

# Belgian bathing water quality in 2019



# Belgium

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## Bathing water quality in the 2019 season

# Belgium

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 European countries. These are then assessed for the annual European Bathing water report (European Bathing Water Briefing by 2020), published by the EEA, and more detailed national reports.

### 1. Bathing Water Directive reporting in the 2019 season

Bathing waters in the 2019 season		Bathing water quality in the 2019 season	
<b>Total reported</b>	115	<b>Excellent</b>	98 (85.2%)
Coastal	42	<b>Good</b>	13 (11.3%)
Inland	73	<b>Sufficient</b>	2 (1.7%)
<b>First identified in 2019</b>	0	<b>Poor</b>	1 (0.9%)
<b>Delisted in 2019</b>	0	<b>Not classified</b>	1 (0.9%)
<b>Total reported samples</b>	2192		

Bathing waters are quality classified according to two microbiological parameters (Escherichia coli and Intestinal enterococci) defined in the Bathing Water Directive. A total of 98.3% of reported bathing waters are in line with the minimum quality standards of the Directive and are thus classified as 'sufficient' or better. One bathing water is classified 'poor'.

More information is available at the **national bathing water portals**:

Flanders: <http://www.kwaliteitzwemwater.be>

Wallonia: <http://environnement.wallonie.be/baignade>

## 2. Bathing Water Directive monitoring

Each bathing water identified by the reporting country must 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 in specific cases) samples are to be taken and analysed per bathing season; and (3) an interval between sampling dates must never exceed one month.

From the reported data, the assessment also designates effective implementation of the monitoring calendar (Table 1).

**Table 1: Bathing waters in 2019 according to implementation of the monitoring calendar**

	Count	Share of total (%)
<b>Monitoring calendar implemented</b> A bathing water satisfies the monitoring calendar conditions listed above.	114	99
<b>Monitoring calendar not implemented</b> A bathing water does not satisfy the monitoring calendar conditions listed above. It may be quality-classified if enough samples are available in the last assessment period.	1	1

