with the EU water *acquis* through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance programme's ([2]) monitoring and annual reporting as part of the enlargement process (Chapter 27).

In 2013 Türkiye has adopted a 15-point Ergene River Protection Action Plan, leading to different investments. In 2019 Türkiye has also adopted the RBMP for Meriç-Ergene Basin. Turkish authorities are monitoring the water quality in Ergene and note significant improvement.

---

1 https://floodmerg.tarimorman.gov.tr/en/meric-ergene-river-basin.
2 https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/tjph/article/375342.
3 https://eunis.eea.europa.eu/sites/GR1110006.
4 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32000L0060.
([1]) Directive (EU) 2026/805 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 March 2026 amending Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, Directive 2006/118/EC and Directive 2008/105/EC, OJ L, 2026/805, 20.4.2026.
([2]) https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/funding-technical-assistance/overview-instrument-pre-accession-assistance_en.