Another town in Portugal brings water into public ownership





(30 September 2020) After the remunicipalisation of water services in Mafra in 2016 (Portugal), another Portuguese town has announced now that is going public.

The City Council of Paredes, a town with around 86 000 inhabitants, recently decided to cancel the concession with the multinational water company, BeWater that was meant to last until 2036.

The decision was made after the company (BeWater) proposed to invest only 2.5 million euros over the next 16 years, a largely insufficient amount compared to the requirements of European Union law.

The Mayor of Paredes said that from the start of the concession in 2001 until 2008, the company invested 23.6 million euros and during that period the water bill grew by 45%. The water bill then grew by another 70% as the company wanted to invest another 35 million. This made impossible for citizens to continue to pay.

The City Council will need to ask for a loan of 20 million euros in compensation. They expect to be able to tap into EU money to continue to invest as needed.

Portugal

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