

Bathing water results 2008 – Latvia

1. Introduction

This report gives a general overview of bathing water quality in Latvia during the 2008 bathing season. Latvia reported under the Directive 2006/7/EC.

During the transition period, samples of Intestinal enterococci and Escherichia coli are reported under the Directive 2006/7/EC, but assessment is done according to the assessment rules of Directive 76/160/EEC. For the conversion of reported parameters under Directive 2006/7/EC, Article 13.3 of the Directive 2006/7/EC foresees that the parameter Escherichia coli, reported under Directive 2006/7/EC, is assumed to be equivalent to the parameter Faecal coliforms of Directive 76/160/EEC. The parameter Intestinal enterococci reported under Directive 2006/7/EC is assumed to be equivalent to the parameter Faecal streptococci. This means that the parameters Intestinal enterococci and Escherichia coli are evaluated according to the guide and mandatory standards defined in the Annex to Directive 76/160/EEC for the parameters Faecal streptococci and Faecal coliforms respectively.

The results are classified in the following categories:

- Compliant with the mandatory value of the Directive 76/160/EEC for Escherichia coli and not compliant with the guide value of the Directive 76/160/EEC for Intestinal enterococci (class CI)
- Compliant with the mandatory value of the Directive 76/160/EEC for Escherichia coli and the more stringent guide values for the Escherichia coli and Intestinal enterococci (class CG)
- Not compliant with the mandatory value of the Directive 76/160/EEC for Escherichia coli (class NC)
- Banned (temporarily closed) or closed throughout the season (class B)

2. Length of bathing season and number of bathing waters

For all bathing waters the bathing season lasted four months, from 15 May to 15 September 2008.

A total of 276 bathing waters were monitored in Latvia during the 2008 bathing season, of which 46 were coastal (31) or transitional bathing waters (15) and 230 freshwater bathing waters (59 on rivers; 171 on lakes).

With 276 bathing waters Latvia accounts for about 1.3% of the reported bathing waters of the European Union.

The evolution of the reported number of bathing waters since monitoring of the water quality began under the Directive 76/160/EEC and Directive 2006/7/EC is presented in Table 1. Both number of coastal and freshwater bathing waters remained relatively stable since the start of the reporting in 2005 (42-46 coastal bathing waters; 230-236 freshwater bathing waters). In 2008, the number of coastal bathing waters was the same as in the previous year. In 2008, two freshwater bathing waters were de-listed compared to the previous year.

3. Results of bathing water quality

The results of the bathing water quality in Latvia for the period 2005-2007 as reported in 2008 report and for the bathing season of 2008 are presented in Figure 1.

The graphs show, for coastal and freshwater bathing waters separately:

- The percentage of bathing waters that comply with the guide values (class CG, blue line),
- The percentage of bathing waters that comply with the mandatory values (class CI, green line)
- The percentage of bathing waters that do not comply with the mandatory values (class NC, red line)
- The percentage of bathing waters that are banned (temporarily closed) or closed throughout the season (class B, grey line)

Table 1 and Table 2 show the same information in absolute numbers and in percentages separately for coastal and freshwater bathing waters. Table 3 shows the bathing water quality results for 2008 season in Latvia for all bathing waters.

Map 1 shows the locations of the reported bathing waters in Latvia. The location of the bathing waters is based on the geographic coordinates reported by the Latvian authorities.

