

Latvian bathing water quality in 2018



Latvia 

June 2019

Photo: © Peter Kristensen/EEA



Bathing Water Quality in the Season 2018

Latvia

Under the provisions of the [Bathing Water Directive](#), more than 21 000 bathing waters are monitored in Europe each season. The monitoring data and other information regarding bathing water management are reported to the European Environment Agency by 30 reporting countries in Europe, to be assessed for the annual European report and more detailed national reports.

1. BWD reporting in the season 2018

In the season 2018, Latvia identified and reported **56 bathing waters**, which is 0.3% of all bathing waters in Europe. No bathing waters in Latvia have been newly identified for the season 2018.

Bathing waters of Latvia in the season 2018		Bathing water quality in the season 2018	
Total reported	56	Excellent	52 (92.9%)
Coastal	33	Good	2 (3.6%)
Inland	23	Sufficient	1 (1.8%)
Total reported samples	372	Poor	0 (0%)
		Not classified	1 (1.8%)

The bathing waters are quality classified according to the two microbiological parameters (Escherichia coli and Intestinal enterococci) defined in the Bathing Water Directive. 98.2% of reported bathing waters are in line with the minimum quality standards of the Directive, thus classified “sufficient” or better.

More detailed information on bathing waters of Latvia is available at the national bathing water portal <http://www.vi.gov.lv/lv/vides-veseliba/peldudens>.

2. BWD monitoring

Each bathing water that is identified by the reporting country needs to have a monitoring calendar established before the bathing season. The monitoring calendar requirements can be summarised as follows: (1) a pre-season sample is to be taken shortly before the start of each bathing season; (2) no fewer than four (alternatively, three for specific cases) samples are to be taken and analysed per bathing season; and (3) an interval between sampling dates never exceeds one month.

From the reported data, the assessment also designates effective implementation of the monitoring calendar. In Latvia, monitoring calendar for 2018 was implemented at all bathing waters.

Table 1: Bathing waters in 2018 according to implementation of the monitoring calendar

	Count	Share of total [%]
Monitoring calendar implemented A bathing water satisfies monitoring calendar conditions listed above.	56	100%
Monitoring calendar not implemented A bathing water does not satisfy monitoring calendar conditions listed above. They may be quality-classified if enough samples are available in the last assessment period.	0	0%

In addition to the monitoring calendar, management specifics of the last assessment period of four years are also assessed. The status primarily indicates whether the complete dataset of four seasons is available, but also points out the reasons as to why the bathing waters do not have the complete last assessment period dataset. The latter may indicate developing conditions at the site – most importantly, whether the bathing water has been newly identified within the period, or any changes have occurred that are likely to affect the classification of the bathing water.

Table 2: Management specifics in the last assessment period of 2015–2018

	Count	Share of total [%]
Continuously monitored A bathing water has been monitored in each bathing season in the last assessment period.	55	98.20%
Newly identified A bathing water was identified for the first time within the last assessment period. Such status is assigned until the complete four-year dataset is available, i.e. for three years after the first reporting.	1	1.80%
Quality changes A bathing water was subject to changes described in BWD Art. 4.4 within the last assessment period. Such status is assigned until the complete four-year dataset of samples taken after changes took effect is available.	0	0%
Monitoring gap A bathing water was not monitored for at least one season in the last assessment period. No quality	0	0%

classification is made if no samples are reported for the most recent season.		
---	--	--

3. Bathing water quality

3.1 Coastal bathing waters

Coastal bathing waters are situated on the sea or transitional water coastline, with respective parameter thresholds defined in Annex I of the Directive. They are subject to more strict thresholds than the inland bathing waters. Quality trend in Latvia for the period 1990–2018 if historical data are available is shown in Figure 1. Count of bathing waters by quality class for the last assessment period 2015–2018 is given in Annex I.

