



European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)

EPSU Press communication

European Citizens' Initiative on water as a Human Right presented in Marseille

(Marseille 18 March) During both the World Water Forum and the Alternative World Water Forum in Marseille this week, the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) announced the first European Citizens' Initiative that will be lodged with the European Commission (EC) on April 1. EPSU is sponsoring this citizen campaign to achieve the implementation of Water as a Human Right, per the United Nations Declaration passed on 28 July 2010. The ECI petition also urges European policy makers to keep water out of internal market rules and not treat it as a commodity.

EPSU has been building alliances across Europe with other organisations such as the European Anti Poverty Network, European Environmental Bureau (EEB), the Italian Forum of water movements, public water companies and many other actors.

"We have tried to apply word-for-word the UN Declaration in our public water operation in Paris. Today we are facing an economic crisis which is a real threat to our water and sanitation services across Europe," declared **Anne Le Strat**, President of Eau de Paris and Aqua Publica Europea. *"I fully support your initiative,"* she added.

EPSU General Secretary **Carola Fischbach-Pyttel** said, *"We hope that this initiative will help to ensure that water stays in public hands and becomes a human right fully respected and applied in Europe."*

EPSU will campaign during 2012 to collect the one million signatures that the EC demands to consider an ECI.

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EPSU is the European Federation of Public Service Unions. It is the largest federation of the ETUC and comprises 8 million public service workers from over 275 trade unions; EPSU organizes workers in the energy, water and waste sectors, health and social services and local and national administration, in all European countries including in the EU's Eastern Neighborhood. EPSU is the recognized regional organization of Public Services International (PSI).