



European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)

First European Citizens' Initiative collects almost 2 Million signatures across Europe!

Press communication – 10 September 2013

(Brussels 10 September) As of yesterday the national branches of the right2water.eu campaign have been handing in the signatures collected to the respective national authorities. We are now demanding that the European Commission implements the Human Right to water and sanitation in European Union basic legislation.

The campaign is an undeniable success. The broad coalition of [supporters](#) that has campaigned throughout the 17 months since the application was submitted, has collected about 1.9 million signatures across all 28 Member States.

The countries that have reached the minimum number of signatures (statements of support) required by legislation are: Finland, Lithuania, Hungary, Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Slovakia, Italy, Greece, Luxembourg, Belgium, the Netherlands and Spain.

We were the first ECI to collect online in early September 2012. Right2water was the only one that had a million signatures in at least 7 countries by the date of May 9th [the original date of the ECI] that the European Commission graciously extended.

Jan Willem Goudriaan, vice President of the ECI declares “*we are the Sergei Bubka of European participatory democracy being the first ones to fully use this tool to clear the high bar set by the European Commission. The real test is still to come: Will the European Commission listen to the voice of citizens and live up to the expectations of so many people by proposing concrete legislation? I am concerned that if it will not, its actions will also have an impact on the turn-out and way people vote in the European elections.*”

Right2Water expects the European Commission to listen to the voice of Europe's people and make the Human Right to water and sanitation become a reality for all, the effect it has had in the European legislation already shows the force of the ECI but it is not what almost 2 million citizens were asking for. We expect to hand the validated statement of support by Human Rights day on December 10th.

For more information contact Pablo Sanchez , psanchez@epsu.org 0032 (0) 474 62 66 33

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 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).