

Annual Report



2024

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Foreword



The annual report is an important document that shows the results, in figures, graphs, and details, of the year-long activity of our employees, more than one thousand. It is essential that our partners and customers learn and understand the complex work hidden behind the water taps from their homes or businesses. We work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with professionalism and commitment, to make sure that whenever somebody turns on a tap safe drinking water runs.

Some of the major challenges of last year – the hottest in the history of temperature measurements – were the prolonged heatwave and drought during the summer. With sustained efforts, we successfully overcame the challenge, and in Timișoara, the drinking water supply was not interrupted for a single day.

In 2024, we carried on our work to secure substantial financing from grants, in order to implement large scale investments. The figures presented in this report are conclusive in this regard and demonstrate our success.

The company's concern for the environment and its protection has intensified with the worsening of the climate crisis, which is felt by everyone. The water and wastewater treatment processes require a significant amount of energy. For two which we have been continuously reducing for more than two decades. With European funds, Aquatim has implemented a renewable energy project to cover for its own consumption at two of its major treatment facilities in Timișoara, the wastewater treatment plant and the Urseni water treatment plant. Almost 1,540 photovoltaic

panels with an output of 1 MWh were installed at the former, while at the latter, 990 panels with an output of 650 kWh were installed. Both photovoltaic parks have been operating since the beginning of 2024, supplying green energy for the water treatment processes. The main objective of this project was to reduce the environmental impact by cutting down the greenhouse gas emissions generated from the company's activity, and at the same time to reduce the amount of electricity supplied from the national energy system.

In 2024 we carried on the works for the construction of the plant that will convert the wastewater sludge generated in Timișoara into energy. The sludge is primarily converted into gas and the energy resulting from the combustion of the gas will be used on site as thermal and electrical energy. The plant can process 100 tons of sludge, with no input of electricity from the grid. The implementation of this technology results in a lower carbon footprint, reduced operation costs at the wastewater treatment plant, and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

The company's strong upward financial trajectory, despite numerous and significant investments last year, suggests effective management of resources and a positive business outlook. The turnover has continuously grown from almost 224 million lei, in 2022, to over 264 million lei in 2023, and exceeded 290 million lei in 2024. In other words, the company consistently progressed. The estimates for 2025 are also optimistic, even though we are to face a politically, and, implicitly, economically complicated period.

People who work for this organisation are a coordinated, efficient, and united team that always knows what to do. Our job is to make sure that the residents of Timișoara and Timiș County can always benefit from quality services in the field of water utility.

Ilie Vlaicu, PhD
General Director

CHAPTER 1

MISSION, VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Mission

Our mission is to focus on the company's values and perform accordingly, and thus achieve the following:

- contribute to the well-being of the communities, providing water supply and wastewater services of good quality and at affordable prices, for all consumers within the area of supply;
- be a factor of stability, ensuring water supply for the existing customers and a factor of progress by extending our area of operation;
- maintain our status as a high-performing, prosperous, stable and top company in this field of business and further build on based on modern management practices, continuous improvement of the activities and institutional responsibilities and also on providing equal professional development opportunities for our employees;
- promote mutual respect and equal treatment to our customers, ensure effective and coherent communication with all key actors; respect the water heritage, a resource which plays an essential role in our activity, support environmental protection and conservation policies both among our employees and our present and future customers; manage properly the customer relations, by employing various communication channels and continuous training of the employees;
- encourage documenting from updated and various sources to support the decision-making process;
- maintain compliance with applicable rules and regulations and other legal provisions relevant to our performance;
- ensure and maintain profitability in the short and medium term

Vision

The general manager's vision for the strategic development of Aquatim takes into account the current background and trends for the national and international utility services market, the industry forecasts and perspectives so as to ensure maintaining a modern, financially and economically viable public utility company that provides quality services to customers, is responsible towards the community, the stakeholders and the environment and is committed to a sustainable development.

Aquatim will ensure that the provision of high-quality water and wastewater services is achieved throughout the region, working together with the members of the Intercommunity Development Association Water-Sewerage Timis (IDA). Aquatim will encourage and maintain within the organization a sense of responsibility, respect for consumers and stakeholders and will appreciate the contributions of the existing and new employees in terms of professional competence and civic awareness. As a regional operating company (ROC), Aquatim will have to work with many local administrations, represented through IDA. Establishing proper communication tools and making information easily available and understandable to the members is crucial. Aquatim will also support the extension of services beyond the administrative limits of the county, in response to the challenges of an efficient water sector.

Objectives

According to the delegation contract for the management of services, the objectives to be achieved by the public water utility service are as follows:

- to provide public water supply and sewerage services in a professional and expedient manner, according to the commitment made and the best applicable practices in the field; be customer oriented;
- to secure a proper public utility infrastructure, in support to the local economic development and the prospects of attracting investments for the respective communities;

- to ensure the sustainable development of the public water supply and wastewater services;
- to keep the environment safe, ensure compliance with the specifications of the environmental permits or other licenses, permits, notices of approval or endorsement of any kind, which extend or replace the former;
- to provide metered water connections for each user; to maintain the public water supply and sewerage systems in an optimal state of operation and make the necessary improvements.

Non-financial performance indicators

- ensure a minimum 95% compliance with the regulations of the physical-chemical and microbiological parameters indicating the water quality. The value of the said indicator for the entire area of operation is of 98% compliance.
- ensure a remediation time for defects in the supply networks of:
 - maximum 24 hours, in 85% of cases;
 - between 24 and 48 hours, in 8% of cases;
 - between 48 and 72 hours, in 7% of cases.
- limit the specific monthly electricity consumption to a maximum of 0.5 kWh/m³ of water.

Risks

To implement a risk management system within the organization, a monitoring, coordination and guidance committee was appointed to provide support for the development of the internal management control system. Risk management teams were established at all levels of the organizational structure. The monitoring committee and the risk management teams' members are replaced, dismissed or new members are appointed when changes occur in the organizational chart or whenever necessary.

Specific risks were identified for each activity and structure of the organization. They are quantified by calculating the exposure to the respective risk, based on their estimated probability of occurrence and associated impact. The Risk Registrar specifies what actions should be taken to prevent or mitigate their effects.

The general manager provides the organizational and procedural framework necessary for the implementation of the established control measures. The risk management procedure is a useful tool for the company's management and employees, enabling them to achieve the objectives specific to each department in a controllable and effective manner. In the management's opinion, most of the identified risks are small and medium and fall into the line management category.

Among the most important medium and high risks managed by the senior management are those related to the implementation of European funded projects, operations (drinking water treatment, wastewater treatment), financial resources (availability of resources and debt collection), completion of the planned investment works included in the annual plan, environment, public procurement and the management of the supply of water utilities contracts, security of the IT network and software applications.

Among the external risk-generating factors we mention those related to politics and legislation. An analysis of risks and vulnerabilities to corruption has been made and tools to prevent corruption (risk registrar, working procedures, employees' surveys assessing the knowledge of anti-corruption measures, declaration of gifts, wealth and interests' statements) are in place.



CHAPTER 2

ORGANISATION PRESENTATION

Overview

Aquatim SA was established on grounds of the Governmental Emergency Order no. 30/1997 and Law no. 31/1990 republished, after the reorganization of the Autonomous "Regia" Aquatim, under the authority of the local administration whose representative bodies are shareholders of the new company, at the same with the extension of the services in the towns of Deta and Jimbolia, in 2007. This administrative measure was approved by the local authorities in order to establish the Regional Operating Company (ROC) for water supply and wastewater collection, to cope with the national strategy in line with the recommendations of the European Union. These refer to the organization of the public water utility services in Romania in an effective manner, by establishing regional operating companies on river basins, able to provide good quality services and to implement projects financed from European funds.

Starting with 2010, based on the Contract for the delegation of the management of public water supply and sewerage, Aquatim has taken over the operation of the water utility services in another 40 administrative units, establishing subsidiaries in Buziaș, Deta, Făget, Jimbolia and Sânnicolau Mare. The contract for the delegation of the management of public water supply and sewerage services, valid for the entire area of supply, was concluded with the association of administrative units from the county, namely the Intercommunity Development Association (IDA) Water and Sewerage Timis, on grounds of Law no. 51/2006. The eligibility criteria necessary to access the Sectoral Operational Program (SOP) Environment financing, part of EU Cohesion Fund, were thus met.

The extension of the area of supply to other regional administrative subdivisions went further on after 2010. However, as compared to the above-mentioned urban centers, the new localities brought along less consumers and lower sales figures.

The ROC's activities consisting in the provision of safe drinking water and sanitation, have a strong social and environmental impact.

