



Global Leakage Summit

Implementing the EU leakage regulation in
Ireland

Current and future challenges for Ireland

Pauline Gillard

02/09/2026

Who is responsible for DW leakage in Ireland?



- **Uisce Éireann: National Water Services Provider**
- Established in July 2013 under the Water Services Act 2013.
- Consolidated the responsibility for water and wastewater services from 31 Local Authorities into a single national utility.
- Uisce Éireann are responsible for:
 - Management of National water and wastewater assets
 - Operation and maintenance of the water and wastewater networks.
 - Strategic Investment and planning.
 - Delivery of capital infrastructure projects.
 - Customer service and billing.



Uisce Éireann – Key Challenges



- **Uisce Éireann Transformation Programme** is completing the transition and incorporating Irelands public water and waste water services into one national utility.
- 540 individual Water Resource Zones (WRZs) that make up public Water supply in Ireland.
- Ageing Infrastructure and historical under-investment.
- Dispersed rural network - increase operational complexity.
- Growing population and new connections driving higher water demand.
- Climate change placing increasing pressure on water resources.
- Workforce and skills challenges across the sector.



We supply **174,184 businesses**
and **1.64 million households**
with clean water on a daily basis



Rising population in Ireland 5.12million
and set to rise with
increased
urbanisation

(CSO, Census, 2022)



16



1.7 billion litres of water
processed every day

706 water treatment plants in
operation across the country

540 water resource zones

723 water supply zones

17

64,686 km of drinking water
pipe in our distribution network



Parts of the distribution
network **>150 years old**

>13 million pipework joints

>1.1 million meters

>4,800 district meter areas

>200 trunkmain meter areas



18

Leakage reduced from
49% to 38%

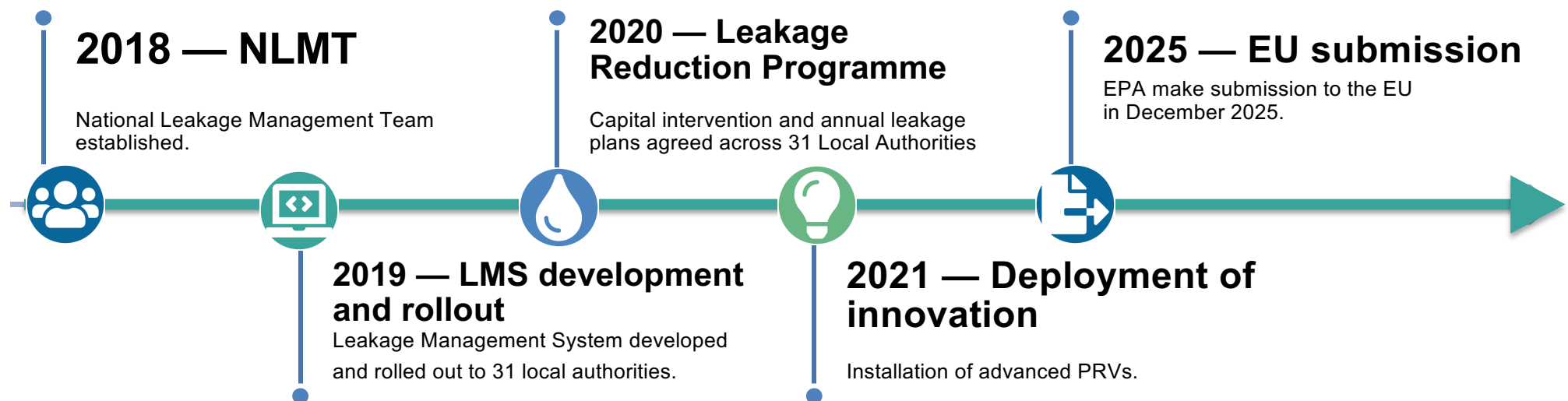
65,000 lead services
replaced

2,500km of
distribution
pipework replaced



19

Uisce Eireann leakage reduction journey



How did we progress the Submission to the European Commission?



- A **National Leakage Sub-Group** was formed by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH.)
- Membership of the sub-group comprises of DHLGH, The Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU), EPA and UÉ. This sub-group submitted updates to the EU Drinking Water expert group.
- Provided updates to the group from the European Commission DW expert group and leakage subgroup.

EU Coordination on Leakage



- EurEau –feedback to set up an expert group.
- European Commission Drinking Water Expert Group (DWEAG) agreed to set up a leakage subgroup for member states.
- A water leakage data set template was developed in consultation with Member States. The Commission recommended the use of this template to MS's.



Ireland's EU Leakage Challenge



- MS having a leakage rate exceeding the threshold value set out in the Designated Act must submit an action plan outlining measures to reduce leakage levels.
- Ireland ranked among the fifth worst performing MS's based on reported leakage rate results. This highlights the need for significant improvement.
- Ireland will have to submit an action plan by 2029 to the EC.
- The National leakage level was reduced from 49% in 2014 to 35% in 2025.
- For the 25 largest WRZ's the combined leakage rate was 33% in 2025. In Dublin the leakage rate was 29.5%.

Ireland's Leakage Reduction Journey



- From the Regulations UÉ developed proposed leakage reduction targets (Potential for improvements) for each WRZ.
- The current **National Water Resource Plan** sets a target to reduce national leakage to **31% by 2034** (equivalent to 27.6% for the largest 25 WRZ's.)
- The Potential for Leakage Reduction targets are supported by a 10 year work programme (2025-2034.)
- Achieving the EU leakage threshold will prove a significant challenge for Ireland.

The Road Ahead



- More Investment needed in the infrastructure.
- Improved data accuracy.
- Investment in skills and resources.
- Action plans required for the 25 WRZ's.
- Reducing leakage is not just about compliance. It is about securing resilient water supplies for future generations.



Thank You!



Any Questions?

Pauline Gillard & Patrick Kenny

p.gillard@epa.ie

p.kenny@epa.ie

