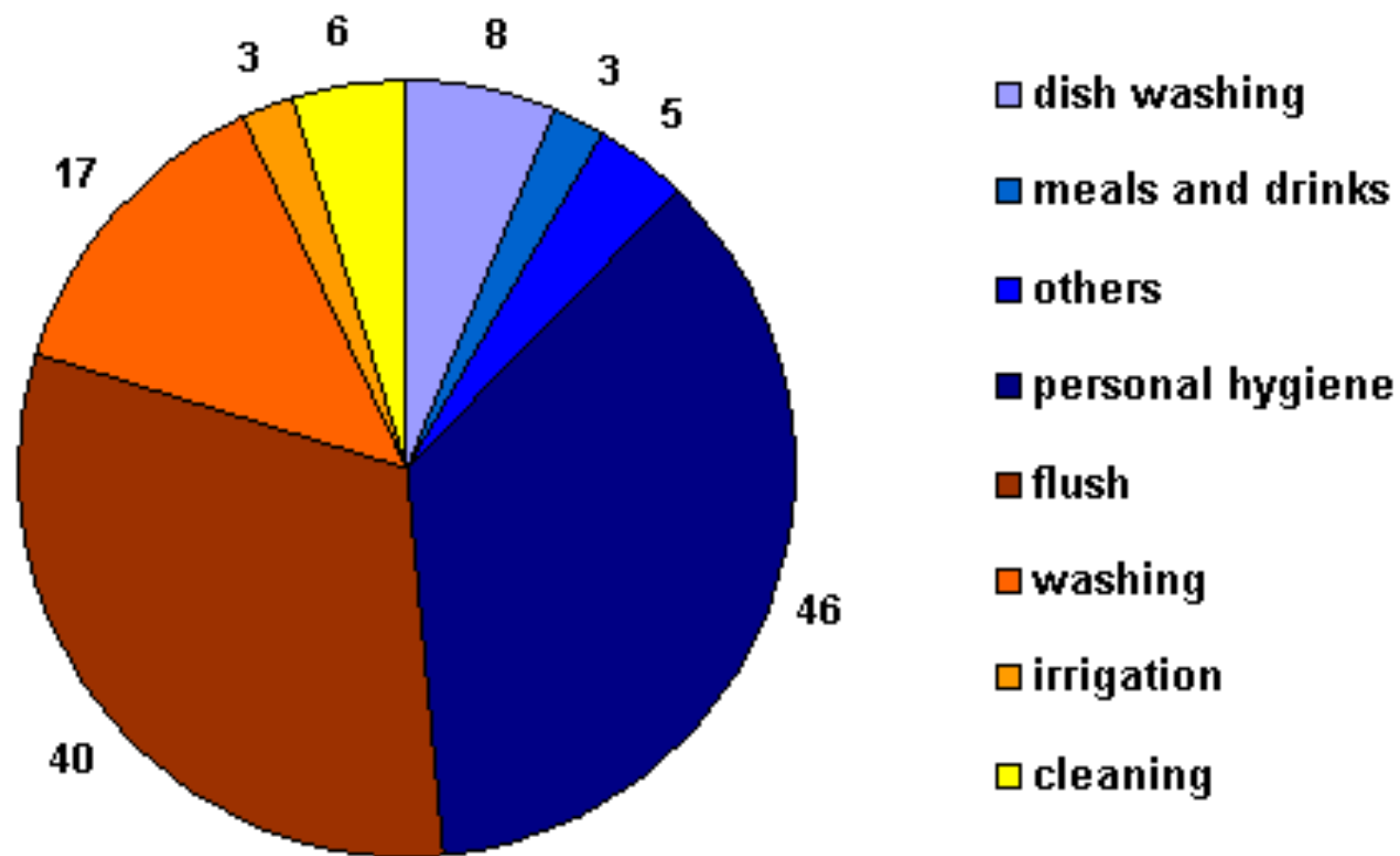


## Domestic Water Use

Daily water consumption in households of 128L per person, broken down to purposes



In the average German household each person only uses 3 litres of the 128 litres they consume for drinking or food preparation, but use over a third of their daily water for personal hygiene, and just under a third gets flushed down the toilet.

## Water Pollution in Germany

The European Commission is referring Germany to the Court of Justice of the EU for failing to take stronger measures to combat water pollution caused by nitrates. Nitrates are essential for plants to grow and they are widely used as fertilisers. However, excess levels cause severe water pollution, with consequences for people's health, the economy and the environment.

The latest figures submitted by Germany in 2012 and several recent reports from the German authorities show worsening nitrate pollution in groundwater and surface waters, including the Baltic Sea.

Despite these trends, Germany has not taken sufficient additional measures to effectively address nitrates pollution and revise its relevant legislation to comply with the EU rules on nitrates. Since the Commission considers that the water pollution by nitrates is also not sufficiently addressed in the framework of the ongoing revision of the national action programme, it has decided to refer Germany to the Court of Justice of the EU.

## Water Conservation

The Germans are obsessed with saving water. You won't find many countries north of the Sahara that are as water-conscious as Germany. They save water while washing dishes (a modern dishwashing machine uses only six litres per cycle), while going to the toilet (many toilets have a setting that allows only a brief flush), and even when washing their cars.

The Environment Ministry recommends that people turn off the tap while they're brushing their teeth. Saving water, the ministry's web page strongly hints, helps poor countries to irrigate their paddy fields.



## Water Privatisation

Germany's water supply at the moment is under the responsibility of local authorities. Most town and city councils manage water supply systems, maintaining water pipes, ensuring that there are enough pipes for every home to be hooked to the water supply system and managing the quality of tap water. Sometimes councils grant concessions to private companies. But only in rare cases, is the operation of the water supply sectors entirely in private hands.

In Germany, Berlin serves as an example of what can happen when the management of the water supply is privatised. The prices for water in the German capital rose steadily, to more than 30 percent today. In 2013 the people of Germany protested against an EU directive that would lead to the privatisation of public water supply systems. They feared it would lead to forced privatisation.



Member of

**German Water Partnership**