

# Influences of Public Ecological Awareness and Price on Potable Water Consumption in the Geneva Area

Giuseppe Catenazzo, Jennifer D'Urso, Emmanuel Fragnière, Jean Tuberosa

Giuseppe Catenazzo, Research Assistant HES, Haute École de Gestion de Genève, Route de Drize 7, CH-1227 Carouge GE, Switzerland, Telephone: +41 (0) 22 3881878 Fax: +41 (0) 22 3881701, e-mail: giuseppe.catenazzo@hesge.ch;

Jennifer D'Urso, Research Assistant HES, Haute École de Gestion de Genève, Route de Drize 7, CH-1227 Carouge GE, Switzerland, e-mail: jennifer.durso@hesge.ch;

Emmanuel Fragnière, Professor HEG and Lecturer at the University of Bath, Haute École de Gestion de Genève, Route de Drize 7, CH-1227 Carouge GE, Switzerland, Telephone: +41 (0) 22 3881724 Fax: +41 (0) 22 3881701, e-mail: emmanuel.fragniere@hesge.ch;

Jean Tuberosa, Professor HEG, Haute École de Gestion de Genève, Route de Drize 7, CH-1227 Carouge GE, Switzerland, Telephone: +41 (0) 22 3881707 Fax: +41 (0) 22 3881701, e-mail: jean.tuberosa@hesge.ch

## CONTEXT

In Switzerland, people can benefit from local network supply services allowing them to receive fresh water in their houses and work places all over the year.

Geneva is an international city located close to the Swiss and French Alps, at the bottom of one of the biggest European lakes, Lake Geneva. Many supplying possibilities are available: Lake Geneva (80%), Rhône and Arve rivers, and underground water.

Water is provided at an affordable price for the consumer: the average individual monthly cost for water consumption is CHF 6.27 (around USD 6.22, see SSIGE - SVGW Zurich, <http://www.svgw.ch>) while the standardized Canton median individual monthly salary is estimated around CHF 6'350 (around USD 6'302, see Geneva Cantonal Office of Statistics, <http://www.ge.ch/statistique>).

