

EFBW: Access to water from every source should be encouraged

Brussels, 23.10.2020. EFBW welcomes today's vote of the Environmental Council on the provisional agreement between the EU institutions on the Refit of the Drinking Water Directive. *"In the interest of public health, access to water from every source has to be facilitated",* says Patricia Fosselard, Secretary General of EFBW. *"Natural mineral waters, spring waters and tap water have all a special role to play towards healthy hydration for consumers."*

In this regard, EFBW would like to further highlight:

- Water is the healthiest choice when it comes to hydration. It has zero sugar, no calories and is free of additives. Improving hydration and drinking habits can make a simple and significant contribution to achieve a healthier lifestyle. Indeed, available data suggests that Europeans are not drinking enough.¹
- According to EU legislation², natural mineral and spring waters are clearly distinguishable from ordinary drinking water, must only come from protected underground origin and may not be disinfected nor chemically treated. Consumers appreciate the naturalness of natural mineral and spring water and the possibility to make a choice based on taste and mineral composition.
- Natural Mineral and Spring Water producers have always acknowledged the importance of protecting the quantity and quality of the world's water. Producers have been safeguarding catchment areas for hundreds of years, helping to protect the natural ecosystems through which water flows to reach its natural source.
- Natural mineral and spring water producers are active supporters of the Circular Economy. All packaging used is 100% recyclable, whether glass, PET or aluminum. Beverage bottles are the most collected and recycled plastic items in the EU. 60% of all PET beverage bottles put in the European market are being collected for recycling.
- EFBW members take concerns about waste very seriously and share the ambition that no plastic should end up as litter. More needs to be done to increase the collection and recycling of PET bottles, and the industry is ready to partner with other actors involved in the waste management

¹ <https://www.hydrationsforhealth.com/en/hydration-tools/liqin7>

² Directive 2009/54 on the exploitation and marketing of natural mineral waters

process, to make sure that each beverage bottle is given a second life. Efficient collection systems are key to ensuring that this becomes a reality.³

- Naturally sourced waters form part of Europe's cultural heritage and bring socio-economic value to local communities. The European natural mineral water and spring water industry counts a large number of regional and local producers in rural areas where other employment opportunities are often scarce.

EFBW:

The European Federation of Bottled Waters (EFBW) is the voice of the bottled water industry, dedicated to promoting the unique qualities of natural mineral and spring water among EU institutions and international organisations. EFBW is a registered international not for profit federation with a membership base of national trade associations and direct member companies. EFBW represents almost 550 natural mineral and spring water producers in Europe.

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³ https://www.efbw.org/fileadmin/DOCUMENTS/EFBW_calls_for_more_collection_01_07_19.pdf