

CALL FOR EVIDENCE — RESPONSE

Water Sector – Accelerating Digitalisation for Better Management and Sustainability

Submitted by: AQUA – European Association of Smart meter Manufacturers

Initiative: 17013

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Stakeholder category: Industry – Water metering device manufacturers

1. Introduction and Who We Are

AQUA represents manufacturers of water metering devices, components, and related digital measurement systems across Europe. Our members design, develop, and produce smart meters, data loggers, communication modules, and associated firmware that form the foundation of any digitally enabled water network.

We welcome the Commission’s initiative and strongly support the development of an EU Action Plan on water sector digitalisation, including the smart meters for all initiative announced as part of the 2025 Water Resilience Strategy. The metering manufacturing industry is a direct enabler of the efficiency and sustainability gains the Action Plan seeks to achieve.

2. Key Conditions for Successful Large-Scale Rollout

Achieving the scale necessary to deliver water resilience across the EU requires a coherent supply-side environment. Based on our manufacturing and market experience, the following conditions are critical:

2.1 Referencing Existing Standards and Regulation

A robust set of agreed international and European standards already underpins the smart water metering industry. **AQUA** members actively implement and build to these standards to deliver interoperable, cross-border devices. These standards exist, will develop further, and are already enabling interoperability across member state markets.

2.2 Demand Stimulation through Rollout Targets

Investment certainty for manufacturers depends on predictable demand. The electricity sector provides a relevant model: the binding smart meter rollout targets introduced under Directive 2019/944 created a long-term demand signal that enabled manufacturers to invest in production capacity, R&D, and supply chain development. An equivalent target framework for water — such as a mandated penetration rate by 2030 and regulations requiring more frequent consumption data e.g. on monthly basis — would generate comparable investment and supply chain confidence in the water metering sector.

2.3 Referencing Existing Regulations

The **EU Drinking Water Directive (DWD)** is the primary legislative framework governing the quality, safety, and access to water intended for human consumption across the European Union. To reduce market fragmentation, uniform and accelerated implementation of the Drinking Water Directive across all EU Member States is essential.

3. Conclusion

The European metering manufacturing industry has expertise, and state-of-the art technical capability and production capacity to support a large-scale smart water meter rollout across the EU. What the industry needs is a coherent regulatory and market framework: procurement rules that consistently reference existing agreed standards, binding rollout targets that provide investment certainty, and financing rules that support deployment at scale.

The **AQUA** stands ready to contribute technical expertise, product performance data, and manufacturing capacity assessments to the Commission's preparatory work.