Certifications, licences

As a public utility company, Aquatim's performance is subject to regulatory provisions and constant monitoring by the National Regulatory Authority for Public Utility Community Services. The company was granted by the national regulator a first-class operating license for the public water supply and sewerage services valid through 2026. Throughout 2024, the key performance indicators were monitored and periodically reported to the national regulator to maintain the existing license that allows the operator to provide the public utility service in the specified area.

The company has implemented an integrated management system, quality environment and health and occupational safety, certified by the Romanian Society for Quality Assurance in accordance with the provisions of the ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and ISO 45001 reference standards. Internal and external audits are performed regularly. In 2024, the integrated management system was recertified.

Personnel and management team

At the end of 2024, the company had 1,001 employees. The organizational structure with its main divisions and subdivisions is published on the company's website, at the page dedicated to information of public interest.

Ilie Vlaicu	General Director
Marioara Călțun	Economic Director
Marian Eperieș	Production Director
Valentin Laichici	Operations Director
Gheorghe Stînean	Technical Director

Board of Directors:

Chairperson: **Sorin Gheorghe Șipoș**

Members: **Iancu Canea, Alina Gabriela Dumitrel, Aurelian Remus Novac, Carmen Nicoleta Popescu, Petru Marin Ștefea, Cătălin Tiuch, Ilie Vlaicu, Andrei Mircea Zorilă.**

Quality, Environment, Health and Occupational Safety Policy

Our organization is committed to continuously improve its performance as a provider of water and sewerage services by controlling the impact of its activities, cutting down the negative impact on the environment, maintaining the quality of its services and by improving its health and occupational safety conditions, ensuring a safe environment for its employees and activities.

We provide high quality services without overusing the limited natural resources, and without damaging the environment, the safety and health of our employees and stakeholders.

To this end, we are committed, at all organisational levels, to achieve the following:

- ensure high quality services, in order to constantly satisfy the needs and expectations of each customer;
- build on customer satisfaction, while considering the risks and opportunities associated with the context and objectives of the organization;
- understand the needs and expectations of stakeholders;
- direct our efforts to integrate into the area of supply the administrative divisions that have just entered it, plan and organize the transfer of knowledge and best practices to the new structures;
- ensure the development of the infrastructure throughout the area of supply;
- keep the environment safe and clean, upgrade technology, where possible, prevent and control pollution, manage resources, materials and waste in a sustainable manner;
- ensure safety and health at all workplaces, minimize or eliminate risks for all our personnel, contractors and visitors;
- provide all necessary resources and organize responsibilities for the integrated management system;
- ensure compliance with the rules and regulations in force, with other existing provisions standard regulations and other legal requirements applicable to our line of business or related to the environment and the associated occupational health and safety issues;
- assess, on a regular basis, the management policy, objectives and programs, in order to keep up with our goals and make the necessary adjustments;
- make sure that this policy is documented, implemented, maintained and communicated to all personnel, and available to the public and all interested parties;
- support our own employees in their professional development and knowledge of their individual occupational health and safety obligations, by training programs and awareness campaigns;
- encourage personnel to contribute to the protection of the environment.

To comply with these commitments, we, the management of Aquatim, have decided to implement, maintain and continuously improve the integrated management system quality, environment, health and occupational safety, adequate to our line of business and the purpose of our organization. The integrated management system was designed to fit the nature and dimensions of our activities' environmental impact and the nature and level of the occupational health and safety risks.

The documents of the integrated management system were developed to support this policy and comply with the provisions of ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and ISO 45001 standard specifications.

Services

Aquatim provides public utility services, water supply and waste water collection, and the tariffs for these services are the same in all localities throughout its area of operation.

As of January 1, 2025, the tariffs are 8.40 lei/cubic meter for drinking water and 8.57 lei/cubic meter for wastewater (around 1.7 euro/cubic meter), VAT included.

According to the tax legislation in force (Law no. 175/2018), the VAT rate applicable for drinking water and sewerage services is 9%. The tariffs for water supply and sewerage services are in accordance with the annual tariff evolution plan for the period 2024-2029, approved by the Intercommunal Development Association Water-Sewerage Timiș in 2024 and endorsed by the National Regulatory Authority for Community Utility Services.

Upon request, the company can also provide water quality tests, meter verification, and other additional services detailed on the company's website.

Area of supply and population served

The company's activity is coordinated from Timișoara, and the operation in the region is organized through the five subsidiaries in Buziaș, Deta, Făget, Jimbolia and Sânnicolau Mare. The operating area comprises (as at 31.12.2024) 163 localities, including one municipality and eight cities. In the year 2024, the villages of Săceni, Dragoiești, Uliuc, Unip, Icloda, Bătești and Begheiu Mic were included in the area of supply.

The addresses and contact details of the main office and the subsidiaries are available on the company's website, in the dedicated section. The population in the area of delegation is 584,944 inhabitants, of which 95.61% benefit from centralized water supply services and 71.9% from sewerage services. In Timișoara, 99.99% of the population is connected to the water and sewerage networks.

Infrastructure: water and wastewater

Aquatim operates 310 water wells, 42 drinking treatment plants and 25 chlorination plants, 2,648 km of distribution network and 98,804 connections to the supply networks, 95.61% of which are metered. The wastewater infrastructure comprises 1,603 km of wastewater collection systems, 55,022 connections to the sewers, 280 wastewater pumping stations and 28 wastewater treatment plants.

Aquatim has consistently upgraded the water and wastewater treatment plants in Timișoara, where over 80% of the processes are now automatically controlled. The recently built or rehabilitated treatment plants have been equipped with SCADA industrial instrumentation systems. The treatment plants and pumping stations are monitored from a central command unit, with remote control of the operations. All these systems were designed to allow future integration into two main SCADA regional centers, for the control of water, respectively wastewater treatment plants.

The Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) from Timișoara was fully rehabilitated in 2012, through an EU funded project, in amount of 30 million Euros. The WWTP is designed for 440,000 equivalent inhabitants and a daily capacity of 2,400 l/s (average), respectively maximum 3,000 l/s. Seven new WWTPs and three water treatment plants were built by Aquatim in 12 localities in the county, funded from the Sectoral Operational Program Environment, implemented during the period of 2007-2013.

The water supply and wastewater collection networks of Timișoara are digitally mapped. The GIS system, consisting of the regularly updated digital data sets has been a valuable tool in the day-to-day work of the company's specialists over the past decade. In Timișoara, 730 km of water supply network and 702 km of sewerage network are digitally mapped.

The company extended the digitization of the infrastructure to reach 96 localities in its area of supply, at the end of 2024. The GIS is consistently updated, as new localities and assets are included in the area of supply, to cover as accurately as possible the infrastructure in operation.

The company performs regular maintenance to the networks, with preventive programs, such as pipe flushing, video sewer inspections and remediation works for pipe bursts etc. Key figures are presented as follows to summarize the maintenance programs in 2024.

Maintenance works, Timisoara:

- corrective maintenance of the water distribution network: over 900 remediation works, of which 90.60% were completed in less than 24 hrs.;
- corrective maintenance of the sewerage system: over 7,700 remediation works, of which 91.58% completed in less than 24 hrs., over 6,600 sewer blockages fixed, of which 95.74% completed in less than 24 hrs.;
- preventive maintenance of the sewerage networks: 25 km pipes visually inspected, 24.5 km pipes inspected with CCTV equipment, around 1,900 storm drain inlets cleaned;
- handed over in 2024: 1,641 new water supply connections and 1,365 new sewerage connections.

Maintenance works, subsidiaries:

- corrective maintenance of the water distribution network: 1,601 repair works, of which 93.43% were completed in less than 24 hrs.;
- corrective maintenance wastewater networks: 406 sewer repair works;
- preventive and corrective maintenance programs performed by contractors: 246 repairs and 539 preventive works (water supply); 139 repair and 509 preventive works (sewerage);
- internal maintenance: 2,271 maintenance operations to electrical installations, water pipes etc.



CHAPTER 3

FINANCIAL ASPECTS

The financial and accounting records of the company are managed according to the applicable regulations in force, in line with the European directives.

Summary of the Balance Sheet 2024

The balance sheet for the financial year ended at 31.12.2024 observes the format and contents of the annual financial statements, accounting principles and auditing rules, as well as all specific requirements for the preparation, approval, auditing and publication of such statements. The main elements presented in the 2024 annual statement are given as follows.

