

To the MEP's of the ENVI Committee  
By email

Ref: JWG/PSC/sh

Brussels, 25 November 2020

Dear member of the ENVI Committee,

Next week you are voting on two files related to water. The recast of **the Drinking Water Directive** and the **Implementation of EU water legislation**.

The European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) is a major actor in the water sector, we organise the workers performing water and sanitation services, and in 2012 we were the main organisation behind the first ever successful European Citizens Initiative on the Human right to water ([www.right2water.eu](http://www.right2water.eu)). As you know, both reports explicitly mention the ECI and the declaration by the United Nations of water and sanitation as a human right that we have been promoting for over a decade.

In that sense we would point out a few things which we find problematic in the current form:

First on the motion on **Implementation of the EU water legislation (2020/2613(RSP))**, we invite you to use the definition of water as used by the European Commission as it appears in the Water Framework Directive; Water is not a commercial product like any other but, rather, a heritage which must be protected, defended and treated as such. (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32000L0060>);

Also on compromise amendment 21 we regret that the ENVI committee is promoting Public Private Partnerships. The [UN rapporteur on the Human Right to water and sanitation](#) just published a report indicating that Public operators fulfill the human right to water in a much better capacity than private ones. This amendment will contradict the previous EP report on the response to the ECI, the Boylan report ([https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-8-2015-0228\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-8-2015-0228_EN.html)). You will be aware that the [European Court of Auditors](#) also had many objections to the use of PPPs and there is a fairly well established body of research on the same point. We call on you to delete such references.

Secondly on the Drinking Water Directive,

We welcome the vote next week that will be the final step of this Directive that came about as a direct response by the European Commission to our ECI. We would have hoped for the European Parliament to be more ambitious and to develop the European Commission's proposal. Initially the proposal made some of the targets binding to

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Member States and the final wording is far too open for interpretation but we still consider that the report is a small step in the right direction. We hope that you will vote positively to the report and this will be the beginning of further engagement to promote the Human Right to water and sanitation and to commit to ensuring that there will be no disconnection of users in the Union.

Yours



Jan Willem Goudriaan  
EPSU General Secretary