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Victory for democracy, Suez must listen to the people of Thessaloniki!

The citizens of Thessaloniki held a self-organised referendum on the privatisation of their water company yesterday, 18 May 2014. They overwhelmingly rejected proposals to privatise the company with 98% of votes against. The referendum was organised with the local support of the 11 municipalities of the metropolitan area. The mayors defied a last-minute attempt by the [Greek government to clamp down on this popular initiative](#), threatening the volunteers with arrest by the police. The result is a success for the campaigners for public water!

The result of the referendum leaves no room for doubt. The turnout was close to 220.000 voters, of the over 500,000 citizens who voted in the municipal elections which were held simultaneously. These numbers are a strong response to the government's threats.

Jan Willem Goudriaan EPSU Deputy General Secretary "The people have spoken. We expect the Greek Government, the Troika and bidders such as Suez and its Greek partner Ellaktor to listen. The companies should withdraw their bid. We congratulate the people of Thessaloniki and volunteers. It is a great day for local democracy."

The referendum was decided on February 17 during a meeting of the SOS te to Nero campaign while watching the right2water European Citizens Initiative hearing in the European Parliament in Brussels.

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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 265 trade unions; EPSU organises workers in the energy, water and waste sectors, health and social services and local, regional and central government, in all European countries including the EU's Eastern Neighborhood. EPSU is the recognized regional organization of Public Services International (PSI). For more information please go to: <http://www.epsu.org>*