

## Water Resilience

### Brief description and main aims:

Over the years, the EU has adopted several pieces of legislation in the field of water protection and quality. The EU's main objective is to ensure that all Europeans have access to good quality and sufficient water, and to guarantee the good status of all water bodies throughout Europe. EU legislation aims to ensure that water is managed sustainably in the long term, that water pollution is reduced and that aquatic ecosystems are protected.

Since 2000, the EU's *Water Framework Directive* (WFD) has been the main piece of water legislation in Europe. It has been complemented by other EU legislation such as the *Groundwater Directive* (GWD), the *Drinking Water Directive* (DWD), the *Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive* (UWWTD), and the *Floods Directive*. While these policies have primarily focused on water quality and pollutants, water quantity management, scarcity, droughts, and other extreme weather events are now receiving more attention. These challenges lack a comprehensive strategy and vision to address them.

In 2023, the *Consultative Committee for Industrial Changes* (CCMI), a *European Economic and Social Committee* (EESC) body, published plans for an *EU Blue Deal* to make the water crisis a policy priority. After the re-election of Ursula von der Leyen as Commission President, the development of a *Water Resilience Strategy* (WRS) was included among the priorities for the new mandate. A dedicated *Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience, and a Competitive Circular Economy*, the Swedish *Jessika Roswall*, has been appointed.

### Why FIEC is dealing with this topic:

Contractors face a growing number of challenges related to water stress, excess water and water quality. Extreme weather events such as droughts and heavy rainfall are becoming more frequent, posing huge challenges to the built environment and resulting in huge damages and high insurance costs. Flood defences and other water management systems are needed to deal with these situations. To the contrary, a major factor contributing to water scarcity and water loss is leakage from water networks: On average, 23% of treated water is lost in public water supplies.

On construction sites, water consumption is relatively low compared to other sectors, as it is mainly used for mixing mortar and for cleaning equipment. To better address this situation, FIEC calls for a sectoral approach, with individual milestones and roadmaps. Moreover, policymakers must recognise the crucial role of contractors in building new water infrastructure, as well as its maintenance and repair. With an appropriate framework, the whole water nexus can also be a huge business opportunity for the sector. However, providing clean water is a public service, and water infrastructure is therefore mainly provided to public bodies. Tackling the identified challenges and using resources efficiently requires greater and more predictable funding to enable investments in the repair and maintenance of water grids, sewer networks, and hydraulic infrastructure. Special attention should be given to how existing laws are implemented and enforced at the national level.

### Actions and key dates:

- 26/10/2023** → [EESC Call](#) for a new and comprehensive water strategy for Europe (*EU Blue Deal*)
- 27/02/2024** → [FIEC - EIC Joint Call](#) for a *European Blue Deal: "Water Policy and the Role of the European Construction Sector"* published
- 04/03/2025** → [FIEC Contribution](#) to the public consultation on a *Water Resilience Strategy*
- 16/05/2025** → FIEC Annual Conference in Athens: "*Building Tomorrow: Solutions for Water Resilience and Blue Infrastructure*"
- 04/06/2025** → [European Water Resilience Strategy](#) published by the European Commission
- 02/09/2025** → FIEC TEC-3 "Environment" Chair Stephanos Pierides presents [Water Resilience Priorities](#) to the Commissioner for Energy & Housing Dan Jørgensen
- 20/10/2025** → [FIEC Position Paper](#) titled "*Water Resilience: Solutions by the Construction Industry in a Sustainable Policy Framework*" published