

### Is access to drinking water increasing?

Sustainable access to drinking water is one of the Millennium Development goals. This implies reducing by half by 2015 (compared to 1990) the proportion of people without access to drinking water.

**The proportion of the population with sustainable access to a source of drinking water was over 80% in most of the Mediterranean countries in 2006.**

**About 18 million people in the Mediterranean countries who generally live in rural areas did not have access to drinking water in 2006.**

Many countries such as the EU countries, Croatia, Israel and Lebanon already have 100% access to drinking water.

Between 1990 and 2006, Morocco, Tunisia, Syria and Turkey made encouraging progress in this direction, while in Algeria the access rate decreased.

In urban areas access is high, with more than 95% in most of the countries. It is under 95% in the Palestinian Territories and in Algeria.

The situation is not as good in rural areas. In 2004 four countries – Palestinian Territories, Syria, Tunisia and Algeria – had access rates between 80 and 90%.

Access to drinking water in the southern and eastern Mediterranean countries (93%) is higher the world average. It is the same for the access in urban areas. (97 %) and in the rural areas (90%).

**Definition**

This indicator represents the share of the population that is supplied with or that has reasonable access to sufficient drinking water. “Access” signifies here a source producing at least 20 litres per capita and per day and situated at fewer than 1000 metres away. (Millennium Development Goals Indicator n°30).

**Precautions / Notes**

Because of the fact that there are different characteristics to distinguish urban areas from rural areas in the Mediterranean countries, the distinction between «urban population» and «rural population» cannot easily be given one sole definition applicable to all of the countries. The national definitions refer in general to the size of the built-up areas, the rural population thus being the rest of the population not considered as urban.

The problem of frequent water cut-offs in many Mediterranean countries is not taken into account in this indicator.

This indicator should be made more precise for the Mediterranean in order to show the progress made in direct access to water at home.

**Sources / References**

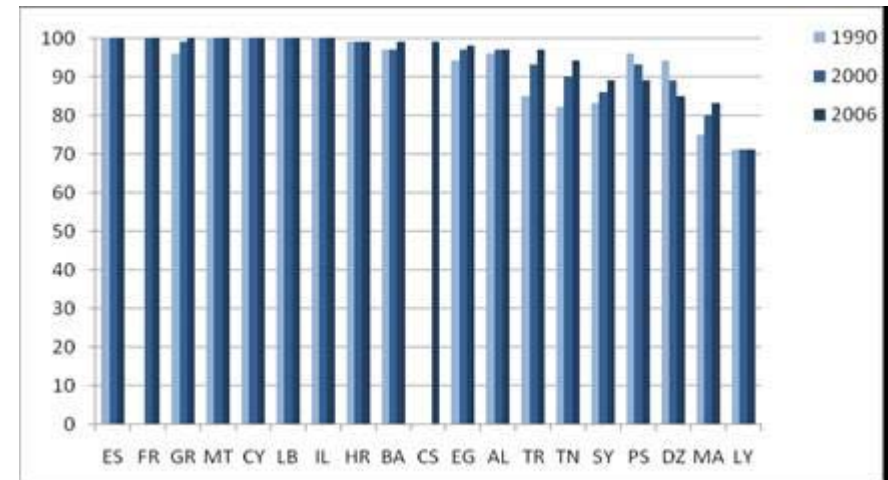
United Nations Statistical Division, The Millennium Indicators Database.

The Millenium Development Goals Report 2008, United Nations, 2009

WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for the water supply and sanitation.

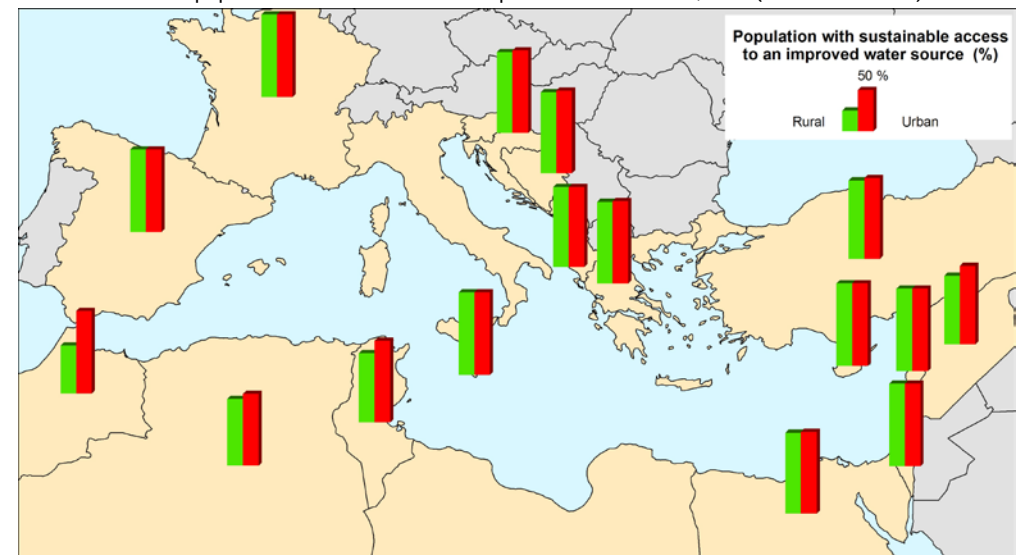
### 4. Share of population with access to an improved water source

Share of population with access to an improved water source, 1990-2006 (%)



Source : UNSD

Share of population with access to an improved water source, 2006(Rural and Urban)



Source : UNSD