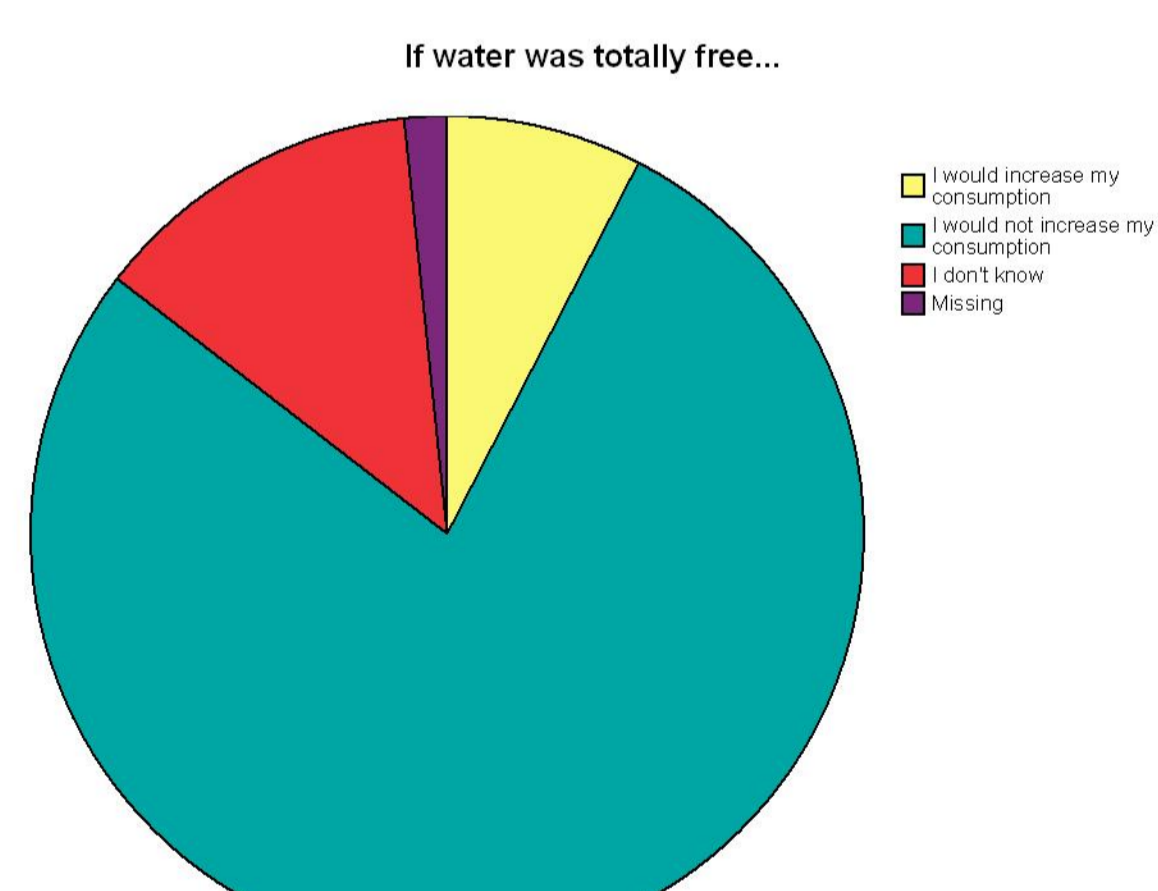
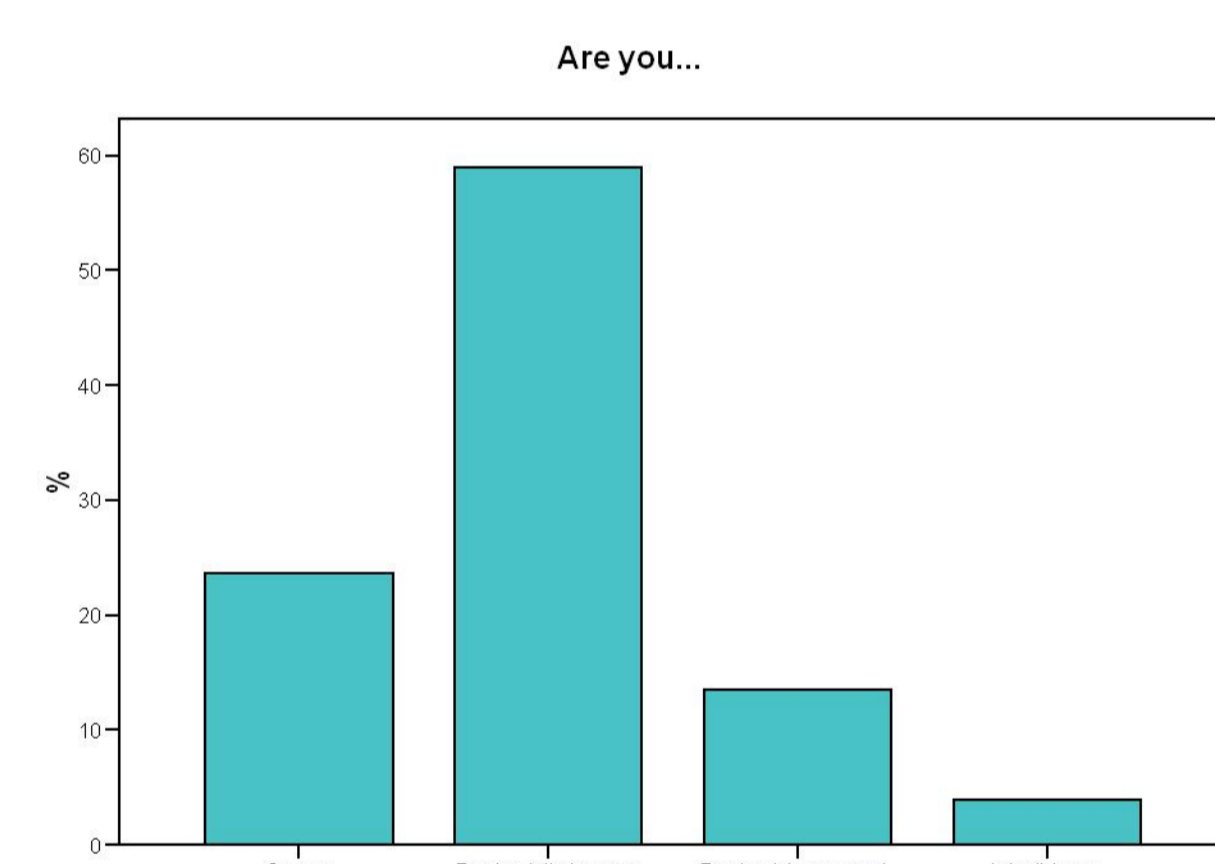
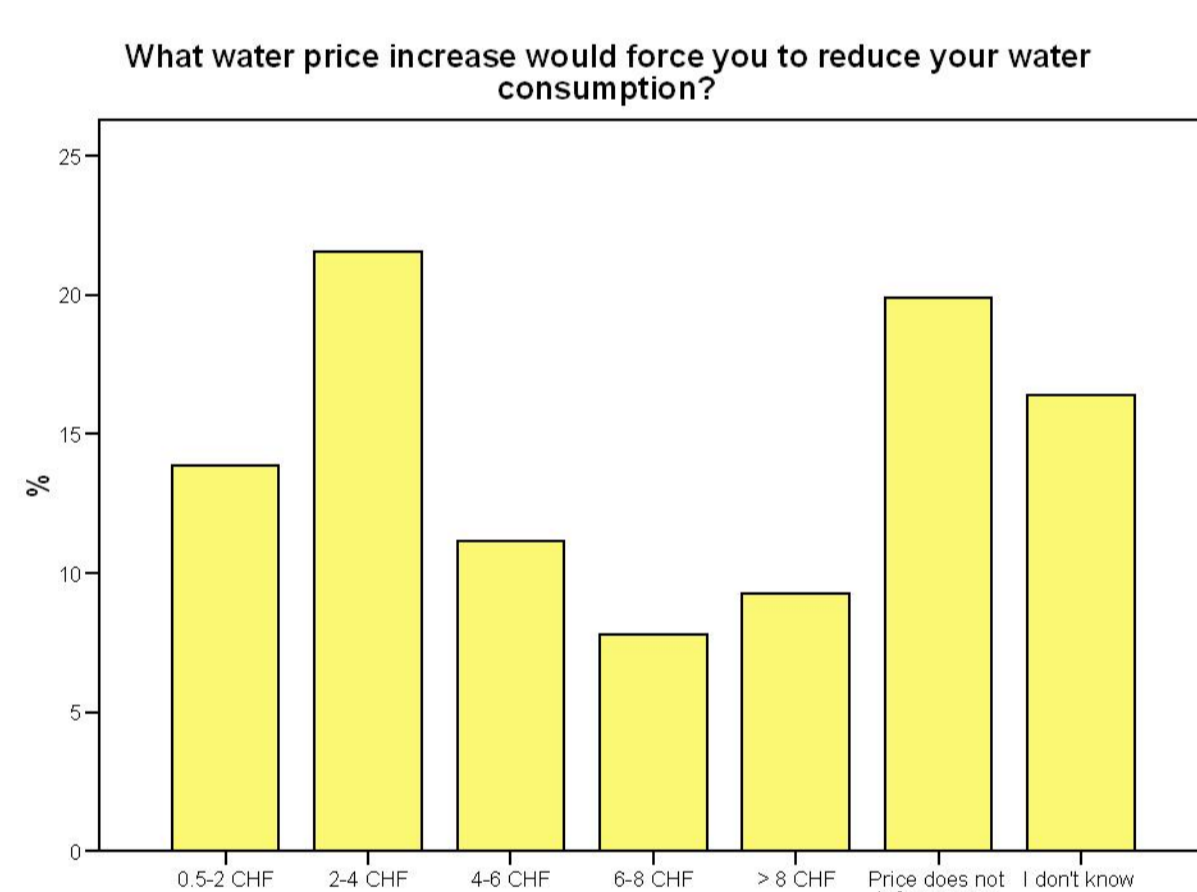
## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Is individual water consumption and ecological sensibility connected to individual behaviour?