Total Fixed Assets of which:	1,271,069,302
Intangible Assets	11,118,957
Tangible Assets	1,259,660,444
Financial Assets	289,900
Total Circulating Assets	584,765.5
Liabilities of which:	181,676.,040
Current Liabilities, not exceeding 1 year	102,876,163
Non-current Liabilities, exceeding 1 year	78,799,876
Subscribed and paid share capital	85,193,100
Total Reserves	210,002,197
Retained Earnings	47,013,187
Own Capital	406,176,819

Summary of the Profit and Loss Account 2024

The profit and loss account, according to Order 1802/2014 with subsequent revisions, reflects the outcome of the business activities during the aforesaid accounting period, in terms of the reported income and expenses, for both operating and financial activities. The main indicators are given as follows:

Operating Revenues	315,239,733
Operating Expenses	259,892,389
Operating Income	55,347,344
Financial Revenues	5,071,262
Financial Expenses	4,991,360
Financial Income	79,902
Total Revenues	320,310,995
Total Expenses	264,883,749
Gross Income	55,427,246
Tax on Income	8,414,059
Net Income	47,013,187



CHAPTER 4

ENVIRONMENT

Our raw material, water

Water, an essential resource for life, is the key element from which originate the company's activities and the its sustainability and environmental protection strategies.

Aquatim extracts water from ground and surface sources. Timișoara has water from two sources, as approximately 75%-80% of it comes from the Bega canal, and the rest from deep wells located to the east, southeast, and west of the city. The water pumped by the Bega Plant (surface source) and by the Urseni Plant (ground sources) mix in the city's distribution pipes. By supplying water from two sources, the necessary amount can be ensured at all times. The amount supplied from surface sources is higher in order to preserve the aquifers, the ground water resources. Throughout the area of supply, raw water is mainly extracted from wells.

In relation to the water resources, the company complies with the regulations and its own policy. The company focuses on aspects that have an impact on the quality and quantity of water resources throughout the technological process, from source to tap, and also on returning treated wastewater to the natural cycle. Details about the actions taken to prevent pollution of water sources and sewage systems, to improve water consumption efficiency, and to reduce losses are given as follows.

The treatment plants, the wells, and the surface water catchment areas are provided with sanitary protection zones, raw and treated water flows are monitored in terms of quantity and quality, and plans to prevent accidental pollution are in place.

In Timișoara, a long-term local program to prevent sewer pollution is in place. It is led by several institutional actors with responsibilities in the environmental domain. The program consists in the monitoring of sewage discharges from non-domestic customers through regular sampling and testing, on a monthly or quarterly basis. In 2024, 56 operators were monitored. 43 of these failed to comply with the limits allowed by law (Regulation NTPA-002/2002 on wastewater discharges), for which 290 notifications were sent and 112 penalties were applied.

To prevent and reduce water losses in treatment plants and in the supply, transport, and distribution networks, there is ongoing maintenance, inspection, and detection, preventive maintenance programs, investment plans for upgrade, rehabilitation, installation of automatic monitoring systems and process digitization.

The district metered areas, namely defined zones where water consumption is closely monitored through meters, represent an innovative solution that help utilities identify potential leaks and other water losses much faster. The solution is currently implemented in Timișoara where a pilot area with automatic monitoring is operational since 2020, covering several neighborhoods, to be extended throughout the entire city. The investment amounts to 13.5 million lei and will be paid by the company. In 2024, the project documentation was in preparation, and works are expected to start in the first part of 2025.

8,000 smart meters with digital interface have been installed in Timișoara since 2023. These are equipped with data loggers and communication modules that allow hourly readings and daily data transmission to the company's IT network terminals, rapid detection of above-average consumption or attempts to manipulate the mechanism.

Sustainable regional development: large investment projects

The main investment program in water utilities, currently implemented by Aquatim with European funds, with a total value of 239,434,180 Euro, will bring significant improvements for the population and the environment in Timiș County. The *Regional Project for the development of water and wastewater infrastructure in Timiș County, 2014-2020 - phase II*, is being implemented through the Sustainable Development Program (SDP) and carries on the works started in the previous programming period (phase I) through the Large Infrastructure Operational Program.

Beyond the value and relevance of these works for consumers comfort and the economic development of the region, it is worth mentioning an issue of crucial importance. Without the European grants, the necessary investments could only be made by increasing tariffs by 4-5 times. The large-scale investments of the regional operating company currently represent 500% of its turnover, compared to an international standard rate of 30-100%. The use of EU-funding correlated with the cost recover plans by increased efficiency and revenues proved to be a financial solution validated in practice over the last 20 years.

In 2024, the ongoing contracts had a total progress of 70% for this stage and a total progress of 64% for the regional project. Last year, works worth over 300 million lei were carried out within the PDD project, with the completion of the following objectives:

- 51.6 km of water supply networks (distribution pipes, transport pipes, water mains);
- 90.26 km of sewerage networks (sewer pipes, discharge pipes) and 11 wastewater pumping stations;
- two water utilities (Sânandrei and Carani);
- one wastewater treatment plant (Belinț-Chizătău);
- six drinking water treatment plants (Hitiaș, Liebling, Mașloc, Giulvăz, Sacoșu Turcesc, Tormac);
- technical assistance services during the project implementation period.

Among the SDP investments for Timișoara, we mention:

- Design and construction of a sludge dryer and sludge energy recovery system at the wastewater treatment plant in Timișoara (detailed project in the Energy section of this report);
- Design and construction of the automatic process monitoring and control system (SCADA) for the localities of Timișoara, Buziaș, Deta, Făget, Jimbolia, and Sânnicolau Mare;
- Upgrade of water and sewerage networks in Timișoara, with a summary at the end of 2024, as follows:
 - works completed and accepted on 75 streets out of a total of 92 as provided for in the contracts;
 - works in progress on 17 streets;
 - over 200 million lei from European funds;
 - over 40 km of rehabilitated water networks;
 - over 20 km of rehabilitated sewerage networks.

At the end of last year, the three regional SCADA dispatch centers (for automatic control of the water, wastewater processes and a mainstream unit), located in Timișoara, were completed, including the data connections between them. The rehabilitation of the process control systems at the Bega and Urseni treatment plants was in progress. Most of the panels will be replaced and new monitoring and control systems will be installed. After the process control of the treatment plants in Timișoara is completed, the dispatch centers will take over all operational assets throughout the area of supply, for which works will also be carried out to integrate them in the central system.

When it comes to the rehabilitation of the networks, we have in mind a long-term impact. The most important improvement that customers notice in the rehabilitated networks is the pressure at the taps. Steel pipes, over 40 years old and often clogged, were replaced with new, larger-diameter pipes made of ductile iron and HDPE, which resulted in significant improvements in the water quality, and also in the pressure and flow.

Concrete sewer pipes were replaced with new pipes made of modern materials. Part of the work was carried out using a “no-dig” technique, which consists of inserting a material into the old pipe that forms a new pipe



inside the damaged one. Thus, no excavation is necessary to replace the pipe. Such interventions were carried out in three populated residential areas in Timisoara.

Last but not least, the modernization of the Bega Treatment Plant in Timișoara, also with European SDP funding, includes the execution of three important objectives: lamella clarifiers, an ozone oxidation station, and a new filtration station. Four pre-ozonation generators, two post-ozonation generators, eight stainless steel basins with a capacity of 100 cubic meters for the reaction system, and an automatic monitoring and control system are planned. At the end of 2024, progress on the ozonation station was 85% complete in terms of mechanical work, 100% complete in terms of civil works, and 78% complete in terms of electrical and automation work. The new filtration station was very close to completion, with 98.8% of the work completed.

The upgrade of the Hitiaș treatment plant was one of the important projects in the county completed in 2024. The hydraulic and mechanical installations in the filter gallery were replaced, electric valves were installed to control the filtration and backwashing processes, filters were rehabilitated, electrical and automation works were carried out, and all the conduits for raw, filtered, and drinking water were replaced, including those in the process lines used for backwashing filters, sludge, and for reactants.

Another important investment program carried out by Aquatim, aimed to improving the environment and the quality of services provided, is financed through the Romania's National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP), and has a total value of over 12 million lei, excluding VAT.

Aquatim is currently implementing two projects financed through the NRRP, namely the *Extension of water and sewerage networks in agglomerations with more than 2,000 equivalent inhabitants in Timiș County* and the *extension of the sewerage network on Calea Șagului, stage III-A, section between Calea Chișodei and the shopping center roundabout - Timișoara*. In 2024, all five works contracts related to the two aforesaid projects were signed and launched, with works ongoing at the end of the year.

In addition to the regional investment program, the water company is supporting the rehabilitation and upgrade of the water and sewerage infrastructure from its own funds.