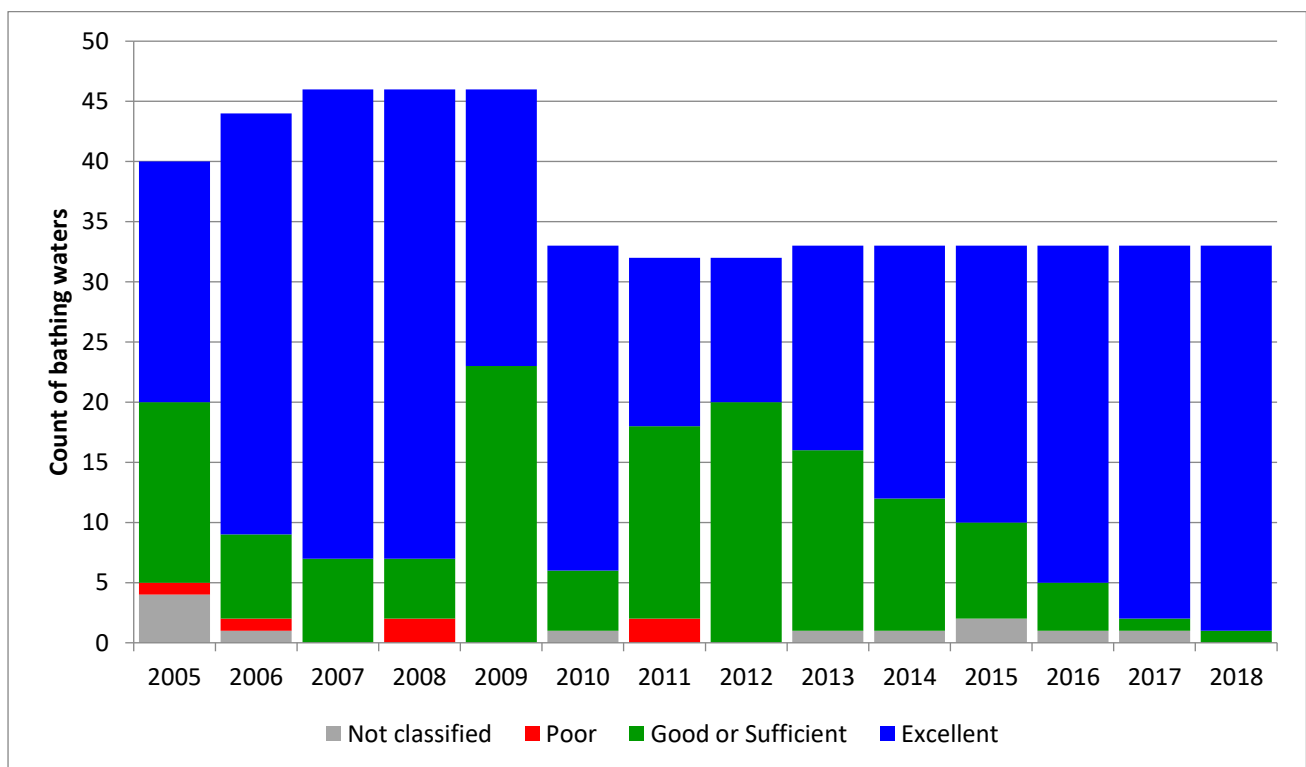


Figure 1: Trend of coastal bathing water quality in Latvia. Notes: Each column represents an absolute count of bathing waters in the season. Quality classes “good” and “sufficient” are merged for comparability with classification of the preceding Bathing Water Directive 76/160/EEC.

3.2 Inland bathing waters

Inland bathing waters are situated at rivers and lakes, featuring fresh water and with respective parameter thresholds defined in Annex I of the Directive. Quality trend in Latvia for the period 1990–2018 if historical data are available is shown in Figure 2. Count of bathing waters by quality class for the last assessment period 2015–2018 is given in Annex I.

