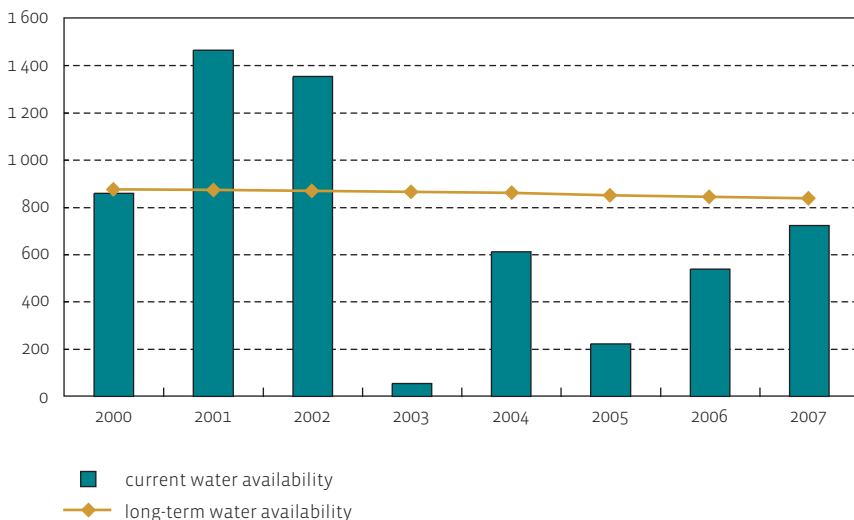




average annual water availability (m<sup>3</sup>/inhabitant/year)



Source: MOW, WLH

## Water shortage in Flanders due to high population density

The average annual water availability is the sum of the average annual precipitation surplus (precipitation minus evaporation) and half of the water that flows into Flanders each year from the neighbouring regions and countries, divided by the number of inhabitants in Flanders.

The long-term average annual water availability in Flanders show a slightly decreasing trend between 2000 and 2007. That decrease is determined solely by the population growth in the period concerned because the precipitation surplus and the quantity water flowing in are kept constant. The long-term average annual water availability is less than 1 000 m<sup>3</sup> per inhabitant per year. This means that on a world scale, Flanders is considered to be a region with a serious water shortage. In 2001, according to the European environment agency, only four countries in Europe scored worse than Belgium. Because the figures are calculated in a different way, it is difficult to compare them with the figures for Flanders (and Brussels).

## Yearly fluctuations in water availability due to variation in the precipitation pattern

The current average annual water availability shows strong fluctuations between 2000 and 2007. This indicator is heavily dependant on the precipitation surplus. In periods with a large amount of precipitation, the water availability is higher, while in relatively dry years the water availability is lower. The inflow from neighbouring regions softens this pattern somewhat.

average annual water availability (m <sup>3</sup> /inhabitant/year)	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
current water availability	860	1 466	1 355	54	612	223	539	724
long-term water availability	872	870	865	861	857	848	841	834