Last year, works worth approximately 8 million lei were completed for pipes rehabilitation, relocation of manholes, optimizations, etc., including:

- rehabilitation of the water network and water connections in Cenei, 1.35 million lei,
- rehabilitation of the water network and water connections in Voiteg, over 1 million lei,
- extension of water networks and connections in Șemlacul Mare, Șemlacu Mic, Percosova, Butin, 2.3 million lei;
- construction of public drinking water fountains in Timișoara, approximately 100,000 lei.

At the end of the year, works worth 11.5 million lei were in progress, the most important of which is the upgrade of the Bega treatment plant, the main drinking water source for the people of Timișoara, including the replacement of pipes sections and connecting conduits for reservoirs, at a total cost of 10.6 million lei. In 2024, works worth 23.2 million lei were underway for systematization, process optimization, repairs, new construction, rehabilitation, and extension of water and sewerage networks, etc.

Energy

The future belongs to renewable, clean, green energy resources, and Aquatim has sought the best solutions for its needs. To this end, it has identified funding opportunities from European projects for investments designed to reduce environmental impact while providing the energy needed for optimal operation. By innovating and optimizing existing processes, Aquatim aims to reduce consumption from conventional sources and move towards the use of renewable energies.

Circular economy at the Wastewater Treatment Plant in Timișoara

An innovative project of great importance, started in 2022, is underway at the Wastewater Treatment Plant in Timișoara. It involves a system of energy recovery from the sewage sludge generated throughout the entire area of supply, a first in Romania. The plant will generate thermal energy, used to dry sludge and heat technological spaces, and will lead to a reduction in carbon dioxide and NOx emissions resulting from the transport and disposal of sludge at landfills or incinerators.

The plant will convert the organic matter in the sludge into synthesis gas, oil, and inert material. The energy resulting from the combustion of sludge is utilized in two stages in the plant's processes: as thermal energy for drying (dehydrating) the sludge and for producing electricity for heating the technological spaces.

The amount of sludge that can be processed is more than 4 tons per hour, i.e. about 100 tons per day (sludge with a content of 28% dry substance). At the end of the process, a small amount of ash results, which is not considered hazardous waste and can be used in the construction materials industry.

It is estimated that the sludge recovery system will consume about 2,300,000 kW/year, but will produce 2,400,000 kW/year, so the amount of electricity produced will cover the amount of energy consumed. The system will operate without additional electricity from the grid.

With a value of more than 10 million euros, the project is carried out with European funds (LIOP), within the regional program for the development of water and wastewater infrastructure. The system is 55.21% complete. The civil works and utilities have been completed. The delivery of technological equipment is in progress; installation and technological tests will follow.



Green energy for water

The use of renewable, clean, sustainable resources is the solution for limiting climate change and reducing dependence on fossil fuels—a topic on the agenda of the Timiș water company.

Water and wastewater treatment are high energy consuming processes, which is why Aquatim has consistently looked up for solutions to optimize consumption and identify alternative energy sources. Since 2024, the Urseni treatment plant and the Timișoara purification plant have been powered by additional, solar energy. Two photovoltaic power plants, of 651 KWp (Urseni water treatment plant) and of 1 MWp (WWTP), have been producing electricity from renewable sources, used entirely for their own demand, since the first day of 2024.



The photovoltaic plant at the WWTP produced last year 1.43 GWh and generated a reduction of 650 tons of carbon emissions, equivalent to planting 890 trees, while the one at the treatment plant Urseni produced 305 MWh.

The power plant at the Urseni treatment plant is now operating at less than 50% of its installed capacity, with additional work underway to supply the additional power generated during peak production in the national system.

The project, worth a total of approximately 12 million lei, aims to reduce the impact on the environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but also by reducing the amount of electricity taken from the national energy system.

Aquatim's first solar energy initiative dates back to 2012, when a small roof-top photovoltaic plant was installed at the main office premises in central area of Timișoara, for the building's local consumption. The output of this plant in 2024 was 2,251 kWh.

Last but not least, four electric cars were purchased and two charging stations were installed.

Optimizing energy consumption at treatment plants

Pumping, the most energy-consuming phase of our operations, is permanently in the attention of Aquatim's specialists, in order to identify the potential for energy savings and increase the efficiency and reliability of the equipment used. The results are seen in a consistent series of successful projects and more than 20 years of application of innovative process control technologies that have led to considerable reductions in energy consumption.

Applied research

The Research & Development Department is focused on applied research, to improve the quality of drinking water distributed to consumers.

In 2024, the research team has monitored water treatment plants in several localities from the subsidiaries of the company and carried on studies to determine the efficiency of reactants used for the treatment process at the Bega treatment plant for periods with higher turbidity. At the WWTP in Timișoara, a project is underway that uses a laboratory stand to investigate sewage sludges and similar sludges generated in urban areas, with the aim of providing calculation parameters for the design of a biogas production and energy recovery facility.

Emissions, waste, green areas

In the company's area of supply, polluting emissions can be generated from the following activities: methane gas thermal power plants, fuel management, wastewater treatment processes (screens, open tanks, sludge dewatering, etc.).

Thermal power plants do not have a negative impact on the air, given the nature of the fuel used to produce heat (methane gas) with the lowest level of pollutants, low consumption, and operating period (approx. 5 months/year). Thermal power plants are checked annually with regard to their air emissions.

Inside the wastewater treatment plants, an unpleasant odor may occasionally occur as a result of anaerobic digestion. To reduce the odor, trees have been planted at the property boundary. In 2025, a tree planting campaign is underway at the boundary of the WWTP in Timișoara.

The company vehicles fleet uses widely available fuels, diesel and gasoline. The fleet is mixed, comprising cars, vans, and special utility vehicles, a total of 283 vehicles. Over 55% of the vehicles in the fleet are Euro 6, 25% are Euro 5, and 20% are Euro 4 and 3.

The process water used in the treatment plants for the regular equipment flushing and backwashing (filters, clarifiers) is evacuated only after sludge separation, to avoid clogging in the sewerage system or polluting nearby water sources. The discharge and treatment of backwash water are fully controlled processes, computer monitored.

Since 2010, the company has implemented separate collection of waste, according to current regulations. Waste is collected efficiently within the company, at each facility. The generated waste is temporarily stored in specially designated areas. Small waste is placed in 120 litre containers for selective collection, marked and coded, and large waste is placed in confined spaces on covered concrete platforms, marked and coded. Paper, cardboard, plastic, metal and glass are collected separately. There are colored and marked bins for each of these recyclables: blue for paper, yellow for metal and plastic, green for glass. Household waste and waste coming from production activities is monitored monthly at each facility. Contracts are concluded with the local waste management operators, as well as with specialized operators for the collection, neutralization, reuse and disposal of all types of waste.

In 2024, approximately 1.89 tons of paper/cardboard, 0.32 tons of PET and 72.4 tons of rust iron were recycled. The amount of household waste discharged was about 217.3 tons.



We're putting the used cooking oil in its place!

Aquatim has been running for several years the awareness campaign Sewerage is not a garbage bin. Distribution of leaflets and brochures, Facebook posts with updates and relevant snapshots from sewer maintenance, contributions to media articles, educational games for children, aim altogether at informing and educating the public on this main environmental responsibility associated with the urban water systems.

Also targeted by this campaign is the disposal of the used cooking oil, whose presence in the wastewater makes the treatment process more difficult and endangers the proper operation of the sewerage network. Therefore, the water company engaged to support actively all local initiatives for the collection of cooking oil. Recently, the company joined hands with OilRight, an eco-inclusive social business in Timisoara, which proposes a clean alternative to reuse cooking oil to produce decorative candles. Several workshops were organized, within the educational program offered to the Water Museum visitors. Also, community awareness campaigns were run in partnership or independently. Leaflets, brochures and candle making kits were distributed and content was developed and published on social media and websites.



AQUATIM

**Știi că...**

Colectând adecvat uleiul uzat,
salvezi milioane de litri de apă
potabilă de la poluare?



CHAPTER 5

SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

Customers

The company aims to ensure the provision of the public utility services professionally and promptly, and in accordance with the best practices applicable in the field, to be a trusted partner, advisor and problem-solver for its customers, a goal pursued throughout its performance, including the water quality, distribution pressure and the interaction with customers.

Safe water, at the tap

Drinking water quality is a crucial issue for the water supplier. Aquatim carefully monitors the water quality to ensure provision of safe water to all consumers. There are three levels of control:

- in the treatment plants, through process instrumentation;
- in laboratories, by testing 35 quality parameters of the treated water;
- throughout the distribution networks, by regularly testing samples collected from several checkpoints, as established in agreement with the Timiș Public Health Directorate.

In 2024, the quality control laboratory tested 6,478 water and wastewater samples and performed 104,351 tests, of which 87,208 for physical and chemical parameters and 17,143 for microbiological parameters.

