



EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION
OF PUBLIC WATER OPERATORS

APE Position on the European Citizens Initiative

- Aqua Publica Europea, the European association of public water operators, wishes to express its appreciation for the recent debate at the European Parliament on the ECI “Rigth2Water”. The intense discussion and the high participation demonstrate the importance of increasing the occasions for public dialogue on such an important issue as the future of European water policy.
- We observe that the ECI probably represents one of the first cases in which European citizens have mobilised in a truly bottom-up and transnational way to influence European agenda on an issue of general interest; and this issue is water as a common good.
- In its “Seville declaration”, Aqua Publica Europea committed itself to promote the adoption of measures aiming to ensure the provision of minimum water supply to people who are experiencing social exclusion or economical difficulties, in accordance with the specific legislation of each country.
We are persuaded that, thanks to appropriate tariffing mechanisms and effective management, public water services can reconcile the implementation of the right to water with the provision of high quality services.
- In accordance with the treaties of the European Union, each member state shall have the freedom to choose how to organise their water services. We thus consider illegitimate the reported pressures from European Institutions to liberalise water services in countries benefiting from support under the European Stability Mechanism.
- At the same time, we have fully taken up the “efficiency challenge”, especially by re-investing operating profit to improve services and infrastructures, while ensuring transparency, accountability and participation (TAP) for the common interest.
- We fully support the ECI request for a greater engagement of the EU in the development domain. We are persuaded that improved access to WASH in developing countries can be achieved by through capacity-building actions. In this framework, we believed that not-for-profit cooperation project among water operators represent an effective tool to enhance self-sustained development processes and we thus call the Commission for restoring the “Water Facility’ mechanism which proved to be effective in previous programming period.

Aqua Publica Europea is the European association of public water operators. The mission of APE is to promote public water management through cooperation and knowledge exchange. The members of APE provide collectively water and sanitation services to over 60 million European citizens, and they are committed to a constant improvement of their performances for the common interest.