Figure 1: Results of bathing water quality in Latvia from 2005 to 2008

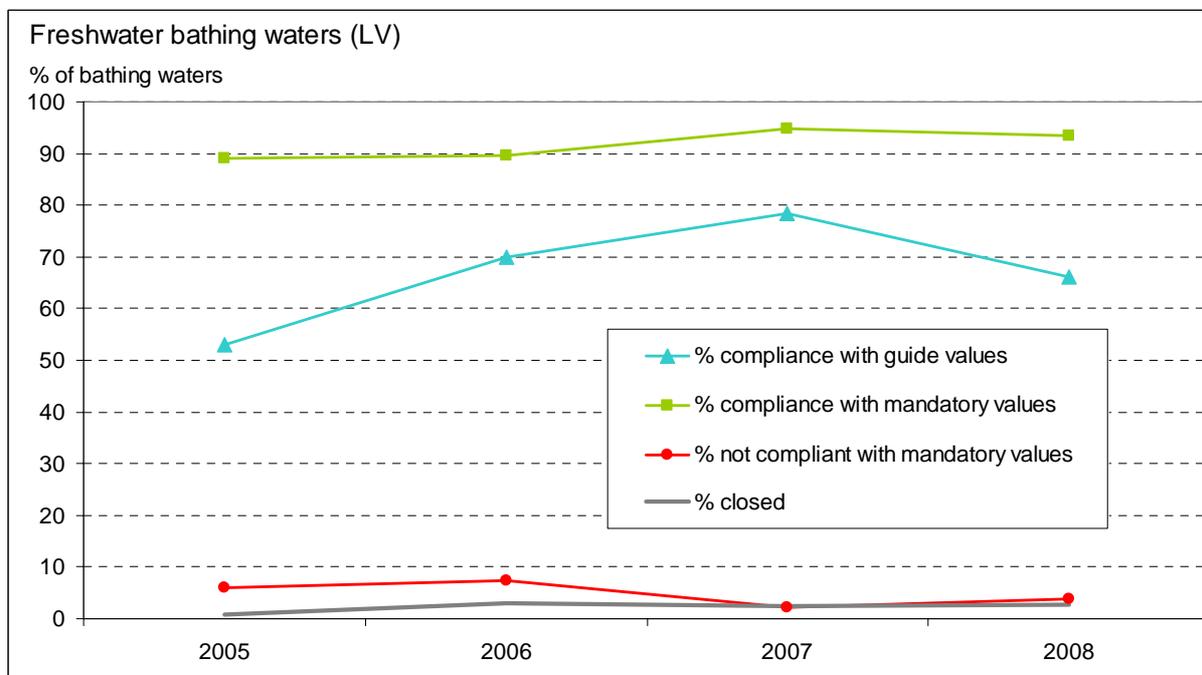
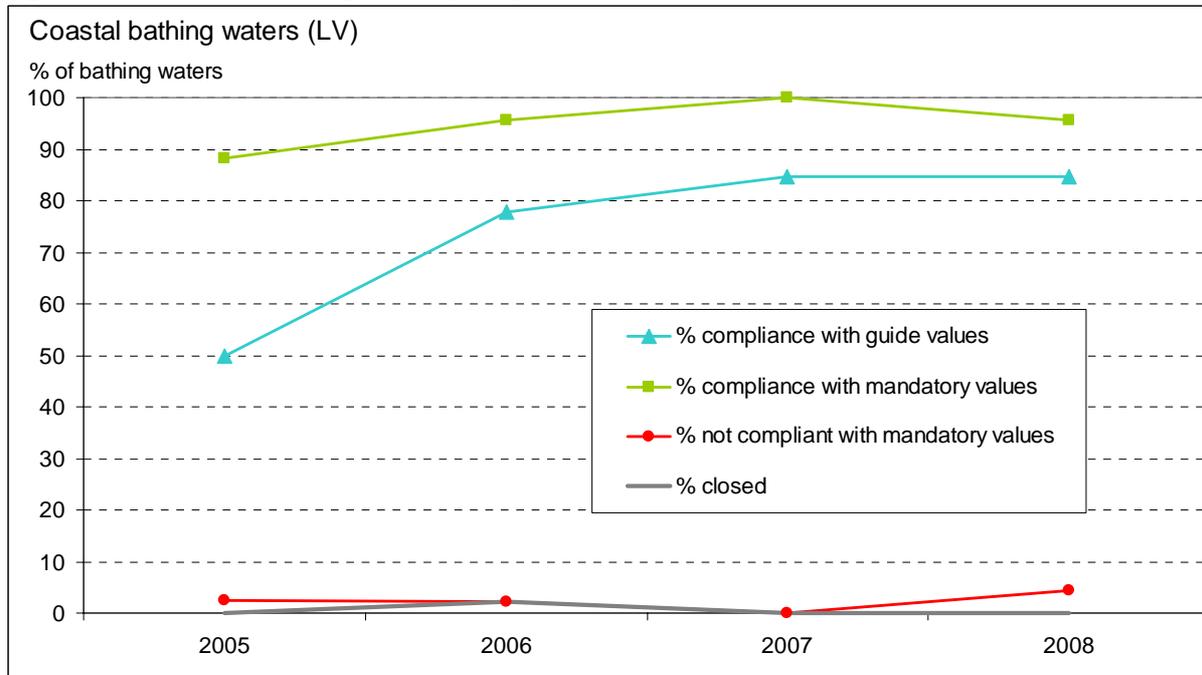


Table 1: Results of bathing water quality in Latvia from 2005 to 2008 as absolute numbers

	Year	Total number of bathing waters	Compliance with guide values	Compliance with mandatory values	Not compliant	Banned/closed throughout the season
LV						
Coastal bathing waters	2005	42	21	37	1	0
	2006	45	35	43	1	1
	2007	46	39	46	0	0
	2008	46	39	44	2	0
Fresh-water bathing waters	2005	236	125	210	14	2
	2006	230	161	206	17	7
	2007	232	182	220	5	6
	2008	230	152	215	9	6

Note: Bathing waters which were insufficiently sampled or not sampled according to the Bathing Water Directive were not included in this table. Therefore, in some cases, the sum of the different categories will not be equal to the total number of bathing waters.