Aquatim's quality control laboratory is registered in the Registrar of drinking water quality monitoring laboratories of the Ministry of Health and it is certified by the Romanian Certification Association, in accordance with SR EN ISO/IEC 17025 standard for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories. In 2024, the laboratory participated in interlaboratory comparison schemes, for drinking and surface water testing of 43 physical, chemical and microbiological parameters.

The results of the monitoring program in the distribution networks throughout the area of supply are published periodically on the company's website homepage. The results of the water quality monitoring can be visualised on an interactive map. For each sampling point, historical testing data are available. Information on the water quality in Timisoara, regularly updated by Aquatim, is integrated on the municipality's open data portal. For other localities in the area of supply, this information is sent directly to each administrative- unit. Data is updated monthly according to the sampling frequency established by the operational monitoring program approved by the health authorities.

Call center and front desk customer service

To improve the management of customer relations, the company has provided facilities devoted to their specific needs, as follows:

- dedicated customer portal, My Account, for online payments and sending meter readings;
- call-center/dispatch service phone line, available 24/7, at the number 0356914;
- customers dedicated contact e-mail address: clienti@aquatim.ro;
- regular updates on the website providing real-time, accurate information on our activities;
- digital tools available on website to engage easily with the company (submit complaints, apply online for permits, fill in contract forms, schedule meetings).

The front desk customer office in Timișoara is a modern and welcoming space, where guests feel safe and comfortable and the staff does its best to ensure short waiting times.

We present some key figures from the customer relations activity:

- call-center operators handle around 4,000 complaints/requests monthly;
- the customer front desk office receives around 40 customers daily;
- around 450 written complaints received on the customer dedicated contact e-mail are solved on a monthly basis.

Digital solutions for customer support

The company's website www.aquatim.ro, launched in 2021, was designed so that to provide easy and quick access of the visitors to any relevant information and allow customers to download and upload support documentation for contracts and permits.

In 2024 Aquatim launched an update version of the *MyAquatim* mobile app, available for Android and iOS systems. It can be downloaded from Google Play and the App Store and is intended for all consumers, whether or not they have a utility supply contract. The difference mainly concerns apartment buildings, where all tenants are consumers, but the contract based relationship with the service provider is with the owners' or tenants' association.

To benefit from the app's features, users must sign up with a username, email address and password. The app integrates data from the My Account portal, so customers who have a contract with Aquatim can easily view and pay bills from their mobile devices, keep track of payments, submit meter readings, and track consumption history. The app also allows them to manage multiple contracts and their associated locations.

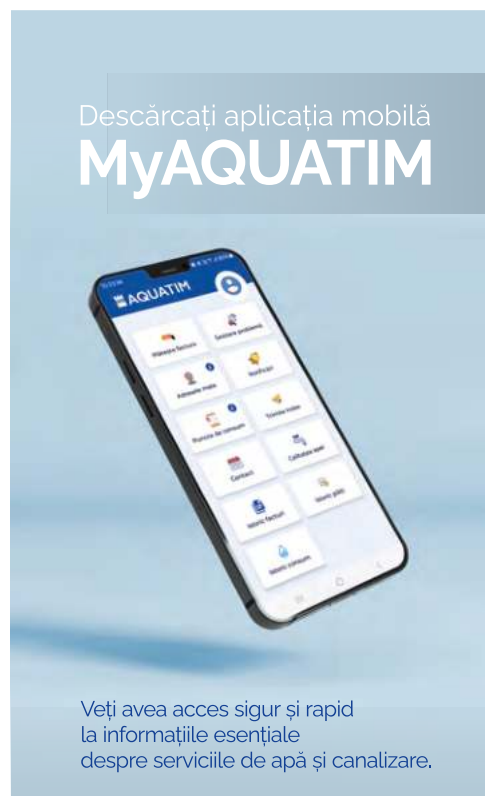
The novelty introduced by *MyAquatim* compared to other apps in the same family is that users can set multiple addresses for which they want to receive automatic notifications when services are interrupted. This way, every consumer gets info, directly and quickly, about breakdowns or planned work on the water supply networks. Consumers can also check out the water quality in their area, send a complaint, and schedule a meeting.

MyAquatim app meets the need for quick, easy to get information and offers advantages to all categories of customers—those who have a contract with Aquatim and want to manage their account securely and efficiently, as well as those who live in condominiums and want to be informed about the company's activities in their area of interest.

Information about services and activity is regularly updated on the company's website and Facebook page. Aquatim representatives liaise with customers on Facebook and Google-based platforms, providing assistance. The media remains one of the main communication channels, as the company's press releases are taken over by around 35 entities, including written and online publications, radio and TV stations

We provide a diversified range of payment methods. Outside company's cash points and *My Account* portal, there are several other options to pay the water bill, commission free, such as bank ATMs and internet banking, post offices and post workers, retail shops and merchant partners to payment processing operators, details are provided on the dedicated pages of the website.

Aquatim continues to recommend to its customers to activate the "invoice by e-mail" option, implemented as early as 2020, in order to avoid possible inconveniences caused by lost mail and to encourage a more environmentally responsible behaviour. The activation of this option is easy and can be made through the customer dedicated portal.



Employees

The most important resource of our organization is the human one, and through all its actions, the company remains close to every employee, firmly believing that together we can be stronger, more determined, and more focused on our professional and personal goals.

Training programs

The organisation develops annual professional training plans and offers access to free training courses. The employees are supported in their professional development through theoretical and practical training programs in line with their activities and professional interests. The company definitely invested more in skills and capacity development last year, as the number of training hours per employee doubled from 71.37 in 2023 to 146.48 in 2024.

Aquatim's employees benefit from priority access to the training programs offered by the Aquadematica Foundation, where the utility company is a founding member.

Internal training and awareness programs aim to promote understanding of individual obligations regarding occupational health and safety, the company's policies and objectives. Throughout the year, all employees were trained on the collective labor agreement and internal regulations, quality, environmental, and occupational health and safety policies, how to apply and comply with work procedures, risk factors, and Aquatim S.A.'s code of ethical conduct.

Healthier, through education and awareness

The organisation's concern for the wellness of its employees includes, beside the regular checkups, long-term programs designed to raise awareness on healthcare issues and the importance of prevention. One such initiative, started by the organisation's medical unit in 2018 is the awareness campaign called Health Boost Station, for which a summary of the 2024 activities is presented as follows.

A major benefit maintained in 2024 is the corporate healthcare package consisting in a substantial set of medical services paid by the company to a private clinic in Timisoara, for all its employees. This is an extra-salary benefit intended to facilitate easy access to specialised and diverse medical services, using state-of-the-art equipment. Last but not least, using these services means that where people would feel comfortable and confident as patients, in a pleasant environment.

Projects and actions:

- Participation in the European project SPRINGS (*Supporting Policy Regulations and Interventions to Negate aggravated Global diarrheal disease due to future climate Shocks*) – through which Aquatim can improve the activity of its Water Quality Control Laboratory;
- 112 Emergency Call Seminar in March, with special guests from the National Emergency Communications Service and the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations – for information and training on emergency calls;
- Menopause Seminar in June, featuring guest Dr. Florina Todoruț, a primary gynecology physician with over 24 years of experience and a special focus on women's health and quality of life;
- Carry over the initiative to install automated external defibrillators at company premises, starting with the installation of an unit at the main office building. Dr. Nica attended a first aid and AED training course;
- Launch of a physical activity program to improve mobility, flexibility, posture, and overall health. The program has a 2 times per week frequency and is developed by an employee with expertise in physical training, kinetotherapy and recovery.

During heatwaves, Aquatim continued to support the community by installing “watering points”, such as tents and shaded areas provided with water dispensers, close to several company locations across town, available for employees, customers and passersby.

As far as occupational medicine is concerned, a detailed questionnaire with systematised questions for each apparatus/system of the body has been implemented from 2023, for each medical check-up. The initiative helps to better detect new diseases that have arisen since the previous check-up and thus to support employees in maintaining good health.

Aquatim has continuously recommended caution and observance to hygiene and prevention measures. Mask-wearing and self-isolation in case of respiratory infection remain valid and are recommended to control the spread of infectious diseases in the work environment

Communication and organisational culture

Organisational culture consists in a system of shared beliefs, values, attitudes and experiences that guide people's behaviour within the company and have a strong influence on its members. Every organisation develops and maintains its own unique culture. The formation and maintenance of the organisational culture is a process which requires sustained involvement, interaction and intense learning, communication, and collaboration efforts.