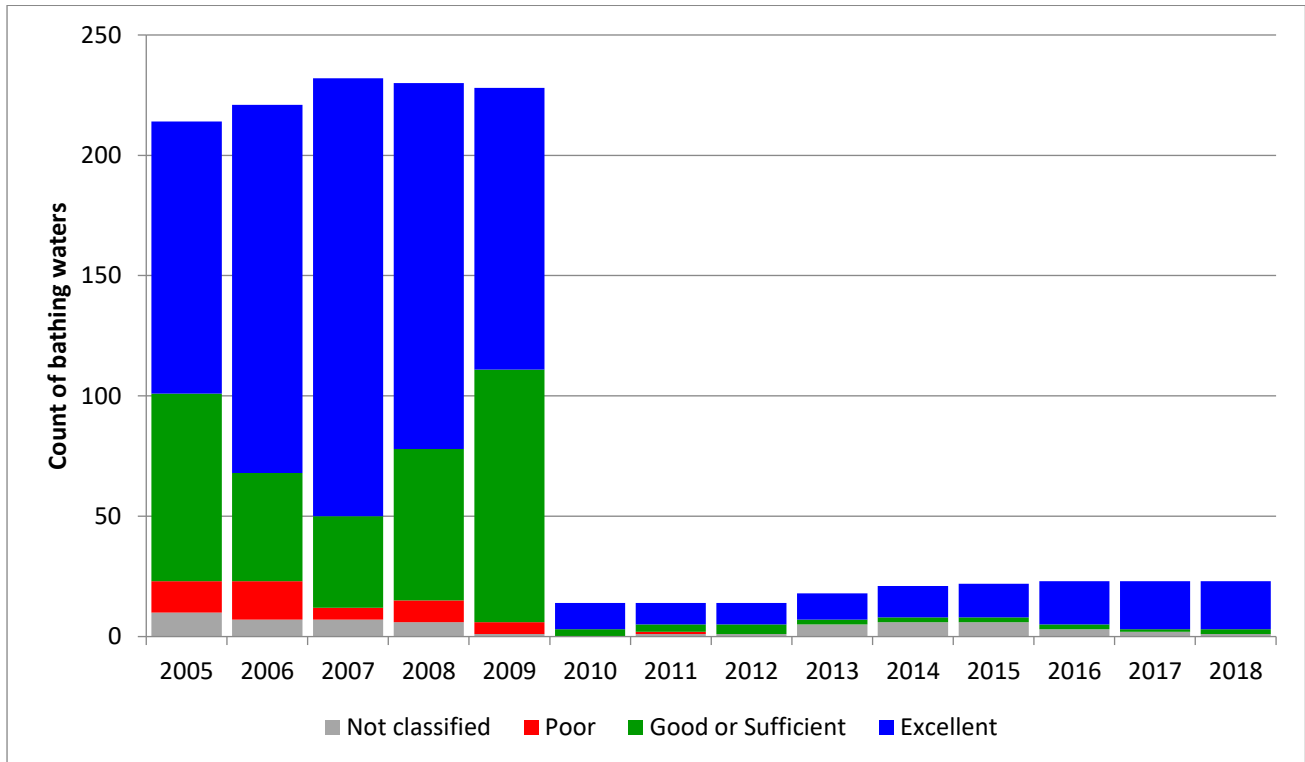


Figure 2: Trend of inland bathing water quality in Latvia. Notes: Each column represents an absolute count of bathing waters in the season. Quality classes “good” and “sufficient” are merged for comparability with classification of the preceding Bathing Water Directive 76/160/EEC.

4. Bathing water management in Latvia

In addition to monitoring data, reporting countries also provide information on bathing water management in the country. The information is used to exchange good practices, discuss issues on the European level, and understand the specifics of implementation of the Directive.

