

EPSU welcomes vote on Drinking Water Directive and step to realise Right2Water in EU Legislation



(17 December 2020) The European Public Service Union (EPSU) welcomes the vote on the Drinking Water Directive recast in the European Parliament (15 December) as a step forward to realise the Human Right to Water in the EU. It follows the first ever successful European Citizens Initiative Right2water. It is regrettable however that the EP did not take the original proposal of the European Commission further and that the result is a very timid approach to the development of the human right to water in the European Union.

EPSU is a major actor in the water sector organising the workers in water and sanitation services. EPSU was the main organisation behind the first ever successful European Citizens Initiative on the human right to water (www.right2water.eu) in 2012. The Drinking Water Directive explicitly mentions the ECI as well as the United Nations declaration on the human right to water and sanitation. The recast Directive is a small step in the right direction to guarantee vulnerable people have access to drinking water. However, we believe that there is too much scope for Member States not to implement the provisions that the directive stipulates. EPSU will continue to campaign for further engagement to promote the human right to water and sanitation and to ensure that no users in the EU will have their water supply disconnected. The Pillar of Social Rights, especially principle 20 on access to essential services, provides a new opportunity to make the crucial step to guarantee the human right to water.

This week the Parliament agreed on the final text that will come into force in 2021.

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