In our company, this culture contains organisation-wide values, emphasizing quality of service, respect, integrity, ethical and professional conduct, the philosophy guiding our corporate policy towards employees and customers, and the supportive organisational climate. Starting from human, personal and profound values and linking them with those of the organization, through ethics, principles, rules of conduct, transparency in action, collaboration and cooperation, Aquatim builds day by day an organizational climate that provides joy, devotion and involvement in our work.

Inter-human relations are based on communication more than simply transmitting/sending information, emails, decisions or ideas; we are talking about an inter-relationship, which requires collaboration, understanding, respect and honesty, trust -- as people, colleagues, managers, bosses. Trust brings into the equation the advantage of a three-dimensional structure of competence, transparency.

Here is a brief overview of the past year company's employee engagement activities:

- Special celebrations for employees with more than 40 years of service with the company in 2024, touching moments of great significance for those who celebrated their anniversary. Management representatives thanked them for their professional performance, loyalty and commitment to the organisation, presented them with certificates of appreciation and awards.
- The traditional early spring celebration for the ladies. Excitement, joy and smiles and special small gifts offered to the ladies, flowers and hand-crafted objects, made by a social inclusive NGO, Fundatia Pentru Voi, one of the many initiatives of social involvement and support to the local community.
- The fishing competition, now in its fifth edition, very popular among employees, engaged, as always, enthusiastic participants a large dose of fair play from competitors and supporters.
- The mini-football championship, a very popular and long-established in-house event that aims to promote a healthy lifestyle, sport, cooperation and respect for each other.
- The Day of the Employee - Aquatim's company day in July, when sincerely and beautifully enjoy together, our achievements, the presence of our colleagues and the close bond with them.
- The Christmas event, for the children of our „large” family, a moment that brings joy and delight to both children and parents, hosted in the magical setup of the Water Museum.

The willingness to support extra-professional actions that are attractive to employees is, on the one hand, an indicator of transparency in communication and collaboration and, on the other hand, an element of the organisational culture, gradually integrated by each of us in a collective behaviour and common interests. Recreational events focused on outdoor sports and physical activities (volleyball, badminton, foot-tennis, etc.) or more relaxed programs hosted by the Water Museum or the Aquapic Centre, all support and promote well-being, balance, motivation, social engagement, with the goal of maintaining a positive and healthy climate at work.



AquaȘtiri and Familia Aquatim

Aquatim has generally encouraged and supported the organisational communication beyond the formal channels. Such an example is AquaȘtiri, the company's publication with monthly issues which reflects and promotes the organisational values among employees and customers. Print editions have been published for 17 years, featuring detailed information about company's projects, community engagement, events and news within the international professional community. The corporate publication reaches all company's locations every month and is quite popular among the personnel. The publication's website, www.aquastiri.ro, is updated regularly, with 2-3 articles per week.

For a correct, complete, up to date information to our customers, we have provided regular podcasts on social media channels. The topics were concisely focused on technical issues, utility services, development plans. Our colleagues, each responsible for areas that concern consumers most, were invited to discuss their work. The podcasts listeners were therefore given live, extensive explanations about water quality, billing, EU funded infrastructure development projects, as well as the social and educational activities that Aquatim regularly carries out.

The series of interviews *FamiliaAquatim*, carried out since 2021, has naturally grew further, with new portraits of our employees, people who contribute, individually and in teams, to what represents, today, Romania's brand company in the field of water supply and sewerage. Interviews with them are included in a new book, entitled *Familia Aquatim* (Aquatim Family).

At the same time, Aquatim's presence in social media is a consistent one. Updates are published on the Facebook company page on a daily basis. They target specific information, but also topics with social impact, all meant to capture the attention of our customers. The campaign launched in 2021.

Ethics and Anti-Corruption: Alignment with the National Anti-Corruption Strategy

The ethical and professional behavior of our employees is the cornerstone of the organization's activity and success. Our reputation is directly linked to upholding the principles of integrity, and each employee is responsible for ensuring that Aquatim's name is synonymous with professionalism, ethics, and quality in service.

In line with the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NAS), Aquatim has made corruption prevention and control a top internal policy priority. Concrete measures include:

- Conducting a risk and vulnerability analysis related to corruption;
- Clearly defining responsibilities and structures involved in implementing anti-corruption measures;
- Adopting prevention tools such as a risk register, transparent and standardized procedures, employee knowledge evaluation surveys on anti-corruption mechanisms, declaration of received gifts, and asset and interest statements.

The company regularly evaluates the staff's knowledge of integrity and ethics standards, ensuring continuous awareness and training. In 2024, an internal survey involving over 400 employees (both management and



staff) achieved a 100% response rate, showing that most employees are aware of and apply anti-corruption rules, and understand conflict of interest and incompatibility regulations.

Best practices identified in implementing the NAS include promoting transparency and effective communication, maintaining high-quality standards, developing and implementing a Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct, and conducting training sessions, discussions, and continuous awareness campaigns.

Through these measures, the company reaffirms its commitment to integrity, responsibility, and professionalism, actively contributing to achieving the objectives of the NAS.

Education, culture and sustainability

As a responsible actor in the local community, Aquatim aims to develop and establish sustainable partnerships in the domains of culture and education. Together with the Aquatim Foundation, of which it is the sole founding member, Aquatim is consistently engaged in shaping a sustainable water wise lifestyle among children and young people. Key objectives align with the United Nations 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals, such as quality education, clean water and sanitation, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production and climate action. More specifically, the company works to build trust in the safety of tap water, encourage responsible water use respectively put a stop to water waste, prevent sewer pollution, protect local water sources and regional or local flora and fauna near bodies of water.

The activities developed target school groups and are based on informal education—learning through play and/or experiment. Children and young people are encouraged to approach STEAM disciplines as well as artistic and creative topics.

Since water continues to be a source of inspiration for people everywhere, Aquatim proposes a wider range of programs and cultural events—exhibitions, performances, concerts, film screenings, book launches, etc.—targeted at artistic communities, partners, tourists, and the communities neighboring the former water plants, now open to visitors.

Programs for school groups, children and young people

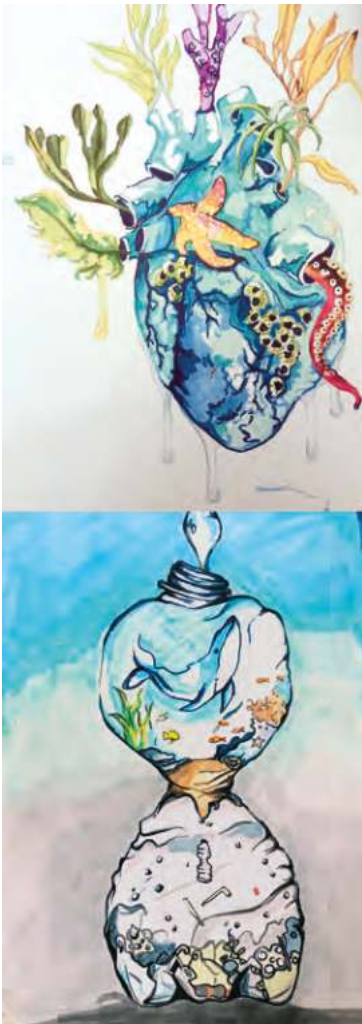
In 2024, the communications department team developed new educational programs for school groups based on original concepts while continuing the programs and partnerships launched in previous years. An overview of the activities and projects from 2024 is presented below.

- *The Water We Want* (TWWW), an international artistic creation contest for children and youth, now in its 5th edition, is a program of the Global Network of Water Museums under UNESCO patronage. Regionally, it is implemented by Aquatim as a network member.

The local edition TWWW 2025 featured 50 works (drawings, paintings, photographs, videos, and other media), over 60 students involved, 6 local finalists featured in the international digital exhibition, and **1st prize in the Other Media category for Romania, won by Mihai Casian Drăgoi** from the Technological High School “Dragomir Hurmuzescu” in Deva.

- *Sete de carte* (Thirst for Reading), a campaign to encourage reading and environmental education, at its 5th edition, continues as a collaboration of the Aquatim Foundation, Romanian Water Basinal Administration – Banat Region, and the bookstore Cărturești Timișoara. 6 workshops, attended by 150 primary school graders and teachers, and prizes consisting in 18 vouchers for books, value of 900 lei.





- *Apă cu Model* (Water Shaped Role Models), a successful new educational activity of 2024 for high school students, consisted of 4 meetings in March, May, September, and November, and targeted 11th and 12th grade students from Timișoara, Buziaș, Deta, Făget, Jimbolia, and Sânnicolau Mare.