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

**Table 2: Management specifics in the last assessment period, 2016-2019**

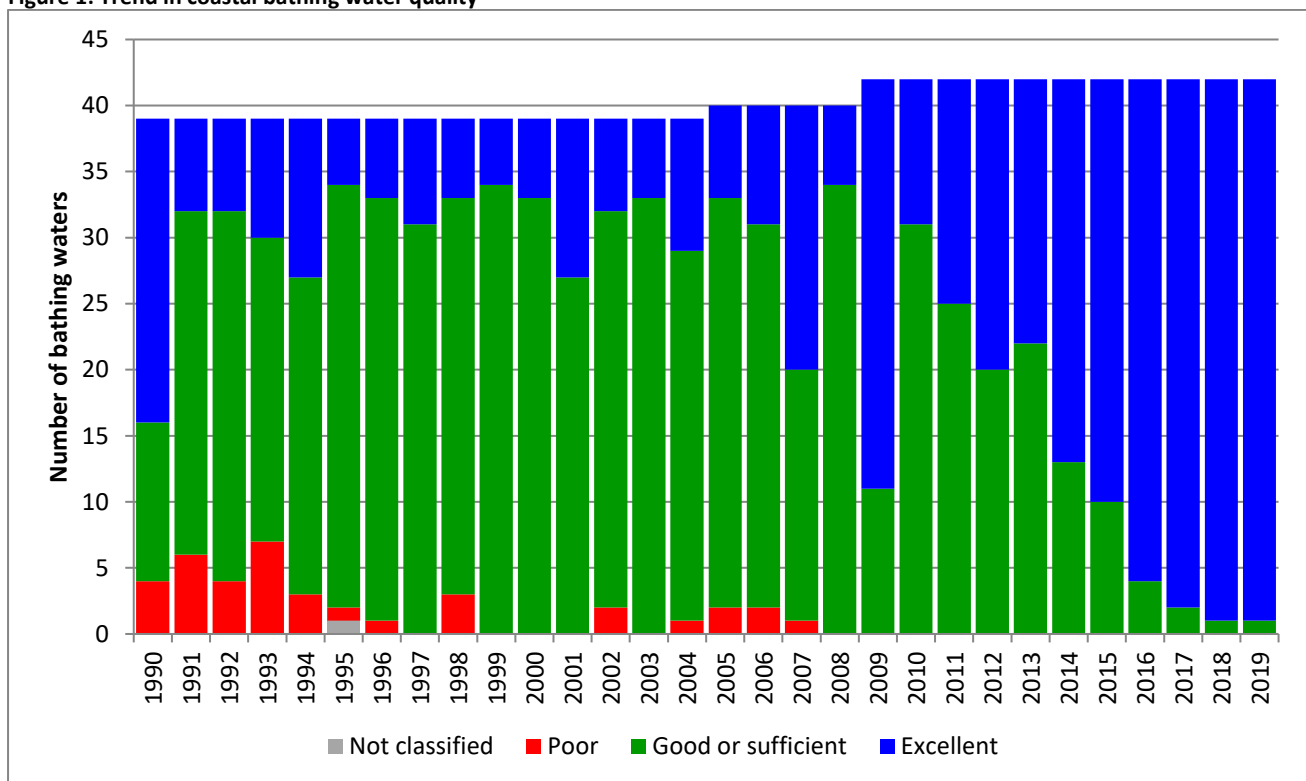
	Count	Share of total (%)
<b>Continuously monitored</b> A bathing water has been monitored in each bathing season in the last assessment period.	112	97.40
<b>Newly identified</b> A bathing water was identified for the first time within the last assessment period. Such status is assigned for the full four years after being reported.	2	1.70
<b>Quality changes</b> A bathing water was subject to changes described in Bathing Water Directive Article 4.4 within the last assessment period. Such status is assigned for the full four years after being reported.	1	1
<b>Monitoring gap</b> A bathing water was not monitored for at least one season in the last assessment period. No quality classification is made if not enough samples are reported for the most recent season.	0	0

### 3. Bathing water quality

#### 3.1 Coastal bathing waters

Coastal bathing waters are situated on the sea or transitional water coastline, with the respective parameter thresholds defined in Annex I of the Directive. They are subject to more strict thresholds than inland bathing waters. The quality trend for the period 1990–2019 (if historical data are available) is shown in Figure 1. The number of bathing waters by quality class for the last assessment period, 2016–2019, is given in Annex I Bathing water quality, 2016-2019.

