



# **EurEau statement on setting hygienic requirements for materials in contact with drinking water**

**Breakfast session; 7 June 2018 – Dr Claudia Castell-Exner**

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Dear honourable members of the European Parliament and dear colleagues, good morning!

First of all I would like to thank Mr Florenz and UBA for inviting us and for organising this very timely meeting on a file that is of utmost importance for water services.

My name is Claudia Castell-Exner and I am Vice-President of EurEau. Who are we?

1. EurEau is the European federation of water services and has been the voice of Europe's water sector since 1975.
2. Our members are 32 national associations of water services from 29 European countries.
3. We represent drinking water and waste water operators – from the public and private sector.
4. With about 500,000 jobs we make a significant contribution to the European economy.

Why are we, as drinking water suppliers, concerned with this topic?

Materials are components of various products that make up the water supply systems.

We need to be certain, when we buy these products on the market, that these goods do not affect the drinking water quality, and subsequently our health, since pipes, for instance, are deemed to stay underground for over 50 years.

In fact materials in contact with drinking water could impair the drinking water quality by:

- ~ Leaching of hazardous substances at level that could pose a risk to human health
- ~ Enhancing microbial growth that could also pose a risk to human health



~ Causing odour or flavour problems.

Here are some pictures showing examples of the problems.

Therefore we are very much in favour of strengthening the current article 10 of the DWD, rather than modifying it in the way the Commission did it.

Member States implemented article 10 since 1998 in vastly different ways while some have no binding provisions at all.

This is why we strongly advocate for EU-wide hygienic requirements to be set on materials in contact with drinking water.

It is essential that materials making up for example construction products, such as pipes, valves or water meters, have to provide proof that they are fit for purpose and don't impair drinking water quality.

Therefore we support an EU-approach directly within the scope of the DWD, as complementary to the construction products regulation and other regulations.

Otherwise negative impacts on European consumers and companies remain, namely:

- ~ Differences in the level of consumer health protection: as correctly pointed out by the President of the European Commission 'in a Union of equals, there can be no second class consumers'.
- ~ High administrative and financial burden for the producers (amounting to over half a billion Euro per year in the EU). Companies need to test and assess the conformity of the same material multiple times in different Member States.
- ~ Obstacles to innovation: European manufacturers do not have incentives to invest in innovative materials, since they do not have the legal certainty that they can sell them to the whole European market.

We think that the Rapporteur's report to establish these hygienic requirements via a delegated act is going in the right direction.

Thank you for your attention