The main goal is to offer young people life models, starting from the legacy of Stan Vidrighin, an engineer and a historical key figure in Timișoara's modern water infrastructure development. The format of the event allows interaction, in form of a dialogue between the special guest (role model) and a moderator, with a Q&A session with the audience, made of students and accompanying teachers.

Special guests at the four meetings, well-known personalities from the Timișoara community - Dr. Eng. Ilie Vlaicu, general manager of the water company, Dr. Șerban Negru, primary oncologist at the Oncology Center Oncohelp and president of the Oncohelp Association, priest Zaharia Pereș, provost of Timișoara and writer Robert Șerban, president of the Aquatim Foundation -, have transmitted to the young people, through their personal example, some healthy principles of life and have offered them landmarks in professional orientation and personal development. A short artistic moment performed by students of the "Ion Vidu" Art High School, partner in the project, punctuated each event.

- *Guardians of the Water*, a substantial educational program dedicated to World Water Day, 22 March, attracted more than 250 primary school pupils, pre-school children and teachers to the Water Museum. They participated in 25 workshops and diversified interactive activities: reading, movement, recycling, crafting, science and experiments, offered by Aquatim Foundation with the support of Klarwin Romania.

- The special programs for school groups enrolled in the *Green Week* and *School of Nature* national programs, meant two full weeks of guided tours and activities in April and October with over 3,000 visitors to the Water Museum and Aquapic Center. Students and teachers discovered the industrial water heritage sites, guided by facilitators including Aquatim staff, from various departments (communication, research, water and wastewater treatment plants), and technical university students, as volunteers.

- *AquaKids* and *AquaTeens*, equally environmental education campaigns and interactive mini-courses about water, successfully continued in 2024, involving hundreds of participating students in educational activities raising awareness to the importance of water as an essential resource, introducing them to the activity of a water company and training them to be responsible water users.

The activities took place mainly in schools in Timișoara, Buziaș, Deta, Deta, Făget, Jimbolia and Sânnicolau Mare, with content structured in several categories, such as the water cycle, states of matter, pollution, etc.. Bibi the Frog, the Aquakids mascot, is responsible for the fun and



joy and motivates children to actively participate in the course. They discuss how can contribute themselves, on a small scale, to using water wisely and reducing water pollution.

The *AquaTeens* mini-course, aimed at middle and high school students, has a special component for tenth graders, organized as a competition. The goal is to introduce high-school students to issues related to water and wastewater treatment, pollution, consumption, but also to capacitate them to work in teams, improve their communication, presentation and public engagement skills.

The final of the *AquaTeens 2024* competition took place in December, at the Water Museum in Timisoara and concluded the series of educational activities organized by Aquatim for students from the Timis County. The challenge of this year's edition was "Sewerage systems". Six teams entered in the competition and pitched in front of the jury and the audience, students and coordinators. The first place was won by the Banat National High School team, followed by the Dositei Obradovici Theoretical High School (second place) and the Western Technological High School (third place). A prize for originality went to the "Casa Verde" High School of Forestry and Agriculture team, while students from the "Emanuil Ungureanu" Technical College and the "Francesco Saverio Nitti" Economic College received jury mentions. The awards consisted of books, teaching materials and school supplies, donated by the Aquatim Foundation.

- For the first time, the locally most popular *Stiintescu&Friends Science Fair*, organized every year at the end of September by the Timisoara Community Foundation, took place at the Water Museum. More than 1,500 people attended – Stiintescu projects participants and beneficiaries, funders and partners of the grant program, friends, families and their supporters, visited the exhibition stands and joined the STEAM education activities facilitated by the students and mentors from Timiș and Arad counties, engaging in chemistry and physics experiments, 3D design and printing, robotics and programming, astronomy, theater performances etc.
- Recurring educational activities for school groups at the Water Museum and Aquapic Center continued to attract hundreds of children. During holiday periods, organized summer school or after-school groups replaced school classes, but children's engagement and enthusiasm was no less. Reading workshops, educational games such as clue hunts, quizzes, quizzes, knowledge checks, guided tours, all enjoyed the attention and appreciation of our visitors.



Revived industrial heritage, culture and art in alternative Spaces

Aquatim supports the revitalization and community repurposing of industrial heritage spaces and the preservation of water-related heritage. The company successfully introduced two decommissioned treatment plants into the regional cultural circuit: the Industrial Water Treatment Plant, turned into the Aquapic Educational Center in 2018, and the Urseni Water Treatment Plant, that became the Water Museum in 2023. Both places feature impressive Secession-style buildings from the early 20th century that were refurbished and opened to the public through urban regeneration and intervention projects and subsequently activated through cultural events and initiatives.

The Water Museum in Timisoara, at the same time a technical museum and a cultural center, is a space for interdisciplinary experimentation and creativity, a meeting point for history, science, engineering, innovation, and art. In 2024, the museum hosted events and cultural activities for the general public, targeting its regular visitors, nearby residents, artists and cultural operators, and academics.



Here is a highlight of the cultural events hosted by the Water Museum:

- *Noaptea De Poezie* (Poetry Night) – A national program held in 10 key cultural venues across 7 Romanian cities. The Timișoara edition brought together poets Șerban Foarță, Daniela Rațiu, Marcel Tolcea, and Costel Stancu, alongside musicians Ilie Stepan and Horea Crișovan, actor Romeo Ioan, and visual artist Keresztes Péter. The event was broadcast live by Radio România Timișoara and organized by Euro CulturArt Association in partnership with the Aquatim Foundation and funded by the National Cultural Fund Administration.
- Visual arts exhibitions: *Explorări Afective*, paintings by Ciprian Radovan, *Sânziene la OZN*, photography, decorative art, and traditional costumes, *Centralitate*, *Infinite*, *Univers*, a group painting exhibition, *Interethnic Art 2024*, collective works focused on cultural diversity.

Ciprian Radovan, a prominent figure in the Timișoara Neo-avangarda, is not only an artist but also a first-rate university professor at the Polytechnic of Timișoara and a researcher with numerous patents in electrochemistry. His exhibition in May was a tribute from the scientific and artistic community to its distinguished member, and included works donated by the author to the Aquatim Foundation.

The unique exhibition of folk costumes, decorative art and photography, *Sânziene la OZN* (Midsummer Fairies at the UFO), organized in June with the support of the Association for Culture and Tradition Asocult, celebrated folk art and traditions, values and our ancestral roots. Photographer Marcel Neag organized a photo session in the Water Museum with the help of a group of Aquatim employees. Adina Tîmplaru, Alina Maier, Andra Cralovicean, Camelia Marițescu, Crenguța Radosav, Crina Chirilă, Cristina Bădulescu, Cristina Borca, Diana Vid, Emilia Bordoș, Ioana Stan, Laura Cazan, Liliana Mariș, Maria Căltun, Mariana Pavlov and Karoly Mezei proudly and happily wearing the authentic folk costumes.



The photographs taken on this occasion were exhibited together with a valuable selection of folk costumes from the mountain and lowland regions of Banat, from Oltenia, Bucovina, Sibiu, Bistrița and Baia Mare. The costumes and decorative art objects, belonging to the Asocult collection in Voiteg, were carefully chosen by Carmen and Laura Cazan, owners of the collection.

The collective exhibition *Centrality, Infinity, Universe*, displayed works of the first year master students of the Faculty of Art and Design West University of Timisoara, Master Painting - Sources and Resources of the Image, resulting from research and artistic creation in the disciplines Alternative Investigations in Chromatology and Representation and Concept, taught by the curators. The paintings, made in acrylic and oil on canvas, represented the transposition of the imaginary essence corroborated with the themes and plastic problems subject of the research.

The exhibition *Interetnic Art 2024*, on display at the Water Museum in October, celebrated the work of children participating in the aforesaid project, implemented by Vivart Center for Art Therapy and Psychology. Secondary school graders and art therapy patients Andrei Bulat, Albert Troaca, Patricia Beres and Grațian Loiczli were the young creators who engaged in therapy activities, creative or sensorial workshops within the project, facilitated by the Vivart team experts, Mirela Navligu, Tina Maxim, Fulvia Deteșan and artist Ana Adam.

- Outstanding musical moments: *Classikid* and *Crossroad Music/Cosy Places* – educational concert programs organized by Asociația Scena Muzicală in partnership with the Aquatim Foundation, and funded by Timișoara Municipality Project Center.

The *Classikid* concert, performed by *Gentis Quartet* in August at the Water Museum, was one of the most appreciated events in the *Celebrate the City* program. It marked the association's first effort to introduce children to music and the emotions conveyed through live performances.