**Figure 1: Trend in coastal bathing water quality**

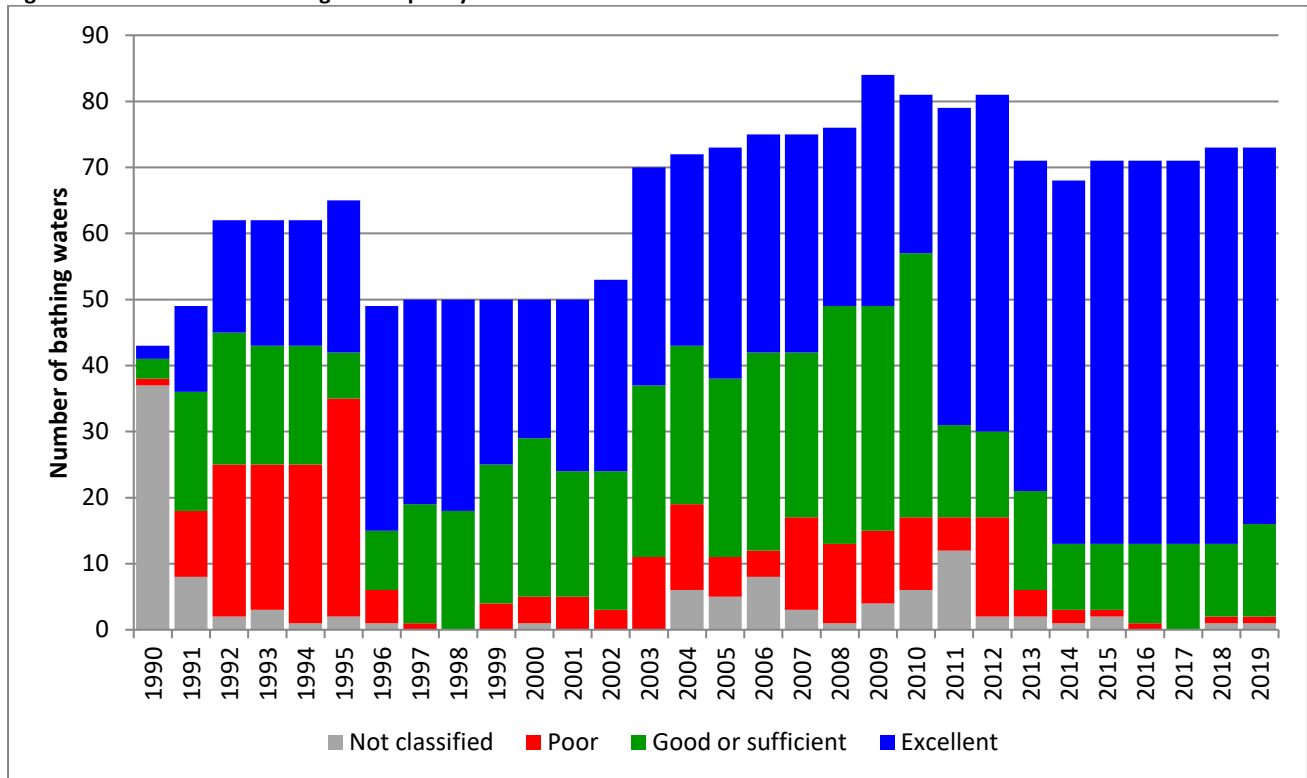


**Notes:** Each column represents an absolute number of bathing waters in the season. The ‘good’ and ‘sufficient’ quality classes are merged for comparability with the classifications under the preceding Bathing Water Directive 76/160/EEC.

### 3.2 Inland bathing waters

Inland bathing waters are situated at fresh water rivers and lakes that have the respective parameter thresholds as defined in Annex I of the Directive. The quality trend for the period 1990–2019 (if historical data are available) is shown in Figure 2. The number of bathing waters by quality class for the last assessment period, 2016–2019, is given in Annex I Bathing water quality, 2016–2019.

**Figure 2: Trend in inland bathing water quality**



**Notes:** Each column represents an absolute number of bathing waters in the season. The ‘good’ and ‘sufficient’ quality classes are merged for comparability with the classifications under the preceding Bathing Water Directive 76/160/EEC.