Latvia is rich with water which is especially appreciated in the summer months. There are more than 2000 lakes of natural origin and more than 12 000 rivers. Beside inland bathing waters, Latvia has approximately 500 km of coast. A large part of these water bodies are used for recreation and swimming.

The proposed list of bathing places is distributed to municipalities each year before the bathing season and comments on the proposed list are asked. The list of bathing places is published on the internet homepage of Health Inspectorate, as well, and the public is asked to provide its suggestions with respect to desired

changes during the whole bathing season both to Health Inspectorate and to respective municipality. Besides, municipalities are asked to provide additional bathing sites located in their territory, being significant for them and attracting large amount of bathers. In 2018 no new bathing site were added. In addition, municipalities can suggest excluding a bathing site from the list of bathing waters due to very small number of bathers and loss of importance as a bathing site.

During the bathing season, the Health Inspectorate performs the inspection of bathing, as well as the monitoring of bathing water. When bathing at specific bathing water is prohibited for whatever reason, bathing prohibition is announced also on Health Inspectorate website (<http://www.vi.gov.lv/lv/vides-veseliba/peldudens/peldudens-monitorings>). On this website also some other information are available to the public, such as: the list of official bathing places, data of official bathing water monitoring, bathing water quality at informal bathing sites, etc. Bathing waters in Latvia are equipped with boards, where visitors can inform themselves about bathing water quality, bathing restrictions such as bathing prohibition and advice against bathing, maximum depth, rescue service location, safety requirements, first aid, etc.

The Health Inspectorate on their website (<http://www.vi.gov.lv/lv/vides-veseliba/peldudens/peldvietu-udens-apraksti>) also offers more detailed bathing water profile descriptions for official bathing waters, to reflect in detail the current status of bathing water, water quality and factors that may cause water pollution to better manage the quality of bathing water and hence improve bathing water quality. These descriptions are primarily aimed at understanding what is the possibility of being affected by microbial contamination. Division of Environmental Health of the Health Inspectorate on this website also invites citizens to submit their comments and suggestions, as well as any other information that would help clarify bathing descriptions via a specific e-mail address (vide@vi.gov.lv).

Citizen participation and engagement is also encouraged through a questionnaire available on another website of Health Inspectorate (available at <http://www.vi.gov.lv/lv/vides-veseliba/peldudens/ied>). Using this questionnaire, everyone can express his observations, opinions and suggestions regarding specific bathing waters and related topics.

