

EPSU Press communication – 18 December 2013

**EPSU angered over Eurogroup President's satisfaction
over destruction of Greece**

(18 December 2013) The President of the Eurogroup, Dutch Finance Minister Dijsselbloem, issued [a press release](#) in which he notes his "satisfaction" that Greece has reached a number of milestones as agreed with the Troika, 17 December 2013. These milestones include preparing the dismissal of 12.500 public service workers (euphemistically called a mobility scheme) as well as improving the financial situation of two large water companies so they can be privatised.

The Eurozone president's statement is once again proof of the fundamentalist belief of current EU leaders in their orthodox and moral economic austerity policies and comes on the eve of the EU summit which will discuss "contractual" arrangements to force governments to implement structural reforms. Dismissing public service workers implies depleting services of resources, like in the Greek tax administration. With less staff and less resources, tax inspectors can not crackdown on fraud, tax avoidance and the use of tax havens by rich Greeks and corporations. Spending cuts impact on hospitals, schools, universities, public broadcasting and many other public services. The policies create a bonanza of new assets and markets for corporate interests, often linked with the governing parties' leaderships. The consequences for Greek society are devastating with crime, illness, homelessness, unemployment jumping to milestone record levels which sadly are not noted by the Eurogroup President.

*"With a mountain of evidence that these policies are destructive and counter-productive- for the long term [future of Greek society](#), for [human rights](#), for [the EU's goals](#) to [address poverty](#), for [the prospects of recovery](#) and potentially for the [EU project](#), for growth and jobs, we need a change of direction", says **Jan Willem Goudriaan**, EPSU's Deputy General Secretary. "But we will not get it from this Commission. A new balance of power is needed that helps charting a new course and implement an investment plan like [EPSU and ETUC](#) are demanding".*

The reference to the situation of the water companies is a chutzpah as well as revealing. A chutzpah as what is described here is that the Greek government makes [the water companies attractive with public money](#), paying its outstanding debts or scrapping them, lowering the value of the companies and then sells them on to [Greek and other corporate interests](#). Revealing as:

- the Greek government denies that what they intend to do with the Thessaloniki and Athens Water companies can be called a privatisation.
- it underlines that the Troika and hence the European Commission are demanding the privatisation of water companies as a condition for receiving money, something the Commission has been denying.
- Greek society is very much opposed to the privatisation of the water companies which might even be unconstitutional.

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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 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).