

Item 13

Delivering safe sanitation for all:

Areas of action to improve the sanitation in the pan-European region

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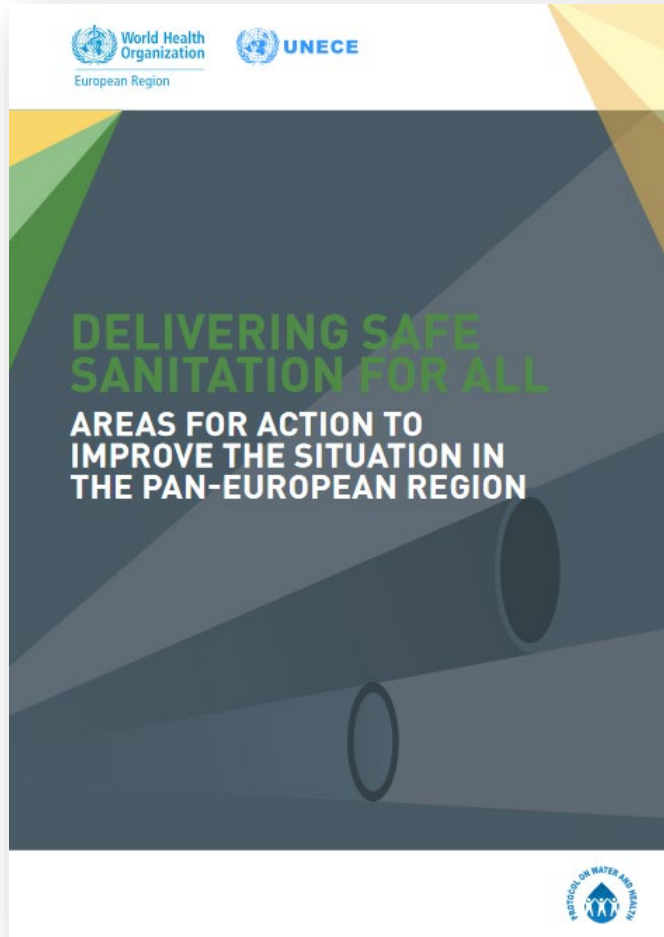


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Introduction



- We need to raise the profile of sanitation in the region and under the Protocol
- We are at risk not meeting SDG 6 sanitation targets
- The publication aims to trigger action and formulates recommendations that can guide interventions in countries and inform future work under the Protocol
- Two expert consultations supported the development:
 - Consultation on onsite sanitation (October 2021)
 - Consultation on sanitation (June 2022)

PART A. SITUATION OVERVIEW AND CHALLENGES FOR SANITATION AND HEALTH

The following sections provide an overview of the current state of sanitation and its potential impact on health and the environment, based on available data. They highlight persistent and emerging issues that require enhanced attention and action at the national and regional levels.

PART B. AREAS FOR ACTION

The following sections offer considerations for decision-makers, relevant authorities and stakeholders in planning and implementing strategies and action to ensure safe sanitation services for all, in accordance with the commitments of SDG targets 6.2 and 6.3. It proposes several action areas to improve sanitation and wastewater management by tackling the prevailing and specific issues and challenges presented in Part A. The action areas take into account international frameworks – in particular WHO recommendations on sanitation and health (1) – and the key accelerators of progress on sanitation defined by the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework (8).

Translating international commitments into national agendas and investment requires targeted policies and a conducive enabling environment that is context- and setting-specific. An enabling environment is understood as the set of favourable conditions necessary to meet safe and equitable sanitation for all; it encompasses national policy and regulatory frameworks, institutional arrangements, service delivery mechanisms, necessary skills and capacity, monitoring and surveillance, and investment and financial arrangements.

SUMMARY OF KEY ACTION MESSAGES

Good governance of sanitation is vital for expanding and maintaining access to safe services. The WHO guidelines on sanitation and health provide evidence-informed recommendations and offer guidance to encourage national and local sanitation policies and good practice actions that enable safe sanitation service delivery and protect public health.

Policies and their implementation at the local level should be transparent; it should be possible to hold those charged with policy formulation and implementation accountable. Devolution of decision-making to the local level helps to create transparency and accountability, but it must be adequately resourced.

National and local governments should prioritise ensuring equitable access to at least basic sanitation services for all in all settings. This should include consideration of different onsite and sewerage technology options, with choices made using transparent and accountable processes.