The *Crossroad Music* project, part of the *Cosy Places* initiative, featured an unconventional concert in the small amphitheater located in the Aquatim's Customer Relations Center building in Timisoara, inspired by the idea of bringing artistic moments outside traditional performance halls. Famous musical works were interpreted, ending with a beloved aria from *Phantom of the Opera* by Andrew Lloyd Webber.

• *Timișoara International Literature Festival (FILTM) – 13th Edition*, held between October 23–25, 2024, under the theme “Literature and Its New Allies”, was organized by the Aquatim Foundation with support from the Timiș County Council, Timiș County Center for Culture and Art (Tim Cultura 2024 program), and the Ministry of Culture.

FILTM brought both Romanian and international authors to Timișoara, who engaged in public readings and literary discussions with local audiences. Three evening events took place at the Timișoara Art Museum, complemented by over 15 side events in secondary schools and high schools, at the West University of Timișoara, Lugoj Municipal Library, and cultural centers in Sânnicolau Mare and Jimbolia. Through its goals and its implemented activities, the festival helped educate the public, grow new audiences, increase the region's cultural interest, and at the same time support the development of Timiș County's cultural tourism sector.

For a strong professional community

The regional water company initiated numerous actions, events, and projects aimed at the professional community — including seasoned experts, students, businesspeople and policymakers, focused on developing and improving skills in the water and environmental protection sectors.

International events in the water industry

From June 11-13, 2024, the Regional Water Forum “Danube-Eastern Europe”, known as EXPOAPA, hosted more than 90 exhibitors in Brasov, presenting innovative equipment and technologies and a consistent session of communications on technical and economic topics of the industry.

Aquatim has been actively involved in the organization and promotion of this key event organized by the Romanian Water Association (RWA), through stand participation, expert contributions to the seminars and knowledge transfer and promotion at local level, within the company and in the professional community.

The Forum brings together water industry professionals from Romania and abroad every year, with the clear



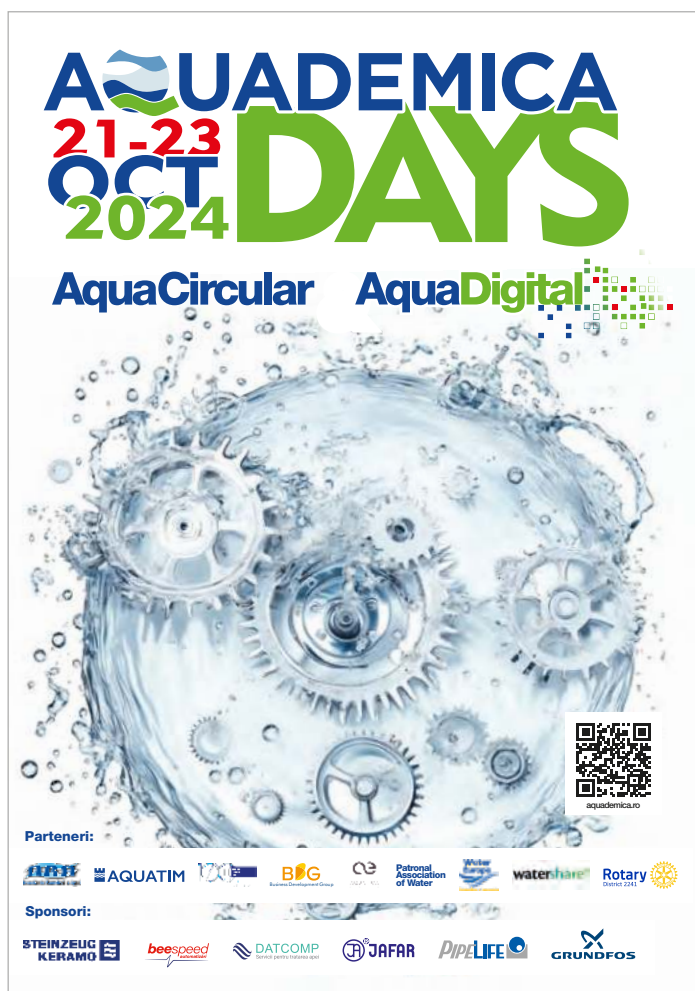
aim of promoting the sustainability and development of this vital sector. Throughout the event, RWA President, Ilie Vlaicu, highlighted key aspects of the Romanian water industry and ARA's role in this field.

The Aquadematica Foundation, whose founding members are Aquatim and the Wastewater Department of the Municipality of Munich, provides professional training programs for water industry specialists in Romania, with a practical focus and the contribution of lecturers with international experience. The proposed programs aim at developing and improving skills in the field of water and environmental protection. The Aquadematica conferences, organized since 2012, bring together every year specialists from the water industry and related fields, managers, international experts, researchers, academics and students, entrepreneurs and decision-makers from the authorities.

The foundation's main scientific event, *Aquademica Days*, took place on October 21-23, 2024, at the Conference Center of the Polytechnic University of Timisoara and included the already known sessions - *AQUACIRCULAR* and *AQUADIGITAL*.

As the circular economy and digitalization are the major challenges of today, they were jointly tackled in this event, built on awareness, communication and collaboration. The implementation of digital technologies in water systems management, innovations in water quality monitoring and control through IoT solutions, solutions for optimizing water and energy consumption, strategies for the transition to the circular economy in the water sector, successful projects and best practices were discussed.

The Aqua Cluster association, established in 2024, was launched and presented with this occasion. This initiative is dedicated to research, development and innovation in the water sector, facilitating collaboration between public and private entities, research centers and communities. The partners contributing to the event were: RWA, Aquatim, Munich Municipality Wastewater Department, Politehnica University of Timișoara, West University of Timișoara, University of Life Sciences "King Mihail", the Romanian Academy, Regional Water Basin Administration, Association Verde de Banat, Aquatica Experience, Business Development Group and Aquaspace.



AQUADEMICA
21-23
OCT
2024 **DAYS**

AquaCircular **AquaDigital**

Parteneri:

Sponsori:

STEINZEUG KERAMO, beespeed, DATCOMP, JAFAR, PIPELIFE, GRUNDFOS

Close to the academic environment

Locally, the collaboration between Aquatim and the Polytechnic University of Timisoara is a long-term and successful one, with real achievements in scientific and academic projects and impactful events.

The water company and the Timisoara based university have identified many common interests that could translate into opportunities for development for both organisations. The collaboration is grounded on the promotion of the technology transfer in areas of European priority or economic interest for Romania, the establishment of integrated research laboratories, and the support provided by Aquatim for training programs, postgraduate, master and PhD studies and apprenticeship programs for the university's students. Providing support and establishing a framework for the Polytechnics students to carry out their internships is also a solid basis for long-term collaboration, successfully validated in 2024.

Aquatim, partner in dual education

Dual education combines vocational education with technical apprenticeship in a company and, in this case, involves a partnership agreement between Aquatim, educational institutions and the administrative bodies, as well as individual contracts for training with students/parent-guardians and the school.

In 2023 Aquatim signed the financing contract and became part of the Regional Consortium for Dual Education West, joining Politehnica University Timișoara, the Municipality, West University, University of Life Sciences "King Mihai I", County School Inspectorate Timiș, Arad Water Company, Apa Prod Deva water company, the Aquademica Foundation, various businesses in the automotive and hospitality sectors, as well as seven high schools in Timișoara.

The project is funded by the National Recovery and Resilience Plan, with a grant value of 21 million euro. Its main objective is to train specialized manpower in the above-mentioned fields by combining theoretical knowledge acquired in schools with practical training, as per the curriculum, organised with the companies that are members of the consortium.

Starting with the school year 2024/2025, Aquatim has entered into a dual education system based partnership with the West Technological High School and the Municipality of Timisoara. The aim of this partnership is to provide quality training for students of vocational schools, preparing to be plumbers and electricians.

A class of students from the aforesaid vocational school will carry out their apprenticeship program in different departments of our company under the guidance of tutors, in accordance with the regulations in force. Students are provided with monthly scholarships and learning a trade with Aquatim offers them job opportunities, after graduation, depending on the company's staffing needs. The partnership will be carried on during the next school year, including additional classes of young learners.

APA, LIANTUL MESERIILOR DURABILE

Învățământ Profesional Dual

Timișoara
Buziaș
Deta
Făget
Jimbolia
Sânnicolau Mare

Meserie

L Liant

A Apă

U Utilitate

D Durabilitate

Aquatim - Liceul Tehnologic de Vest
electrician/ instalator
(bursă acordată de către Aquatim)

AQUATIM, partener în sistemul educațional!
Deprindeți o meserie mereu actuală prin practică
și bucurați-vă de avantajele învățământului dual!

Annual Report 2024

2024



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