Has water price any effect on its consumption?



Source: Genève Tourisme et Bureau des Congrès (<http://www.geneve-tourisme.ch>)



## FINDINGS

- There is a relationship between the fact that individuals pay or not their water bills and their water waste awareness. The payment action seems to influence the individual behaviour regarding water consumption.
- There is a correlation between water consumption reduction in case of price increase and the monthly household income. However, this correlation is really low, we conclude that the price does not represent a sufficient driver to influence individuals' behaviour concerning water consumption.

## CONCLUSIONS

- In Geneva people are used to get high quality water in their taps at a very affordable price. This has made people less and less aware of the benefits they are provided with.
- The knowledge perceived by individuals concerning fresh water consumption is low, public information campaign should take this into account.
- Water price has a limited impact on individual behaviour.

## DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Sample size: 907

54.7 % men, 45.3% women

58.9% of the respondents rent the habitation in which they live, all charges included. 13.5% pay extra charges for water and gas supply, waste collection services.

69% of the respondents affirm to be attentive not to waste water, 24.7% don't pay attention to it. 50.9% think not to be informed enough on consumption and conservation systems, 83.2% don't know their individual monthly consumption.

After telling people the average individual daily water consumption (162 litres), 64.7% think it's a too high consumption. Concerning toxic liquids flushed away through pipelines, 48.3% are attentive about this topic while 26% rarely or never pay attention to it.

"Please order these features that have influence on you when buying a wash-dishes or a wash-machine?" 50% answered "Price" as the main feature, then follows "Energy consumption" with 25%. Water consumption is solely quoted only as the 4th criterion. 80% can't estimate what's the water price for domestic use (1000 litres). Since this information is given, CHF 1.60 m<sup>3</sup>, 50% say it is a fair price while 20% estimate it is cheap. 74.1% know that the water supply tariffs are paid to SIG (*Services Industriels de Genève*).

If water price shifted between a range of CHF 0.5 to CHF 2 per month and per person, 14% of the respondents would lower their consumption, 21% would if price increased of a range of CHF 2 and CHF 4. However, 20% of the sample affirms that price does not influence their water consumption, 16% cannot answer.