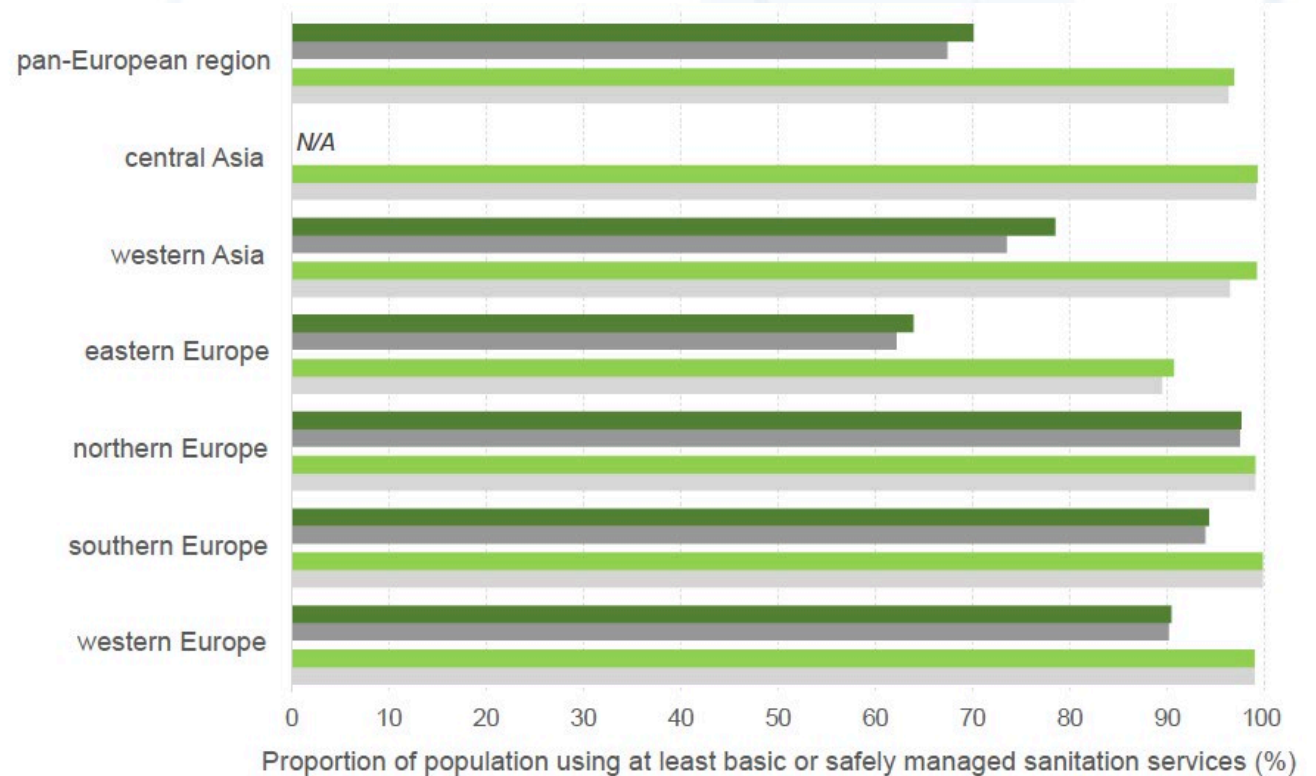
Safely managed sanitation brings the best possible health and environmental gains. To ensure safe sanitation, it is essential to manage health risks systematically along the entire service chain. Governments should establish legal requirements and regulations to adopt risk-based management principles for sanitation services – such as the sanitation safety plan approach recommended by WHO – and scale up their implementation.

Sanitation is vital to community resilience, but may itself be vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Sanitation should be integrated into national adaptation plans and nationally determined contributions, and investment should be made in building resilience of services.

Reuse of treated wastewater should be promoted, with a regulatory framework in place at national and local levels to ensure safety. Wastewater reuse promotes transition to a wider circular economy, aids adaptation to climate change and water scarcity, and has direct climate benefits.