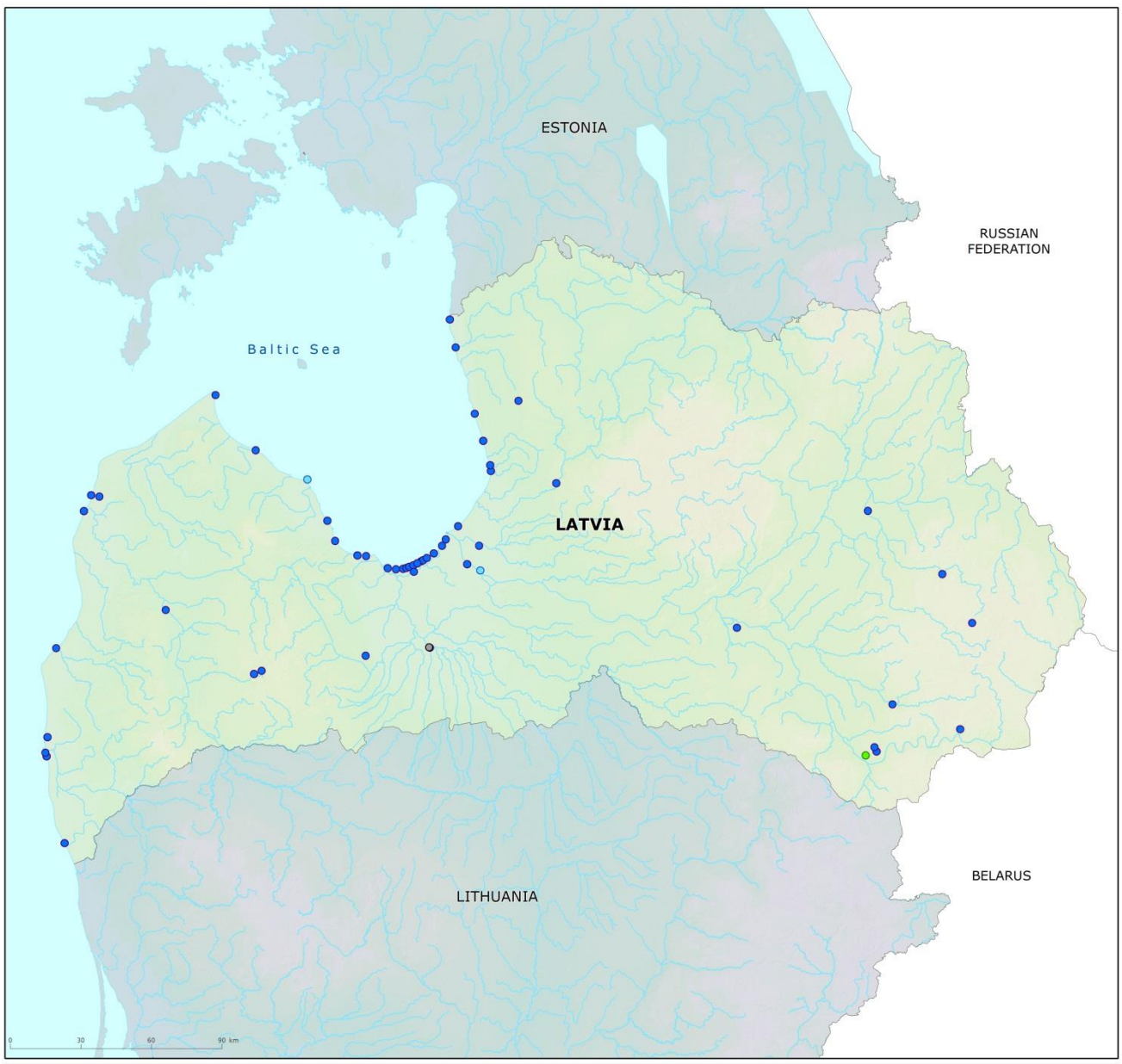
Annex I Bathing water quality in Latvia in 2015–2018

Table 3: Bathing water quality by water category and season

		Total count of bathing waters	Excellent		Good		Sufficient		Poor		Not classified	
			Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Coastal	2015	33	23	69.7	8	24.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	6.1
	2016	33	28	84.8	4	12.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.0
	2017	33	31	93.9	1	3.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.0
	2018	33	32	97.0	1	3.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Inland	2015	22	14	63.6	2	9.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	27.3
	2016	23	18	78.3	1	4.3	1	4.3	0	0.0	3	13.0
	2017	23	20	87.0	1	4.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	8.7
	2018	23	20	87.0	1	4.3	1	4.3	0	0.0	1	4.3
Total	2015	55	37	67.3	10	18.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	14.5
	2016	56	46	82.1	5	8.9	1	1.8	0	0.0	4	7.1
	2017	56	51	91.1	2	3.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	5.4
	2018	56	52	92.9	2	3.6	1	1.8	0	0.0	1	1.8

Annex II Bathing water quality map

Map 1: Bathing waters reported during the 2018 bathing season in Latvia



Bathing water quality

- Excellent water quality
- Good water quality
- Sufficient water quality
- Poor water quality
- Quality classification not possible
- No data
- Outside data coverage (data available, not presented on the map)

Source: National boundaries: EEA; Large rivers and lakes: EEA, WFD Article 3; Bathing waters data and coordinates: Latvian authorities; Digital Elevation Model over Europe (EU-DEM): EEA.