

## **Challenges of Social Exclusion for Effective Water Supply Policies and the Accomplishment of SDG in Europe**

**Convened by the National University of Public Service – Centre for Sustainable Development Studies - IWGC**

**and**

**Trinity Enviro Kft.**

**Side Event - Budapest Water Summit 2016**  
**28 November 2016, 14:00-15:00 - Tisza Gallery (Building D)**

Effective and socially inclusive water supply policies are crucial for sustainable development and water governance. Making water and sanitation accessible and affordable is not only a matter of smart economy and sustainable governance, but it is also a human right. Since 2010, access to water has been recognized a human right under the UN and other international and national systems, which guarantee equitable access to water and sanitation regardless your nationality, ethnic identity, age, gender, economic status, or social position. In France, for example, the courts ruled illegal to disconnect households from drinking water supply due to payment arrears, while other countries have followed with water supply policies sensitive to vulnerable groups.

The panellists of the side-event will discuss the role of social factors influencing an effective water policy supply and the accomplishment of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and specifically the Goal 6. Unlike focusing exclusively on the situation in the Europe's most water-scarce regions, the side-event aspires to recalibrate our perspective towards issues of social exclusion and social inequalities, which can influence the water and sanitation supply even in the regions with sufficient water resources and water infrastructures.

The panel will concentrate on the inequalities in the access to affordable and accessible water and sanitation. Although in formal terms the water services are available for everyone, the significant differences exist among the people living urban and rural areas, rich and poor, men and women, members of the majority and ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, elderly people, etc.

The side-event will discuss the challenges in water supply due to the interference of social factors like housing segregation, housing informality, lack of land titles, construction permits, lack of financial resources for individual water supply connections and regular water fees payments, and performance of local authorities in decentralized governance systems, and ethnic discrimination as well. All across Europe there is a growing number of people experiencing challenges in the access to clean water and sanitation due to these social factors. The water providers in Europe – private or public ones – aspiring to provide effective water supply have so far left without comprehensive legal and policy frameworks to tackle the challenges stemming from social exclusion and social

inequalities. The panel will examine what forms these frameworks could take and how they could be implemented in Europe and worldwide as well.