Closing the gap in delivering safe sanitation for all

- Region not on track to deliver universal and equitable access to safely managed sanitation for all
- Incremental improvements are needed in governance, safe management and surveillance
- We need concerted action to close the equity gap and to reach SDG 6
- Assurance of basic sanitation in institutional settings and public places

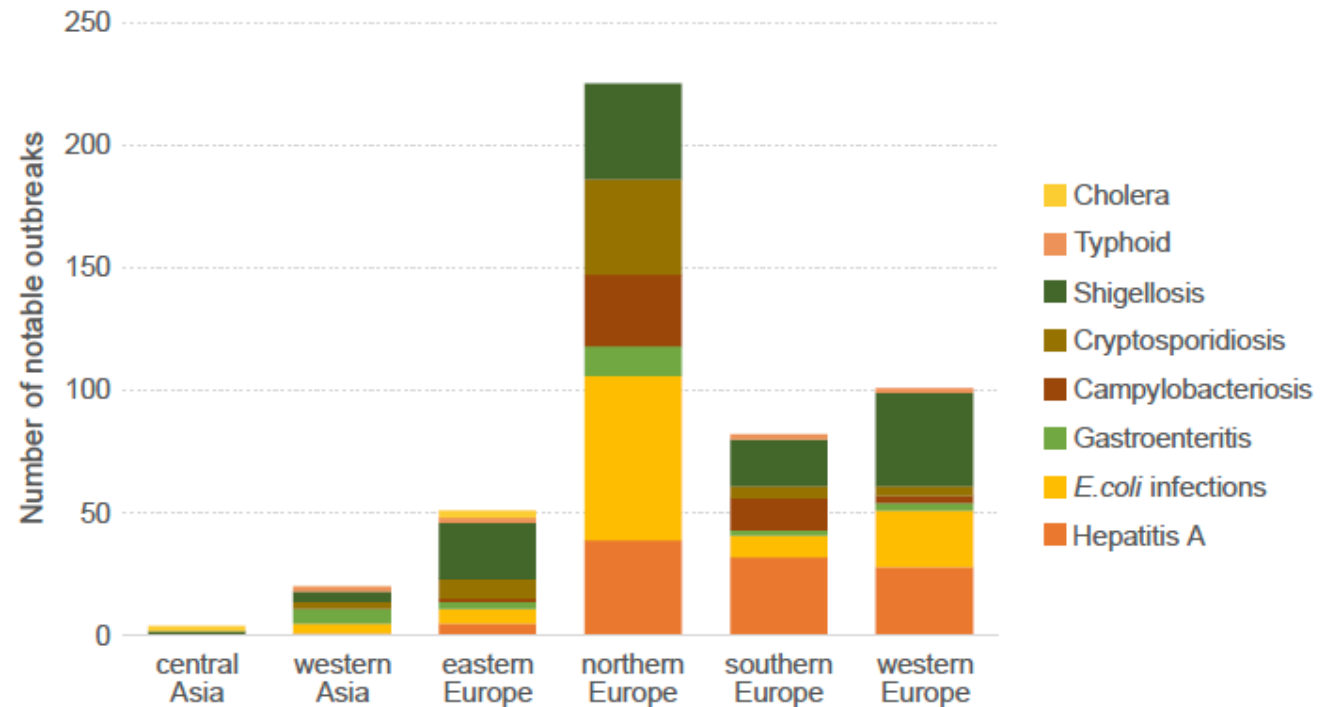


Strengthening national policies and regulatory frameworks

- Build governance mechanisms and political leadership
- Empower local governance
- Establish regulations and standards
- Promote safe wastewater reuse and regulatory framework
- Establish sanitation and wastewater management into AMR action
- Make sanitation integral part of climate change planning
- Consider demographic changes in sanitation system planning

Improving surveillance systems for evidence-informed interventions

- High number of water/sanitation related outbreaks in the region
- Integrate sanitation into public health surveillance frameworks
- Establish programmes for environmental surveillance of wastewater
- Sanitation and health data should be used for planning



Improving sustainable financing and using innovative sanitation solutions

- Develop sustainable financing plans
- Identify and develop locally appropriate sanitation solutions
- Invest in climate-resilience and adaptive management
- Establish and maintain sanitation asset management plans
- Create institutional and regulatory support models for small systems
- Develop human resource capacities



Building on the Protocol on Water and Health

- The Protocol provides a coherent framework to accelerate national and regional efforts towards safe, equitable and sustainable sanitation for all
- Target setting framework – strengthens governance on sanitation
- Reporting system – improves data collection on sanitation
- Programme of work – prioritizes safe sanitation management and resilience to climate change



Thank you for your attention!

