

PUBLIC DRINKING WATER CONSUMPTION

HOUSE 3

Households and most sectors of economic activity use public drinking water on a daily basis to meet a variety of needs (domestic or otherwise). The use of "tap" water is not only a public health issue but also a sustainable development issue, since it touches on environmental (use of the resource), economic (a consumption good) and social aspects (an essential good).

A general downward trend

The consumption of domestic and non-domestic public drinking water in Wallonia in 2015 amounted to slightly more than 155 million m³, representing average consumption of 119 l/(per capita per day). Daily per capita consumption of public drinking water was down over the period 2004-2015 (-11.6%), while annual consumption per connection was in constant decline over the period 1990-2015 (-34.6%). This trend is explained *inter alia* by the decrease in the average size of Walloon households¹.

A highly variable level of consumption across the territory

In 2015, domestic public drinking water consumption was estimated at an average of 67.5 m³/meter, or about 90 l/(per capita per day). This consumption was not uniform throughout the territory²: the municipalities of western Hainaut and southern Namur had a level of consumption lower than the regional average, whereas it was higher in the east of the province of Liège and in Walloon Brabant. According to a study³, these disparities are due essentially to differences in household income and the use of a rainwater tank for at least one indoor use⁴.

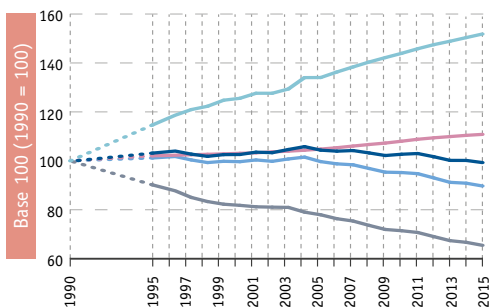
Upward trend in the price per m³.

Since 01/01/2005, the price structure of water has been identical for all Walloon households and includes a "production-distribution" component and a "treatment" component. At the end of 2015, the average water bill for 100 m³ was €498 (+5.2% compared to 2014). The "production-distribution" component (+1% compared to 2014) and "treatment" component (+10.9% compared to 2014) represented respectively 55% and 39% of the bill⁵. The upward trend in the price per cubic metre in recent years is partly due to the sector's need to finance major investments in treatment. This is offset to some extent by the general decrease in consumption, which limits the increase in water bills for users.

The volumes of public drinking water for domestic use are similar to the volumes consumed by "small-scale consumers". These are generally users whose homes are equipped with a meter with a flow of less than 250 m³/year. This definition includes household consumption and consumption linked to certain professional activities (small businesses, HORECA, etc.).

[1] → SOCIOECO 2 | [2] → Map 20 | [3] AQUAWAL & CEHD, 2015 | [4] → HOUSE 4 | [5] AQUAWAL, 2016

Fig. HOUSE 3-1 Consumption of public drinking water (domestic and non-domestic use) in Wallonia

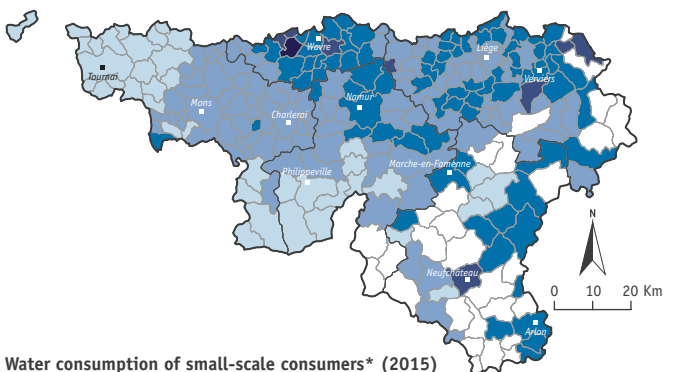


2015 values

Number of connections to the distribution network.....	1,591,585
Number of inhabitants.....	3,589,744
Consumption (Mm ³).....	155,67
Consumption (l/(per capita per day)).....	119
Number of m ³ of water consumed per connection.....	98

SOERW 2017 – Source: AQUAWAL

Map 20 Estimate of domestic public drinking water consumption

Water consumption of small-scale consumers* (2015)
(municipal average in m³/ (per year per meter)

Average for Wallonia: 67.5 m³/ (per year per meter)

min. 35.2 60 70 80 90 max. 93.9

— Provincial boundary
— Municipal boundary

* Consumers with meters with a flow of less than 250 m³/year

SOERW 2017 – Source: AQUAWAL