Table 2: Results of bathing water quality in Latvia from 2005 to 2008 as percentages

	Year	Total number of bathing waters	% compliance with guide values	% compliance with mandatory values	% not compliant	% banned/closed throughout the season
LV						
Coastal bathing waters	2005	42	50.0	88.1	2.4	0.0
	2006	45	77.8	95.6	2.2	2.2
	2007	46	84.8	100.0	0.0	0.0
	2008	46	84.8	95.7	4.3	0.0
Fresh-water bathing waters	2005	236	53.0	89.0	5.9	0.8
	2006	230	70.0	89.6	7.4	3.0
	2007	232	78.4	94.8	2.2	2.6
	2008	230	66.1	93.5	3.9	2.6

Note: Bathing waters which were insufficiently sampled or not sampled according to the Bathing Water Directive are not included in this table. Therefore, in some cases, the sum of the percentages is not equal to 100%.

Table 3: Results of bathing water quality for all bathing waters in Latvia in 2008

		LV				
		Total number of bathing waters	Compliance with guide values	Compliance with mandatory values	Not compliant	Banned/closed throughout the season
Bathing Waters	2008	276	191	259	11	6

4. Development of bathing water quality

Coastal bathing waters

In Latvia, 95.7% of the coastal bathing waters (44) met the mandatory water quality in 2008. This is a decrease compared to the previous year, when all coastal bathing waters were in compliance with the mandatory values. 84.8% of the bathing waters (39) met the guide values, the same as in 2007. Two bathing waters (4.3%) were non-compliant with the mandatory value for for *Escherichia coli*. No coastal bathing water had to be closed during the season.

Since the start of reporting in 2005, the compliance rate with the guide values improved and it was stable in the last two years. The compliance rate with the mandatory values increased to 100% in

2007. The number of bathing waters that did not comply with the mandatory values decreased from one in 2005 and 2006 to zero in 2007, but it increased to two in 2008.

Freshwater bathing waters

93.5% of the freshwater bathing waters (215) met the mandatory water quality in 2008. This is a decrease compared to the previous year (- 1.3%). The rate of the compliance with the guide values decreased by 12.4%, reaching 66.1% of the bathing waters (152). The difference between the percentage of the bathing waters that met the mandatory water quality and the more stringent guide water quality increased (+ 27.4%). The percentage of the non-compliant bathing waters decreased from 2.2% (5) to 3.9% (9 bathing waters). The number of closed bathing waters was six (2.6%), the same as in 2007. In Latvia, none of the bathing waters was closed for the entire bathing season, but only temporarily banned for two weeks or a month due to algal blooming.

From 2005 onward we see an overall increase in the compliance rate, although it took Latvia till the 2007 bathing season to reach a level of non compliant freshwater bathing waters below 5%. The mandatory water quality was met in 89% of the bathing waters since 2005 and for 2007 and 2008 in almost 95% of the bathing waters. Since 2006, the guide water quality reached 70% of the bathing waters, but it decreased below that level in 2008.

5. General information as provided by the Latvian authorities

Samples were taken from the same places every other week, mostly from the area where the number of swimmers was the biggest. The bathing water quality problems are considered in preparation of River Basin Management Plans according to Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC). Only afterwards it will be possible to evaluate the investments needed.

6. More information on bathing water quality in the European Union

More information on bathing water quality in the European Member States, including the reports for 27 Member States and the EU summary report, can be found on the bathing water quality website (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-bathing/index_en.html).

By 2015, Member States will have to comply with the stricter and more ambitious requirements laid out in the new Bathing Water Directive (Directive 2006/7/EC). This Directive requires more effective monitoring and management of bathing waters, greater public participation and improved information. More information on the new Directive can be found on the bathing water quality website and on <http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:064:0037:0051:EN:PDF>.

Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Spain and Sweden started to report according to more stringent new requirements in 2008 bathing season, while Luxembourg already started in 2007 bathing season.

WISE - Water Information System for Europe (www.water.europa.eu) is a gateway to all water related information. Among other water related data, information on individual bathing water quality can be found in the WISE Map viewer and WISE Data viewer through interactive maps and graphs (<http://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/water/status-and-monitoring/state-of-bathing-water>).

Map 1: Bathing waters reported during the 2008 bathing season in Latvia