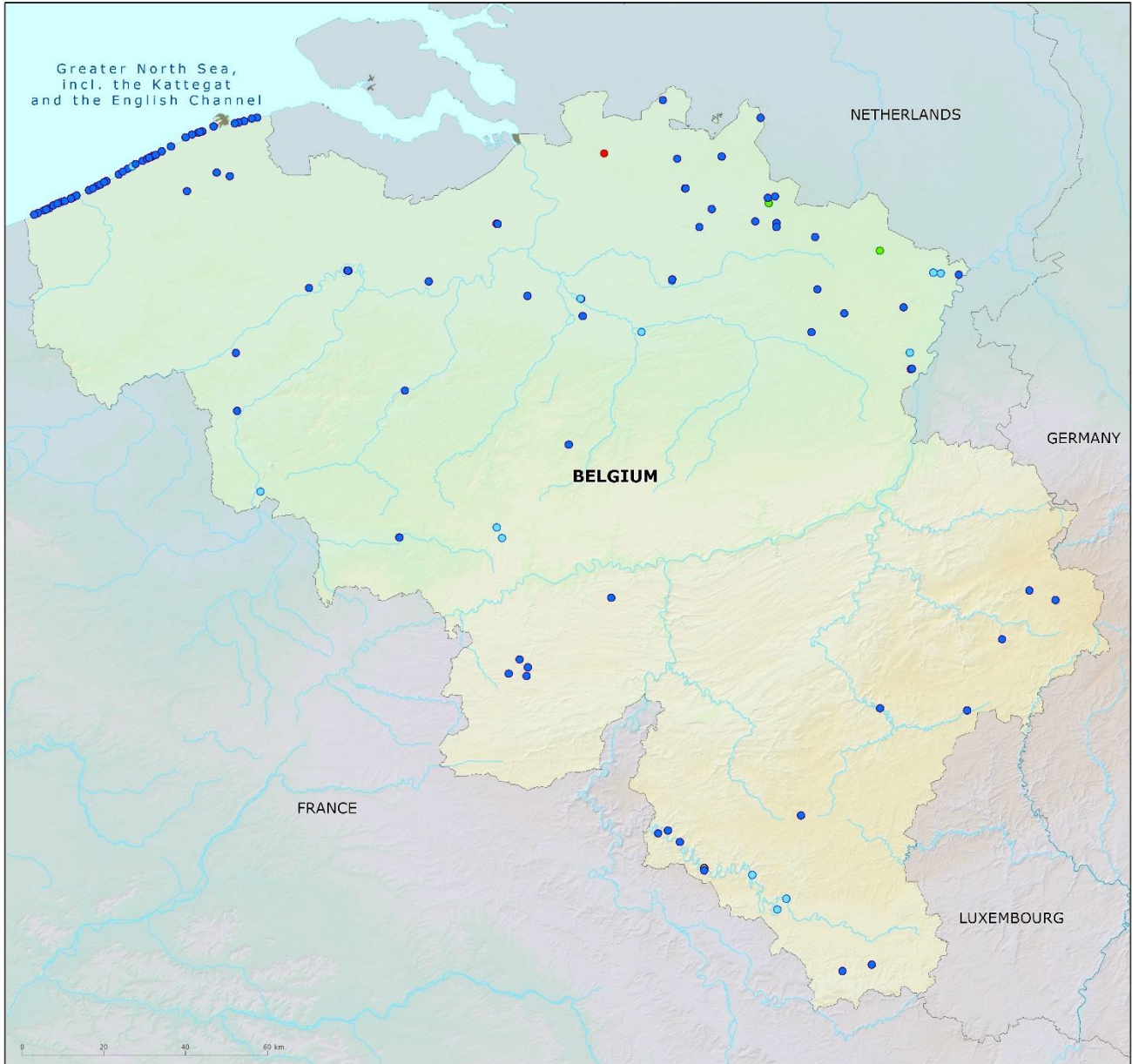
## Annex I Bathing water quality, 2016–2019

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	2016	42	38	90.5	4	9.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	2017	42	40	95.2	2	4.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	2018	42	41	97.6	1	2.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	2019	42	41	97.6	1	2.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Inland	2016	71	58	81.7	10	14.1	2	2.8	1	1.4	0	0.0
	2017	71	58	81.7	10	14.1	3	4.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
	2018	73	60	82.2	9	12.3	2	2.7	1	1.4	1	1.4
	2019	73	57	78.1	12	16.4	2	2.7	1	1.4	1	1.4
Total	2016	113	96	85.0	14	12.4	2	1.8	1	0.9	0	0.0
	2017	113	98	86.7	12	10.6	3	2.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
	2018	115	101	87.8	10	8.7	2	1.7	1	0.9	1	0.9
	2019	115	98	85.2	13	11.3	2	1.7	1	0.9	1	0.9

# Annex II Bathing water quality map

**Map 1: Bathing waters reported during the 2019 bathing season in Belgium**



**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: GISCO; Large rivers and lakes: EEA, WFD Article 3; Bathing waters data and coordinates: Belgian authorities; Digital Elevation Model over Europe (EU-DEM): EEA.